

Legislation Text

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Recognizing and Honoring the Korean American Association of Greater Philadelphia (KAAGP) on the Occasion of its 50th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, The Korean American Association of Greater Philadelphia (KAAGP) was formed on October 3rd, 1970; and

WHEREAS, October 3rd is celebrated annually by Koreans as National Foundation Day in recognition of the first Korean state of Gojoseon in 2333 BC; and

WHEREAS, The formation of the KAAGP on this day was an intentional recognition of Philadelphia as the birthplace of American independence; and

WHEREAS, The KAAGP was created to support and advocate for the growing number of Korean immigrants with their cultural and economic assimilation into American life; and

WHEREAS, Kyu Hwan Lee, a doctor at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, served as the KAAGP's first president; and

WHEREAS, Korean immigration to the United States can be traced back to 1903 with the arrival of 102 people in Honolulu, Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, Korean immigration to the United States rapidly increased in the 1960s and 1970s following the Vietnam war; and

WHEREAS, Today, there are an estimated 1.82 million people of Korean descent living in the United States, with over 80,000 Korean Americans residing in the greater Philadelphia region; and

WHEREAS, The KAAGP has worked tirelessly through the decades to serve as the go-to resource for the local Korean American community, whether it be by bridging language barriers, assisting with the formation and growth of Korean American businesses, or connecting Korean American students with scholarships and financial aid; and

WHEREAS, The KAAGP has also developed programs to connect Korean Americans with local civic centers to obtain driver's licenses or to vote in local elections; and

WHEREAS, The KAAGP has even purchased a local cemetery site for Korean Americans to be laid to rest; and

WHEREAS, During this difficult year, the KAAGP rose to the challenge to combat the various public health and economic crises; and

WHEREAS, The KAAGP formed the Korean Community COVID-19 Emergency Committee in March 2020 to

support the region's pandemic response, which led to the "Community Make Masks Campaign"; and

WHEREAS, The campaign gathered and distributed over 45,000 masks to essential workers in healthcare, law enforcement, schools, senior centers, and senior centers; and

WHEREAS, After hundreds of local Korean businesses were damaged and looted, the KAAGP partnered with the Korean American Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia to assist businesses in applying for and receiving grants to rebuild; and

WHEREAS, The KAAGP also worked to ensure Korean American communities were counted in the 2020 census, reaching over 10,000 individuals through phone banking and pledge drives; and

WHEREAS, Now in its 50th year of service, the KAAGP continues to lead the way as a voice and vital resource for Korean Americans, and its leadership will ensure the local Korean American community will continue to thrive and grow for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, that it hereby recognizes and honors the Korean American Association of Greater Philadelphia (KAAGP) on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Korean American Association of Greater Philadelphia (KAAGP), further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.