



Seeking An Apology to Chinese Americans For Historical Discrimination Preceding and Embodying the Era Of The Chinese Exclusion Acts

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance seeks a Joint Resolution or Bill of Apology to Chinese Americans for the historical racial discrimination, harassment, and persecutions perpetrated upon their predecessors and ancestors during the American era of 1852 to 1960, approximately, which were formally expressed and sanctioned nationally by the immigration laws defined by the Chinese Exclusion Acts from 1882-1943.

This requested national action is inspired by the successful 2009 passage in the California Legislature of like resolutions: Assembly Concurrent Resolution 42, Relative to Chinese Americans in California, and Assembly Concurrent Resolution 76, Relative to Day of Inclusion, as follows excerpted:

42 RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, THE SENATE THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Legislature deeply regrets the enactment of past discriminatory laws and constitutional provisions which resulted in the persecution of Chinese living in California, which forced them to live in fear of unjust prosecutions on baseless charges, and which unfairly prevented them from earning a living. The Legislature regrets these acts and reaffirms its commitment to preserving the rights of all people and celebrating the contributions that all immigrants have made to this state and nation...

76 RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, THE SENATE THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Legislature joins all Californians throughout the State in acknowledging December 17 each year as an annual "Day of Inclusion" in recognition and appreciation of the priceless contributions of all immigrants to the greatness of the United States and especially to our great State, California...

It is to be noted that December 17, 1943, is the day of the passage in Congress of the Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Acts of discrimination and harassment, including massacre and murder, occurred against peoples of Chinese ancestry throughout all the States and territories of the United States, essentially sheltered by the Chinese Exclusion Act and subsequent acts against the immigration and rights of
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Chinese during the period 1882-1943, previously and beyond. The Chinese Exclusion Act remains the first racially-based act of Congress and remains one of the few, if not only such act in the history of the United States, to be based on race or ethnic origin.

In August, 2009, at its biennial national Council, the Chinese American Citizens Alliance declared the following:

WHEREAS, the United States of America has a long tradition of tolerance toward minorities, of promoting ethnic harmony among its citizens, and of correcting wrongs even if it is long overdue;

WHEREAS, the opening of the West was due in large part to the toiling, sacrifice, and persistence of Chinese immigrant laborers under extremely harsh conditions, both physically and socially, with relentless discrimination at its worse;

WHEREAS, due to historical reasons, the California State Constitution in 1879 was revised to contain anti-Chinese provisions, and the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 by the United States Congress, resulting in permanent and irreparable damage to loyal American citizens, who happened to be Chinese Americans, even up to the present;

WHEREAS, the great State of California Legislature has unanimously passed a resolution in July 2009, expressing profound regret for the persecution of Chinese immigrants, and recognizing the contributions of the Chinese in the development of this country;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we must learn from past mistakes, and remedy past injustices, and to honor the numerous and great contributions of the Chinese Americans to the great United States of America, by passing a resolution in the Congress of the United States of America, to apologize for past discrimination against Chinese who helped develop this United States of America.

A measure of that loyal service to the United States was passed in 2008 by the House of Representatives in House Resolution 415, recognizing the loyal service of soldiers of sailors of Chinese and Asian ancestries in the American Civil War. *(05/10)*