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**ACR-121 Chinese American Day.** (2019-2020)

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**Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 121**

**CHAPTER 172**

Relative to Chinese American Day.

[ Filed with Secretary of State September 26, 2019. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

ACR 121, Chen. Chinese American Day.

This measure would designate October 23, 2019, as Chinese American Day in California to highlight the important historical contributions of Chinese Americans to California and to the United States of America.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, In January 1785, the American merchant ship Empress of China set sail for America after becoming the first American ship to reach China and successfully trade with the people of China; and

WHEREAS, On August 9, 1785, four Chinese sailors onboard the American merchant ship Pallas landed in Baltimore, Maryland, and became the first Chinese nationals to land in America; and

WHEREAS, In 1834, Afong Moy, age 14, became the first female Chinese immigrant to America; and

WHEREAS, Between 1863 and 1869, over 12,000 Chinese laborers helped build the Transcontinental Railroad, which is the greatest infrastructure project in the United States of America in the Nineteenth Century; and

WHEREAS, During the Civil War, 58 Chinese Americans, some with Anglicized names, served in the military, both in the United States Army and United States Navy. Most notably, Joseph Pierce from Canton, China, served with the 14th Connecticut Infantry, which repulsed Pickett's Charge at the Battle of Gettysburg, and John Tommy made headlines in both the North and South before giving his life to preserve the Union at the Battle of Gettysburg; and

WHEREAS, Despite unfair treatment in the years following the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, many Chinese Americans worked hard and contributed to society; and

WHEREAS, Hundreds of Chinese Americans served in the United States military during World War I; and

WHEREAS, An estimated 20,000 Chinese Americans served in all branches of the United States military during World War II. The most notable among them was Army Captain Francis B. Wai who gave his life in the Battle of Leyte Gulf in the Philippines Campaign. He was initially awarded a Distinguished Service Cross, which was upgraded in 2000 to a Medal of Honor after a review by the Army; and

WHEREAS, Chinese Americans continued to serve our country in all armed conflicts since World War II; and

WHEREAS, With diligence, loyalty, a sense of gratitude, and an enduring belief in the American dream, Chinese immigrants contributed to American society in many areas, including academia, science, technology, education, business, finance, arts, entertainment, and public service. Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu, who worked on the Manhattan Project, helped bring about the Atomic Age. Dr. Chen-Ning Yang and Dr. Tsung-Dao Lee won the 1957 Nobel Prize in Physics. Elaine Chao, the first Chinese American to serve as a cabinet-level advisor to the President of the United States, served as the Secretary of Labor and is currently serving as the Secretary of Transportation. Gary Locke served as the Governor of Washington, United States Secretary of Commerce, and United States Ambassador to China; and

WHEREAS, As the Chinese American community continues to work diligently to make California and the United States of America a better place, Chinese Americans must instill in younger generations proper appreciation for the courage and values of their forefathers, a deep sense of their roots, and pride in their own cultural heritage so that they may better contribute to the great State of California, which is rich with ethnic and cultural diversity; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby proclaims October 23, 2019, as Chinese American Day in California; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.