

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

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| FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROCLAIMING THE) | RESOLUTION NO. 20-5106 |
| MONTH OF MAY ASIAN AMERICAN AND) | Introduced by Council President Lynn |
| PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH) | Peterson |

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) have lived, worked and thrived in Oregon for over 200 years and have greatly contributed to the state’s history, economy, culture and prosperity. With over 50 cultural groups, the Asian American and Pacific Islander’s diverse population has greatly contributed to Oregon’s rich heritage; and

WHEREAS, May was specifically chosen to recognize AAPI history month because the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the US on May 7, 1843, and because of the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the US on May 10, 1869 since Chinese laborers were instrumental to building the railroad; and

WHEREAS, Asian American and Pacific Islander communities are the fastest growing group in Oregon, growing more than 44% since 2000, according to Census Bureau population estimates. As of July 2018 there were over 260,390 Asian Americans and Native Hawaii and Pacific Islanders a growth of nearly 190,000 Asian Americans and 26,00 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders living in Oregon from the 2010 Census; and

WHEREAS, More than two-thirds of Oregon’s Asian residents were born outside of the United States (69%) the overwhelming majority of the AAPI population are immigrants or the children of immigrants. The AAPI community has the highest proportion of immigrants of any other racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. Approximately two-thirds of Asian Americans and one-sixth of Pacific Islanders were born outside of the United States.

WHEREAS, four percent of Metro’s workforce are employees who identify as Asian American and Pacific Islander; and

WHEREAS, the AAPI community is an essential workforce in Oregon, making up growing numbers of public employees, entrepreneurs, educators, tech industry, food service workers and are keeping our community safe and thriving as doctors, nurses and other health care professionals; and lead the fight to achieve social and political change as advocates, activists and elected officials; and

WHEREAS, Metro will continue to partner, collaborate and invest in community based organizations that serve these communities and address the needs and concerns of its AAPI community and remains committed to seeking solutions to problems they face such as prejudice, discrimination, and violence; specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Metro as an employer, will seek to center experiences of AAPI employees and other communities of color as our essential workforce as we build toward shared prosperity in our economic recovery work during and post COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Metro as a regional leader calls on our national leaders to end scapegoating of immigrant communities and work quickly to enact safe and just comprehensive immigration reform and


an end to inhumane policies separating immigrant families- including removing bans on green card and visas; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Heritage month means Metro takes this time to honor the work and contributions of the AAPI communities in our nation and in our region and continue to create safe and welcoming space in all its properties an programs and services; now therefore,


BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council proclaims May 21, 2020, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and encourage other businesses, organizations, public institutions, and community members to observe this month, learn and teach others about the important contributions of this community.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 21st day of May 2020.

Approved as to Form:



Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney



Lynn Peterson, Council President

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 20-5106, FOR THE PURPOSE OF
PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF MAY ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER
HERITAGE MONTH

Date: May 14, 2020
Department: Council Office
Meeting Date: May 21, 2020

Prepared by: Victor Sin, Council Office
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Presenter: Raahi Reddy

ISSUE STATEMENT

The Metro Council has an opportunity to stand with residents, community partners and local jurisdictions in our region by adopting Resolution No. 20-5106, in recognizing the month of May to honor the contributions and influence of Asian American and Pacific Islander Americans to the nation.

ACTION REQUESTED

Consideration and vote on Resolution No. 20-5106.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Advancing the Metro Council's proclamation of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month from May 1 through May 31, 2020.

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

Council adoption of this resolution will further Metro's commitment to the goals stated in the Strategic Plan to advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, in particular:

- a) Metro meaningfully engages communities of color
- b) Metro hires, trains and promotes a racially diverse workforce
- c) Metro creates safe and welcoming programs, spaces and destinations

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the Metro Council adopt Resolution No. 20-5106.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

1. Known Opposition/support/community feedback

No opposition known at this time.

2. Legal Antecedents

None. This is the first year that the Metro Council is considering adoption of this resolution.

3. Anticipated effects

None.

4. Financial implications

None.

BACKGROUND

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month honors the richness in cultural heritage and traditions while recognizing the contributions of Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) who have lived, worked and thrived in Oregon for over 200 years.

May was specifically chosen to recognize AAPI heritage month because the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States on May 7, 1843, and because of the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the US on May 10, 1869 since Chinese laborers were instrumental to building the railroad. It was annually designated when Congress passed Public Law 102-450 in 1992.

AAPI communities are the fastest growing group in Oregon, growing more than 44% since 2000, according to Census Bureau population estimates. More than 134,000 Asian American and Pacific Islander community members call Greater Portland home.

With over 50 unique cultural groups, AAPI communities are diverse in their experiences but share a history of a longstanding and on-going struggle with assimilation and American identity. The AAPI story is one of a history of written into law exclusion and internment, discriminatory practices, economic exploitation, environmental destruction, colonialism and the "foreigner" identity that continues to have lasting negative effects. Racist stereotypes and model minority myths have also hidden the truth about the hardship and barriers many in the community face. In Oregon, about 14,576 AAPI community members lack health insurance and 24,080 AAPI community members live in poverty.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, we have seen a surge of discriminatory rhetoric and violent attacks against Asian Americans across the country. In Oregon, reports of hate crimes has risen by 366% in the last two months with 20% of these reports coming from AAPI communities.

AAPI Heritage Month for Greater Portland reaffirms Metro's commitment to racial justice in standing with the AAPI community to combat racism and continuing to strengthen relationships while closing the opportunity gap for underserved and underrepresented community members.

ATTACHMENTS

None.