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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States is inextricably tied to the story of the United States; and

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WHEREAS, The Asian American and Pacific Islander community is an inherently diverse population, comprised of over 45 distinct ethnicities and over 100 language dialects; and

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WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau, the Asian American population grew faster than any other racial or ethnic group over the last decade, surging nearly 72 percent between 2000 and 2015; and

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WHEREAS, One of the earliest records of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in the United States dates back to 1763 in New Orleans, Louisiana, where Filipino sailors who worked the Manila-Acapulco trade route settled; and

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WHEREAS, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have made indelible contributions to the history of Illinois and the United States that include, but are not limited to, building the Transcontinental Railroad, serving honorably in the Armed Forces, fighting for the United States in foreign wars, and advocating for civil rights; and

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1           WHEREAS, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have endured  
2 hardships, including unjust working conditions, prejudice, and  
3 discrimination in some of the darkest times in our State's and  
4 nation's history, including the Chinese Exclusion Act,  
5 naturalized citizenship ineligibility, the Alien Land Law,  
6 anti-miscegenation laws, and Japanese internment; and

7           WHEREAS, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans continue to  
8 cultivate, advance, and lead in the fields of art, fashion,  
9 business, technology, education, science, government, law,  
10 humanities, medicine, sports, and entertainment; and

11           WHEREAS, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Illinois  
12 represent diverse ancestries that include, but are not limited  
13 to, Indian, Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Burmese, Cambodian,  
14 Chinese, Taiwanese, Filipino, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean,  
15 Laotian, Malaysian, Maldivian, Mongolian, Nepalese, Native  
16 Hawaiian, Vietnamese, Okinawan, Pakistani, Samoan,  
17 Singaporean, Sri Lankan, Thai, Tongan, and other Pacific  
18 Islands; and

19           WHEREAS, Federal law designates May as Asian/Pacific  
20 American Heritage Month in Section 102 of Title 36 of the  
21 United States Code; and

1           WHEREAS, Celebrating Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage  
2 Month provides Illinoisans with an opportunity to recognize the  
3 achievements, contributions, and history of Asian and Pacific  
4 Islander Americans; therefore, be it

5           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL  
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize that Asian  
7 American and Pacific Islander communities enhance the rich  
8 diversity of and strengthen the State of Illinois and the  
9 United States, and we commend Asian and Pacific Islander  
10 Americans for their notable accomplishments and contributions  
11 to Illinois; and be it further

12           RESOLVED, That we declare May 2019 as Asian and Pacific  
13 Islander American Heritage Month in the State of Illinois.