

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 2023 AS ASIAN
AMERICAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER
MONTH**

WHEREAS, the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community is an inherently diverse population, composed of more than 45 distinct ethnicities and more than 100 language dialects, and its members have different experiences, histories and cultures; and

WHEREAS, within the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community there is intersectionality among those who are multiracial, adopted and first generation; and

WHEREAS, the story of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States is an inextricable part of the history of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the first Asian communities to settle in the State were Chinese families in the late 1850s; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970s and 1980s, many Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese families immigrated to the State, escaping the upheaval of the Vietnam War and escaping persecution and the Cambodian Genocide conducted by Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge; and

WHEREAS, the numbers of people who identify as Asian in the State have increased significantly each decade, doubling from 1990 to 2000, increasing by 33% from 2000 to 2009 and increasing by 23.8% for those who identify as Asian alone and by 82.2% for those who identify as Asian in combination from 2010 to 2020; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are playing a significant role in the State's labor force and are employed in all sectors of the State's economy, including work in high-tech industries, service industries, the financial sector, government, health care, biomedical research, public schools and higher education, and Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the State have high civic participation and voter turnout rates; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have made significant contributions to the United States at all levels of the Federal Government and in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the month of May was selected to honor Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders because the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States on May 7, 1843 and the first transcontinental railroad was completed on May 10, 1869 with substantial contributions from Chinese immigrants; and

WHEREAS, nationwide, there was a 167% increase in hate crimes against Asians from 2020 to 2021; and

WHEREAS, there remains much to be done to ensure that Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have access to resources and a voice in the government of the United States and the State and continue to advance in the political landscape; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize May 2023 as Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Month and pay tribute to the contributions of generations of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who have enriched the history of the State and the United States.