



Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7
 2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704
 PHONE 510-981-7170 FAX 510-981-7177 kworthington@ci.berkeley.ca.us

CONSENT CALENDAR

May 28, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington

Subject: Proclamation Honoring Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Proclamation honoring May as Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

BACKGROUND

In 1978, Congress passed a joint Congressional Resolution to commemorate Asian American Heritage Week during the first week of May. This week was selected because of two significant anniversaries: The first Japanese immigrants arrived in America on May 7, 1843 and the transcontinental railroad was completed by numerous Chinese laborers on May 10, 1869.

In 1990, Congress voted to expand the commemoration from the span of one week to an entire month of celebration. In May 2009, President Obama officially proclaimed the month of May as “Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month” in celebration of the heritage and proud legacy of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. In April 2015, President Obama issued a renewed Proclamation in honor of Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month reaffirming his Administration’s commitment to comprehensive immigration reform, increasing opportunity, and addressing unmet needs and discrimination still facing many AAPI communities.

There are nearly 6 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California alone and this is one of the fastest growing ethnic populations in the state. According to the 2010 census, Asian persons represented 19.4% of Berkeley’s population.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders contribute extensive resources that enrich our social, economic, and political fabric. Some of their many contributions include but are not limited to: providing housing and job services, organizing local and grassroots campaigns for economic and political justice, serving on commissions and for the city, and creating wonderful music, dance, art, poetry, and theater. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have played a critical role in strengthening the diverse quality of life that Berkeley holds so dear.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: None.

CONTACT PERSON:

Councilmember Kriss Worthington 510-981-7170

Attachment:

1. Proclamation Honoring May as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

HONOR MAY AS ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

WHEREAS, The earliest Asian Americans immigrated to the United States in the 1800's; and

WHEREAS, Many Asian laborers contributed to the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have played a critical role in the social, economic, and political development of California throughout its history; and

WHEREAS, Asian American and Pacific Islander entrepreneurs have led many of California's businesses to the pinnacle of their respective industries; and

WHEREAS, The nearly 6 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California are one of the fastest growing ethnic populations in the states; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders represent 19.4% of Berkeley's population and represent ancestries that include Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, East Indian, Filipino, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Hmong, Indonesian, Iu-Mien, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Singaporean, Thai, Tongan, Vietnamese, Samoan, Guamanian, and Native Hawaiian; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islander immigrants have contributed greatly to California's economic success, rural growth, and urban development; and

WHEREAS, Asian American and Pacific Islander communities throughout Berkeley actively promote their cultural heritage and promote cross-cultural understanding; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders will continue to be an important part of Berkeley's diverse tapestry of cultures and ideas; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have a proud legacy of service and dedication to our community, our city, our state, and our country; and

WHEREAS, May has become a symbolic month in which Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and supporters come together in various celebrations of culture, traditions and history; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Berkeley hereby declares the month of May 2015 to be:

ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

We invite everyone to reflect on their notable accomplishments and outstanding services to the nation, California and the City of Berkeley.

