

Proclamation

- Whereas,** in 1978, Congress proclaimed the first Asian Pacific American Heritage Week to take place in May of 1979, during the first ten days of the month; and
- Whereas,** the first ten days of May include two milestones in Asian Pacific American history: arrival of the first Japanese immigrants on May 7, 1843 in the United States; and contributions of Chinese workers to building the transcontinental railroad, which was completed on May 10, 1869; and
- Whereas,** sadly, this time of year also recalls a darker aspect of the Asian and Pacific Islander experience that we must not forget. On May 6, 1882, President Chester Arthur signed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which prevented Chinese laborers from entering the United States and denied Chinese immigrants a pathway to citizenship for more than 60 years; and
- Whereas,** in 1992, Congress designated May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month; and
- Whereas,** the Buena Vista United Methodist Church, the oldest congregation serving the Asian-Pacific Islander community in Alameda, began its service to Japanese immigrants in 1898 and celebrates its 58th Annual Spring Festival Bazaar on May 7, 2017, to which the public is welcome, and will commemorate the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066; and
- Whereas,** during World War II, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, on February 19, 1942, authorizing the Secretary of War to "prescribe military areas ... from which any or all persons may be excluded," and Public Law 503, on March 9, 1942, enforcing his executive order, resulting in approximately 120,000 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry, including Alamedans, being evicted from their homes, and held in internment camps; and
- Whereas,** on August 10, 1988, Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 providing that, "as described by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, a grave injustice was done to both citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry by the evacuation, relocation, and internment of civilians during World War II. As the Commission documents, these actions were carried out without adequate security reasons and without any acts of espionage or sabotage documented by the Commission, and were motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.... For these fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of these individuals of Japanese ancestry, the Congress apologizes on behalf of the Nation;" and
- Whereas,** the U.S. Senate in 2011 and the U.S. House of Representatives in 2012 unanimously condemned the Chinese Exclusion Laws and affirmed Congress' commitment to preserve the civil rights and constitutional protections for all people; and
- Whereas,** Americans who trace their ancestry to Asia and the Pacific Islands have contributed much to our nation and to the City of Alameda with their talents, hard work, and diversity of cultural traditions, languages, and faiths.

Now, therefore be it resolved, that I, Trish Herrera Spencer, Mayor of the City of Alameda, on behalf of the Alameda City Council, do hereby proclaim May 2017 as

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

in the City of Alameda, and encourage Alamedans to learn more about the history and rich contributions of Asian-Pacific American Islanders to the United States of America.



Trish Herrera Spencer
Mayor