

## PROCLAMATION OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION

**WHEREAS,** every May, we celebrate the history, contributions, and achievements of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) across our nation and at the Port of Seattle; and

**WHEREAS,** the annual Asian and Pacific American Heritage Week was first introduced by Congressmen Norm Mineta and Frank Horton in 1977, and transformed over the following decades to a month-long celebration known as APA Heritage Month, which was officially designated in 1990 with the passing of Public Law 101-283; and

**WHEREAS,** despite discrimination such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Immigration Act of 1924, and exclusionary laws and policies that prevented access to naturalization, education, jobs, housing, and public services, each successive generation of AANHPI's helped build our great nation's infrastructure and economy, and defended our democracy in times of crisis. AANHPI have laid railroad tracks, tilled fields, started businesses, cared for our infirm, and served honorably in the military to protect our freedom; and

**WHEREAS,** we celebrate the achievement of Vice President Kamala Harris, the first person of South Asian descent to hold the second highest office in the nation, and who is blazing a trail for AANHPI communities, and women in general, and that AANHPI are part of the American fabric and higher aspirations are achievable; and

**WHEREAS,** we also celebrate the achievements of our Port of Seattle Commissioners Sam Cho and Toshiko Grace Hasegawa, who are of Asian ancestry, paving the way for future AANHPI leaders; and

**WHEREAS,** despite the many achievements, disparities still exist when Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Communities are disaggregated on a racial and ethnic basis, and we must strive to disaggregate information in order to identify these disparities and work to close the equity gaps that continue to exist among AANHPI communities; and

**WHEREAS,** we recognize the valuable contributions and many sacrifices our diverse AANHPI community members have made to our nation and to the Port of Seattle,

as we remain cognizant of the continued struggles faced by our AANHPI communities, such as an immigration system in need of comprehensive reform and systemic barriers to economic justice, health equity, educational attainment, personal safety, and “glass ceilings” in the workplace; and

**WHEREAS,** AANHPI communities have long histories in the Pacific Northwest and together make up the largest non-white ethnic group in King County, refuting the perception that they are “perpetual foreigners;” and

**WHEREAS,** in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen an increase in anti-Asian sentiment and violent acts towards people of Asian descent, including elders. March 16 marked the one-year anniversary of the 2021 Atlanta Spa shooting where six Asian American women – two of Chinese descent and four of Korean descent – were targeted because of their ethnicity; and

**WHEREAS,** the Covid-19 pandemic disparately impacted Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander and COFA Islander communities, who experienced significantly higher incidence of contraction, hospitalization and death, and experienced significant workplace discrimination; and

**WHEREAS,** the recognition of May as Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is an important and meaningful step in honoring the history and contributions of AANHPI people and Port employees.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** the Port of Seattle Commission hereby commemorates May as Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month; acknowledges the contributions of the “Home of Asian and Pacific Islander” (HAPI), Port of Seattle employee resource group; and commits to demonstrating an inclusive and welcoming environment for AANHPI people and promoting racial equity.

Proclaimed by the Port of Seattle Commission this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

Port of Seattle Commission

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