

Legislation Text

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Commemorating June 19, 2022 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 can be observed in all facets of American life, including: politics, industry, entrepreneurship, 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 himself as a pioneer for the advancement of Korean American history; and

WHEREAS, Year 2022 marks the 132nd Anniversary of the first U.S. 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 form a vibrant, growing Korean American community. This far-reaching community continues to make important contributions in many distinguished career fields such as: law, medicine, business, education, architecture, and the arts; and

WHEREAS, As a Korean political refugee, Philip Jaison made his home in Media, PA and turned the Philadelphia area into a central overseas base for supporting Korean independence. Inspired by the First and Second Continental Congress of the United States held in Philadelphia, Syngman Rhee, the first President of the Republic of Korea, Philip Jaison, and Han Kyong Chung 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 noted champion of the Korean Independence Movement in America, and established the Korean Information Bureau. This Bureau published the Korea Review that advocated political and religious freedom in 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. The League boasted 25,000 members whose goal was to educate the general public, as well as community and government leaders, about the aspirations of the Korean people to strive for Korean independence; and

WHEREAS, First generation Korean immigrants throughout America created a new homeland in the United States for their children and future generations of Korean Americans; and

WHEREAS, Korean Americans have made significant contributions to the economic fabric and vitality of the United States and the global marketplace. The economic impact of the Korean American community has can be seen in all facets of government, in for-profit or not-for-profit organizations, and in a variety of the academic communities; and

WHEREAS, Korean American citizens, both native born and naturalized, have made history by winning elections for political office at the local, state, and federal levels throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, Korean Americans have designated June 19, 2022 as “Korean American Citizenship Day” to commemorate the first step of the long and prosperous journey to US citizenship for 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, 2022 as the Korean American Citizenship Day to Celebrate the First Naturalization of a 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.