



GRAND LODGE
ESTABLISHED 1895

美洲同源總會
CHINESE AMERICAN CITIZENS ALLIANCE
~ NATIONAL ~

1044 Stockton Street, San Francisco, California 94108 • Telephone/FAX (415) 829-9332

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Contact: Ed Gor, (713) 320-8889
(Chinese) Faye W. Lee (415) 661-7352

**CHINESE AMERICAN CITIZENS ALLIANCE APPLAUDS
THE INTRODUCTION OF CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTIONS
ADDRESSING CHINESE EXCLUSION LAWS**

Washington, DC– Chinese American Citizens Alliance applauds the bipartisan introductions of H. Res. 282 and S. Res. 201, expressing regret for the passage of discriminatory laws against the Chinese in America, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The passage of this Act marked the first time in our nation’s history that Congress expressly singled out a group of immigrants for denial of citizenship rights.

Organized as a non-partisan, grassroots effort of several prominent national civil rights organizations, including the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Committee of 100, National Council of Chinese Americans and OCA, the 1882 Project focuses on educating lawmakers and the public on the Chinese Exclusion Laws and their impact on our history. These organizations and others similarly aligned will spearhead concerted efforts to foster passage of the resolutions.

Ted Gong, vice president of the Alliance’s Washington DC Lodge and member of the 1882 Project Steering Committee, observed, “Introduction of the resolutions is a substantial milestone. But passing the resolutions will require our effort to convince community members from throughout the United States to call and write their Senators and Representatives. If we do this together and succeed, we will have done something historic. We would have addressed a tremendously harmful wrong, while at the same time affirming the democratic principles that allow a government we believe in to acknowledge and atone for past mistakes.”

Grand President Carolyn H. Chan, also a member of the 1882 Project Steering Committee, added, “We pledge our efforts to the passage of these resolutions to honor the generations who suffered and sacrificed to give us the life that we enjoy today.

The education and public awareness that goes with such an effort will be worth the time and expense. As importantly, the successful passage of the resolutions honors and gives long overdue respect to our fathers and mothers who suffered under the Exclusion Laws and who struggled so that we can have the life we have today and that allows us to extend the promise of America to our children. It would be priceless if Congress could pass these resolutions in time to honor our forebears before the last of their generation passes.”

The resolutions address a series of legislative measures passed between 1879 and 1904 that severely restricted the immigration of Chinese persons to the United States and violated the civil rights of Chinese immigrants already living in America. H. Res. 282 was introduced by **Representatives Judy Chu (D-CA), Judy Biggert (R-IL), Mike Coffman (R-CO), and Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA)**, and S. Res. 201 was introduced by **Senators Scott Brown (R-MA),**



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Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Marco Rubio (R-FL), and Daniel Akaka (D-HI).

“It is long overdue that Congress officially acknowledges these ugly laws, and expresses the sincere regret that Chinese Americans deserve,” said Rep. Chu, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), in a national press conference announcing the introduction of the House resolution. “The last generations of settlers impacted by this legislation are leaving us, giving Congress a short window to make amends to those who were directly affected.”

While the laws were repealed in 1943 in order to strengthen the alliance between the United States and China during World War II, Congress has never formally acknowledged or expressed regret for the pain and suffering endured by Chinese immigrants as a result of the discriminatory laws. In addition to finally providing such acknowledgment, H. Res. 282 and S. Res. 201 recognize the significant contributions of Chinese Americans to the growth and success of the United States.

Rep. Chu was joined by fellow House cosponsors Reps. Biggert and Coffman in a press conference that closed out Asian Pacific American Heritage month on Capitol Hill. The press conference also included in attendance grassroots constituents and national Asian Pacific American community leaders.

“America’s strength has always derived from the principles of our founders and our ongoing struggle to live up to those ideals,” said Rep. Biggert.

Rep. Coffman added that the resolution represented “an important step in acknowledging a great injustice in American history when Congress, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, enacted a series of discriminatory measures against Chinese Americans that not only limited their rights but denied them citizenship.”

The Senate companion resolution was also filed on Thursday by lead cosponsors Senators Brown and Feinstein.

“Today we take a step toward expressing regret over an unfortunate period in U.S. history when Chinese immigrants were discriminated against because of their race,” said Sen. Brown.

“Chinese Americans have been a critical component of our national fabric and have contributed to our country in so many ways. This resolution expresses our nation’s gratitude for their contributions.”

Sen. Feinstein remarked that “[t]he enactment of Chinese exclusionary laws is a shameful part of our history that must not be forgotten. I hope this resolution will serve to inform those who may not be aware of this regrettable chapter in our history, and bring closure to the families of immigrants who lived through this difficult time.”

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The Chinese American Citizens Alliance, established in 1895, is among the oldest civil rights organizations in the United States. Headquartered in San Francisco with chapter/lodges in Albuquerque (NM), Chicago (IL), Greater San Gabriel Valley (CA), Houston (TX), Las Vegas (NV), Los Angeles (CA), Mississippi, Oakland (CA), Orange County (CA), Peninsula (CA), Phoenix (AZ), Portland (OR), Salinas (CA), San Antonio (TX), San Francisco (CA), Seattle (WA), Tucson (AZ), and Washington, D.C., the Alliance addresses issues regarding voter education, political participation, racial discrimination and hate crimes, youth leadership training programs and equal employment opportunities for all Chinese Americans.