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SENATE MEMORIAL 1

**54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019**

INTRODUCED BY

Mimi Stewart

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING JANUARY 17, 2019 "ASIAN AMERICAN DAY" IN THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, there are more than forty-two thousand Asian Americans living in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans are among the fastest-growing and emerging communities of color in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans in New Mexico come from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Tibet and Vietnam, as well as other locations; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans have worked on the railroads and in agriculture in New Mexico since the nineteenth century and fought bravely in World War I, World War II, the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, the Gulf War and in Afghanistan and Iraq and

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1 have received congressional medals of honor, purple hearts and  
2 other military commendations; and

3 WHEREAS, this year represents the fifty-fourth anniversary  
4 of the passage of the federal Immigration and Nationality Act  
5 of 1965, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson at the  
6 foot of the statue of liberty on October 3, 1965; and

7 WHEREAS, the Chinese American citizens alliance, including  
8 its Albuquerque chapter, the Asian American association of New  
9 Mexico and the Japanese American citizens league thank the New  
10 Mexico legislature for its leadership in the 1882 project,  
11 seeking an apology from congress for passage of a series of  
12 laws, including the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which was not  
13 repealed until 1943; and

14 WHEREAS, prior to passage of the federal Immigration and  
15 Nationality Act of 1965, Asians were greatly affected by the  
16 Chinese Exclusion Act, which restricted immigration of Chinese  
17 laborers and forbade the naturalization of Chinese immigrants;  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Asians also were affected by the federal  
20 Immigration Act of 1917, which designated an "Asiatic barred  
21 zone" of much of eastern Asia and the Pacific islands from  
22 which people could not immigrate to the United States; and

23 WHEREAS, the federal Immigration and Nationality Act of  
24 1965 enabled Asian family reunification, civil rights and equal  
25 protection under the law that had been denied for over sixty

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1 years; and

2 WHEREAS, United States Senate Resolution 201, passed by  
3 unanimous consent, including New Mexico Senators Jeff Bingaman  
4 and Tom Udall, on October 6, 2011, acknowledged that the  
5 exclusion laws were incompatible with a basic founding  
6 principle of the United States: that all persons are created  
7 equal; and

8 WHEREAS, United States Senate Resolution 201 further  
9 expressed deep regret for six decades of legislation  
10 specifically targeting persons of Asian descent, barring them  
11 from naturalization and immigration and denying them civil  
12 rights and equal protection under the law; and

13 WHEREAS, United States House of Representatives Resolution  
14 683, expressing the regret of the house of representatives for  
15 the passage of laws that adversely affected the Chinese in the  
16 United States, including the Chinese Exclusion Act, was  
17 supported by Congressmen Martin T. Heinrich, Steve Pearce and  
18 Ben R. Lujan; the resolution was placed on the suspension  
19 calendar and passed unanimously by the one hundred twelfth  
20 congress by voice vote on June 8, 2012; and

21 WHEREAS, New Mexico Senator Cisco McSorley sponsored and  
22 led the repeal of the Alien Land Law from the constitution of  
23 New Mexico during the first session of the forty-seventh  
24 legislature in 2005, which law prohibited land ownership by all  
25 immigrants ineligible for United States citizenship; and

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1           WHEREAS, the repeal of these laws affirms the  
2 responsibility of congress and the New Mexico legislature to  
3 safeguard the civil rights and constitutional protections of  
4 all Americans, regardless of their race or ethnicity; and

5           WHEREAS, Asian Americans contribute greatly to the economy  
6 of New Mexico with their labor, industry, businesses and  
7 purchasing power; and

8           WHEREAS, Asian Americans are contributing their unique  
9 culture, customs and traditions to the already richly diverse  
10 culture of New Mexico; and

11           WHEREAS, Asians are a strong part of the narrative and  
12 historical context of New Mexico and deserve to have their  
13 humanity in all its shapes and forms be recognized;

14           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
15 OF NEW MEXICO that January 17, 2019 be declared "Asian American  
16 Day" in the senate; and

17           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
18 transmitted to the Asian American association of New Mexico and  
19 the New Mexico Asian family center.