



SR1073

LRB098 20578 GRL 58086 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, During the Japanese colonial and wartime expansion of Asia and the Pacific Islands from 1932 through the duration of World War II, approximately 200,000 women and girls were coerced into a system of forced military prostitution; and

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WHEREAS, The term "comfort women" was a euphemism used by the Japanese government to describe women and girls forced into sexual slavery by the Imperial Japanese military at camps, known as "comfort stations"; and

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WHEREAS, The majority of "comfort women" were of Korean or Chinese descent, but women from Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Australia, and the Netherlands were also interned in military camps run directly by the Imperial Japanese military or private agents working for the military; and

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WHEREAS, Some of the women were sold to these military camps as minors, others were deceptively recruited by middlemen with the promise of employment and financial security, and still others were forcibly kidnapped and forced to become "sexual slaves" for soldiers stationed throughout the Japanese occupied territories; and

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1           WHEREAS, Approximately three-quarters of the "comfort  
2 women" died as a direct result of the brutality inflicted on  
3 them during their internment; some of those who survived were  
4 left infertile due to sexual violence or sexually transmitted  
5 diseases; and

6           WHEREAS, The stories of the "comfort women" are an  
7 essential part of the history of human trafficking; and

8           WHEREAS, The United Nations reports that 2.4 million people  
9 across the globe are victims of human trafficking at any one  
10 time, and 80% of them are being exploited as sexual slaves; and

11           WHEREAS, At least 16,000 women and girls are involved in  
12 the sex trade every year in Chicago, many of whom are victims  
13 of human trafficking; and

14           WHEREAS, The State of Illinois stands against human  
15 trafficking in all its forms, as evidenced by the 2005  
16 formation of the Illinois Rescue and Restore Coalition, a  
17 partnership between the Illinois Department of Human Services  
18 and the federal government to combat labor and sex trafficking  
19 in Illinois; and

20           WHEREAS, The State of Illinois further showed its  
21 commitment to fighting human trafficking through Public Act

1 98-0435, which became law last August and allows trafficking  
2 victims to receive financial assistance to remove "trafficking  
3 tattoos" that traffickers often use to brand their victims as  
4 their property; and

5 WHEREAS, It is fitting for the Senate to support H.R. 121,  
6 adopted by the United States House of Representatives in 2007,  
7 which called upon the Japanese government to stand by its  
8 statement of remorse for the sexual enslavement of "comfort  
9 women" by the Imperial Japanese Army and its apology to  
10 survivors and to educate future generations about these crimes;  
11 therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL  
13 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize and  
14 support "comfort women" by acknowledging as historical fact the  
15 suffering they endured during their forced internment in  
16 Japanese military comfort stations; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That we urge all Illinois educators to share with  
18 students of an appropriate age the story of "comfort women"  
19 when discussing the history of Asia or World War II, or the  
20 issue of human trafficking; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That we commit to working toward the inclusion of  
22 Asian and Asian American experiences, such as the story of

1 "comfort women" and the forced incarceration of Japanese  
2 Americans during World War II, in history and social science  
3 curricula used in Illinois public schools; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That we reaffirm our commitment to ending all  
5 forms of violence and trafficking of women in the State of  
6 Illinois; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
8 presented to the executive directors of the Korean American  
9 Resource & Cultural Center, Korean American Voter Organizing  
10 Initiative & Community Empowerment, Korean American Women in  
11 Need, the Japanese American Service Committee, the Cambodian  
12 Association of Illinois, and Asian Americans Advancing  
13 Justice-Chicago.