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The President

Proclamation 7089 of April 30, 1998

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Like millions of others who left their homelands to come to America, the first Asian and Pacific Island immigrants who arrived here in the 19th century were seeking a better life than the one they left behind. Many were poor; many had suffered oppression; but all were strengthened by a rich culture, an ancient heritage, a belief in freedom's promise, and a willingness to work for their share of the American Dream.

For many, however, that dream was deferred. These courageous men and women from Asia and the Pacific Islands were met in America by prejudice as they strived to make a living and establish a home in their adopted country.

These brave new Americans would prevail over every hardship. Whether working in the gold fields of California, laboring on the sugar and pineapple plantations of Hawaii, constructing the transcontinental railway, or creating their own businesses, Asian and Pacific Americans succeeded in building new lives for themselves and their families.

Today, Asian and Pacific Americans are helping to build a vibrant America. They are leaders in medical and scientific research, in the halls of Congress, in the classrooms of our educational institutions, in business, labor, the arts, and every other human endeavor. They are building economic and technological bridges across the Pacific and beyond, which will ensure America's leadership well into the next millennium. These sons and daughters of Cambodia, China, Indonesia, India, Japan, Korea, Laos, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and so many other Asian and Pacific lands have enriched our national life and culture with their energy and talents, with their commitment to family and community, and with their enduring reverence for freedom.

As we approach the 21st century, Asian and Pacific Americans are playing an increasingly important role in the life of our Nation, helping us to maintain our leadership in the global economy. More important, they are inspiring us to embrace the wider world, to recognize and appreciate the blessing of our great diversity, and to become one America.

To honor the accomplishments of Asian and Pacific Americans and to recognize their many contributions to our Nation, the Congress, by Public Law 102–450, has designated the month of May as ''Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month.''

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 1998 as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

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