



HJ0074

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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, It is right and appropriate to celebrate a  
3 diversity of cultures and heritages; this celebration serves as  
4 a reminder that despite our differing backgrounds, everyone in  
5 Illinois is bound by a common hope for a better and more  
6 inclusive future for our children; and

7 WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are among  
8 the fastest growing ethnic groups in Illinois; Asian Americans  
9 and Pacific Islanders make up more than 5% of the population of  
10 the State; the community grew by over 40% between 2000 and  
11 2010; and

12 WHEREAS, The Asian American and Pacific Islander community  
13 has a long and integral history in the United States; in  
14 recognition and celebration of that history, the United States  
15 Congress established Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week in  
16 1978; that week was extended to the full month of May in 1990;  
17 and

18 WHEREAS, May is an appropriate month for the observation of  
19 Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage, since May 7, 1843  
20 marked the arrival date of the first Japanese immigrant to the  
21 United States; May 10, 1869 is the date that America was united  
22 coast to coast by the Transcontinental Railroad with the

1 placement of the "Golden Spike"; the railroad was made possible  
2 by the herculean efforts of the mostly Chinese immigrant  
3 workers; May 6, 1882 marks the passage of the Chinese Exclusion  
4 Act, which shaped the course of Asian immigration for almost a  
5 century to come; and

6 WHEREAS, The Asian American community played a heroic role  
7 in the Second World War; the 442nd Infantry regiment, comprised  
8 mostly of Japanese Americans, fought for the United States  
9 while their families at home were facing harsh discrimination  
10 and internment; the 442nd became one of the most decorated  
11 units for its size, earning almost 10,000 Purple Hearts; and

12 WHEREAS, Despite the contributions of Asian Americans and  
13 immigrants, the Asian American community has faced challenges  
14 and discrimination in the United States; many of the Chinese  
15 laborers were treated extremely poorly during the construction  
16 of the Transcontinental Railroad, and none of the Chinese  
17 Americans were allowed in the famous picture of the "Golden  
18 Spike"; Asian immigrants faced xenophobia and outright  
19 violence throughout periods of the 19th and 20th centuries; and

20 WHEREAS, Despite this inequity, brilliant leaders from  
21 different Asian American communities have contributed to the  
22 history of our country; Dalip Singh Saund was the first Asian  
23 American elected to Congress; Fred T. Korematsu was a champion

1 of civil liberties and of the Japanese Americans interned  
2 during the Second World War; Larry Dulay Itliong was a hero for  
3 the labor movement; Grace Lee Boggs and Patsy Mink were both a  
4 transformative force for Title IX; whether as soldiers,  
5 laborers, business owners, advocates, or community leaders,  
6 those in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community  
7 continue to rise to the challenges they face and serve as a  
8 force for good in the State of Illinois and the United States;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Illinoisans and Americans of all walks of life are  
11 encouraged to learn about the deep history of Asian and Pacific  
12 Islander Americans and their contributions to our State and  
13 country; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
15 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
16 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we declare May of 2019 as Asian  
17 American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in the State of  
18 Illinois in honor of the people in these communities in the  
19 State and the nation; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That we welcome everyone to Asian American Action  
21 Day on May 15, 2019, where community organizations and people  
22 of all creeds across Illinois advocate in the Capitol for  
23 legislation that is more inclusive of Asian and Pacific

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1 Islander Americans.