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HOUSE 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 the United States  
22 was united coast to coast by the Transcontinental Railroad with

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

6 WHEREAS, The Asian American community played a heroic role  
7 in the Second World War; the 442nd Infantry regiment, made  
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 the different Asian  
13 Americans and immigrants, the Asian American community has  
14 faced challenges and discrimination in the United States; many  
15 of the Chinese laborers were treated extremely poorly during  
16 the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad and none of  
17 the Chinese Americans were allowed in the famous picture of the  
18 "Golden 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; leaders like Dalip Singh Saund, who was  
23 the first Asian American elected to Congress; Fred T. Korematsu

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

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

15 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
16 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that May  
17 16 of 2018 is the date designated as Asian American Action Day,  
18 where community organizations and people of all creeds across  
19 Illinois advocate in the Capitol for legislation that is more  
20 inclusive of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans; and be it  
21 further

22 RESOLVED, That we acknowledge May of 2018 as Asian American  
23 and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in honor of the people in

1 these communities in Illinois and the nation.