

Legislation Text

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Proclaiming January 13, 2019 as Korean American Day in the City of Philadelphia to Celebrate and Commemorate the Proud Heritage of Korean Americans and their Invaluable Contributions to Enhancing the City's Culture, Economy, and the Founding Ideals of Independence and Democracy.

WHEREAS, The first wave of Korean immigrants to the United States, comprised of 102 people, arrived in Honolulu, Hawaii, on January 13, 1903. Today, 1.82 million people of Korean descent live throughout the United States and are part of a vibrant, growing Korean American Community; and

WHEREAS, Year 2019 marks the centennial anniversary of the historic First Korean Congress held in Philadelphia from April 14-16, 1919; 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 became the first Korean President of the Republic of Korea, and Han Kyong Jung organized The First Korean Congress in Philadelphia at the Little Theatre located on 17th and Delancey Streets from April 14th to April 16th, 1919. A delegation of 150 Korean representatives and Americans participated in the First Korean Congress and on the last day, with the support from the City of Philadelphia, they marched in solidarity from the Little Theatre to Independence Hall, where they proclaimed Korean Declaration of Independence; and

WHEREAS, Following the First Korean Congress, Philadelphia became the birthplace of the League of Friends of Korea in America that was organized in 21 American cities as well as in London and France; and

WHEREAS, The Korean American Community in the Philadelphia metropolitan area has grown to exceed 41,000 members. Korean Americans own many retail stores, provide various cultural opportunities, and are making important contributions in distinguished career fields such as law, medicine, business, education, architecture, and the arts; and

WHEREAS, There are ever greater exchanges between Korea and Philadelphia, and the friendship between the two regions has been characterized since the beginning by a shared love of freedom, dedication to peace, and building of prosperity; and

WHEREAS, From April 14th to April 16th, 2019, the Korean American Community of Philadelphia will come together to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the First Korean Congress with special opportunities to strengthen the ties between Philadelphia and Korea; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the historic relations between Philadelphia and Korea, all citizens of Philadelphia are encouraged to participate in learning about the rich heritage and contributions of Korean Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby proclaims January 13,

2019 as the Korean American Day in the City of Philadelphia to celebrate and commemorate the proud heritage of Korean Americans and their invaluable contributions to enhancing the City's culture, economy, and the founding ideals of independence and democracy.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the First Korean Congress Centennial Celebration Organizing Committee, further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.