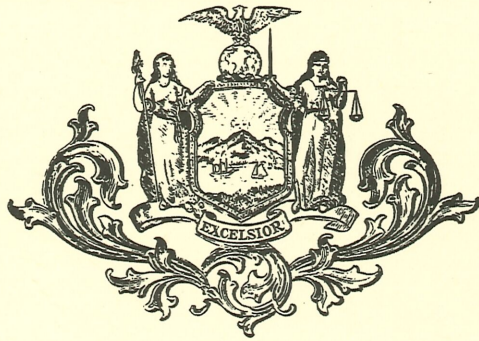




State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, New Yorkers welcome the opportunity to honor our many diverse communities that reflect the profuse cultural richness found in our state and, as home to a thriving population of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, we proudly join in the annual observance of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month that is celebrated each May; and

Whereas, born of respect for one of our nation's most inspiring communities, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month originated in 1978 with the enactment of Public Law 95-419, establishing a seven-day period beginning on May 4, 1979 as "Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week," which stood as such until 1990, when the law was amended to expand the observance to a full month that year, with the month-long observance made permanent on an annual basis in 1992; and

Whereas, the month of May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869, the majority of which was built through the hard work, perseverance, and diligence of Chinese immigrant laborers; today, we celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month to honor all those with ancestral roots in the Asian and Pacific Island region, comprised of the entire continent of Asia and the Pacific island groups of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, uniting people worldwide through their shared pride in heritage and fostering appreciation for their distinct culture, traditions, and history among individuals of all backgrounds; and

Whereas, throughout history, New York State has been a champion of human rights and leader in fighting for the freedom, safety, and protection of all people, while building bridges of understanding and respect within our diverse society; our state is dedicated to a mission to eliminate racial, social, economic, and religious barriers fueled by hatred and ignorance, and we are horrified and disgusted by the escalating number of attacks and acts of violence against the Asian American and Pacific Islander populations and, as we stand with the new leadership of our nation in need of healing, we will confront these critical issues together; and

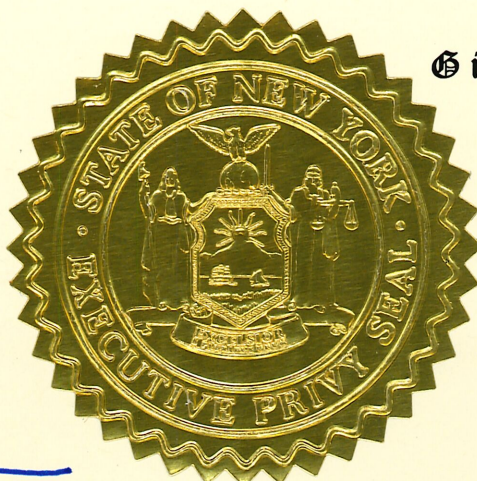
Whereas, as the early epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak, New York State and its people have endured an especially difficult and demanding year – yet human strength and resilience are most visible among our communities, such as the Asian American and Pacific Islander population, which inspires us through their expressions of unity during this global health crisis; we extend special appreciation to the essential and frontline workers of Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage who have given selflessly of themselves, as we work together to get through this pandemic; and

Whereas, our state and nation continue to benefit from Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and, over the years, they have enriched our society and our lives, many of them having established organizations founded upon their common values and desire to improve the world, and these organizations have become valuable resources here in New York State; we are thankful for our Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and will always stand up to defend human rights, combat discrimination, and ensure dignity and equality for people of all races, religions, and nationalities as does every civil society that respects the sanctity of life and that deplores and denounces any form of violence or aggression against our fellow human beings for whom we unequivocally share a common love and concern;

Now, Therefore, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim May 2021 as

ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

in the Empire State.



Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this nineteenth
day of April in the year two thousand twenty-one.

Governor

Secretary to the Governor
Melissa DeRosa