

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month Speech Resources: Fact Sheet

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Introduction

May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. It is a time to recognize the contributions and achievements of Americans of Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Island descent.

This guide is designed to assist congressional offices with work related to Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month celebrations. It contains links to census and demographic information, CRS reports, and presidential proclamations, as well as to additional web resources commemorating Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. The guide also provides a list of educational, cultural, and advocacy organizations focusing on the Asian/Pacific American community.

History

President Jimmy Carter declared May 4-10, 1979, Asian Pacific Heritage Week, as called for by the passage of P.L. 95-419. The observance was extended to one month by P.L. 101-283, signed by President George H. W. Bush in 1990. In 1992, Congress passed P.L. 102-450, which permanently designated May as “Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month.” The commemoration also is referred to as “Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month,” as seen in Presidential Proclamation 8369 of 2009.

Legislation

P.L. 102-450 is codified in the *U.S. Code* at 36 U.S.C. §102.

H.Res. 448 (2021), Recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month in May as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

S.Res. 247 (2021), A resolution recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

H.Res. 983 (2020), Recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month in May as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

S.Res. 589 (2020), A resolution recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

H.Res. 401 (2019), Recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month in May as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

S.Res. 218 (2019), A resolution recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

Asian/Pacific American Members of Congress

CRS Report R46705, *Membership of the 117th Congress: A Profile*, by Jennifer E. Manning. The report provides statistical information on current Members of Congress, including the number of Asian/Pacific American Members, by gender and party.

CRS Report R45583, *Membership of the 116th Congress: A Profile*, by Jennifer E. Manning. The report provides statistical information on Members of the 116th Congress, including the number of Asian/Pacific American Members, by gender and party.

U.S. House of Representatives, “Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Congress.” From the Office of the Historian and the Clerk of the House’s Office of Art and Archives, this website, based on the book *Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Congress, 1900-2017*, contains profiles of former and current Asian/Pacific American Members of Congress, essays, images, and photos.

Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC). A nonpartisan, bicameral caucus established in 1994 and currently chaired by Representative Judy Chu.

Sample Congressional Speeches and Recognitions

Members of Congress typically make floor statements, issue press releases, or enter Extensions of Remarks into the *Congressional Record* to recognize federal holidays and observances. The following are some examples from the *Congressional Record*.

Senator Mazie Hirono, “Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 167 (May 27, 2021), pp. S3887-S3888.

Representative Darren Soto, “Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 164 (May 23, 2018) p. H4690.

Representative Jim Costa, “Asian Pacific American Heritage Month,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 162 (May 24, 2017), p. H4511.

Representative Judy Chu, “Asian Pacific American Heritage Month,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 162 (May 24, 2016), p. H2968.

Representative Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen, “Recognizing Asian Pacific American Heritage Month,” Extensions of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 161 (April 26, 2016), p. E588.

Presidential Proclamations

One of the many uses of a presidential proclamation is to ceremoniously honor a group or call attention to certain issues or events. Some recent proclamations commemorating Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, from the *Compilation of Presidential Documents*, are the following:

Presidential Proclamations—Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (2021-)

Presidential Proclamations—Donald J. Trump (2017-2021)

Presidential Proclamations—Barack H. Obama (2010-2017)

Presidential Proclamations—George W. Bush (2002-2009)

Presidential Proclamations—William J. Clinton (1994-2001)

Presidential proclamations and remarks from 1993 to the present are available through the govinfo service on the Government Publishing Office website. Earlier remarks (including selected audio and video clips) are available through The American Presidency Project, established by the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Statistics

Numerous federal and private sources maintain statistics on the Asian/Pacific American population. Three that may be useful are

U.S. Census Bureau, “Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month: May 2021,” facts for features, April 19, 2021.

Abby Budiman and Neil G. Ruiz, “Key facts about Asian Americans, a diverse and growing population,” Pew Research Center, April 29, 2021.

Robert Gebeloff, Denise Lu, and Miriam Jordan, “Inside the Diverse and Growing Asian Population in the U.S.,” *The New York Times*, August 21, 2021.

Commemorating Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

Several federal, state, and local departments and agencies provide resources and host events to celebrate Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. These include the following:

Library of Congress, “Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.” Highlights events, exhibits, collections, and educational materials related to Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. For additional research material, see the “Asian American and Pacific Islander Materials: A Resource Guide.”

National Archives and Records Administration, “Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.” Holds a wealth of material documenting the Asian and Pacific Islanders experience, and highlights those resources online, in programs, and through traditional and social media.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), “Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage and History in the U.S.” The NEH highlights historical readings and educational resources.

National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Department of the Interior, “Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.” The NPS features historic properties listed in the National Register and National Park units “highlighting important aspects of the Asian and Pacific experience in America.”

Programming Librarian, “Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month.” The American Library Association highlights public libraries throughout the United States that celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with activities, programs, displays, entertainment, and more.

Educational, Cultural, and Advocacy Organizations

Numerous nongovernmental organizations provide information on and promote advocacy for Asian/Pacific Americans. Some of these include the following:

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies

Asian Pacific Fund

Federal Asian Pacific American Council

National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (CAPACD)

OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates

UCLA Asian American Studies Center.

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