

Legislation Text

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Commemorating June 19, 2021 as Korean American Citizenship Day to Celebrate the First Naturalization of a Korean American in 1890.

WHEREAS, The influence of naturalized or natural born citizens of Korean American heritage may be observed in all facets of American life from politics to industry, entrepreneurship to volunteerism, the arts, and education; and

WHEREAS, On June 19, 1890, Philip Jaisohn became the first Korean immigrant to acquire United States citizenship and established as a pioneer for the Korean American history; and

WHEREAS, 2021 marks the 131st Anniversary of the first US citizenship granted to Korean American and Korean Americans will come together on June 19 to celebrate this date as the Korean American Citizenship Day; and

WHEREAS, Today, Korean American citizens live throughout the United States and are part of a vibrant, growing Korean American community; and

WHEREAS, The Korean American community is making important contributions in distinguished career fields such as law, medicine, business, education, architecture, and the arts; and

WHEREAS, Philip Jaisohn, a Korean political refugee who made his home in Media, PA, made Philadelphia a central overseas base for supporting Korean independence. Inspired by the First and Second Continental Congress of the United States held in Philadelphia, Philip Jaisohn, Syngman Rhee, who is the first President of the Republic of Korea, and Han Kyong Jung organized the First Korean Congress in Philadelphia where they proclaimed Korean Declaration of Independence from April 14 to April 16, 1919; and

WHEREAS, Philip Jaisohn was the noted champion of the Korean Independence Movement in America and established the Korean Information Bureau to publish the Korea Review for the cause of political and religious freedom of Korea and Far East; and

WHEREAS, Philip Jaisohn and Rev. Dr. Floyd W. Tomkins founded the League of Friends of Korea that was organized in 21 American cities as well as in London and Paris with 25,000 members to educate general public, and community and government leaders about the aspirations of Korean people on the independence for Korea; and

WHEREAS, First generation Korean immigrants established America as a new home and naturalized to establish new homeland for their children and future generations of Korean Americans; and

WHEREAS, Korean Americans have made significant contributions to the economic vitality and fabric of the United States and the global marketplace in all facets of fields in government, for-profit or not-for-profit business and academic communities; and

WHEREAS, Korean Americans have made history by winning elections as naturalized citizens or natural born citizens throughout the country in local, state, and federal levels of political office; and

WHEREAS, Korean Americans have designated June 19, 2021 as “Korean American Citizenship Day” to commemorate the first step of the long and prosperous journey to US citizenship of Korean Americans in the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby commemorates June 19, 2021 as the Korean American Citizenship Day to Celebrate the First Naturalization of Korean American in 1890.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Philip Jaisohn Memorial Foundation, further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.