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By:  Button H.R. No. 551

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, May 2021 has been set aside as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month to recognize the accomplishments and wide-ranging contributions of individuals who trace their ancestry to Asia and the Pacific Islands; and

WHEREAS, Originally established by the United States Congress as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Week, the observance celebrates the diverse culture, traditions, and history of people from the Asian continent and the islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia in the Pacific; it was officially expanded into a monthlong celebration in 1992; and

WHEREAS, The month of May was chosen for this commemorative period because of two key events in our nation's history; on May 7, 1843, the first Japanese immigrants arrived, and on May 10, 1869, a workforce largely composed of Chinese laborers completed the Transcontinental Railroad; and

WHEREAS, According to a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, Asian Americans represent approximately 5 percent of the country's population, while about 1.5 million Americans trace their origins to Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands; among U.S. states, Texas has the third-largest Asian American population and the fourth-largest Pacific Islander population; and

WHEREAS, In 2017, the Pew Research Center released a factual analysis highlighting the growth and progress of the Asian American community; the study established Asian Americans as the fastest-growing of all the major racial or ethnic groups in the United States in recent years, with a population increase of 72 percent between 2000 and 2015; the Pew analysis further noted that the Asian American population as a whole had higher than average levels of economic well-being and that more than half of Asian Americans age 25 and older held at least a bachelor's degree; and

WHEREAS, The Lone Star State is home to generations of Americans who take great pride in their family roots in Asia and the Pacific Islands, and this annual observance provides a welcome opportunity to celebrate their significant contributions to the prosperity and cultural vibrancy of our nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby recognize May 2021 as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.