
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 172 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY STEPHENS, KIM, MALAGARI, QUINN, DONATUCCI, TOOHL,
KORTZ, HILL-EVANS, MURT, KINSEY, BARRAR, HOHENSTEIN,
HANBIDGE, SCHLEGEL CULVER, SCHLOSSBERG, MILLARD, CALTAGIRONE
AND DIGIROLAMO, MARCH 25, 2019

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MARCH 25, 2019

A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the centennial of the March First Movement and
2 First Korean Congress and noting their historic roles in
3 Korea's nationwide resistance against imperial Japan.

4 WHEREAS, Early 20th century Korean nationalists spurred
5 independence movements in India, China, Philippines and other
6 colonized countries and laid the foundation for provisional
7 governments and governments-in-exile and, in 1948, the First
8 Republic of Korea; and

9 WHEREAS, On March 1, 1919, 33 activists assembled at a
10 restaurant in Seoul to adopt a recently drafted Korean
11 Declaration of Independence; and

12 WHEREAS, The declaration was publicly read that day at
13 Seoul's Pagoda Park and other appointed places; and

14 WHEREAS, Japanese colonial officials received a written
15 version; and

16 WHEREAS, As translated, the declaration begins:

17 We hereby declare that Korea is an independent state and

1 that Koreans are a self-governing people. We proclaim it
2 to the nations of the world in affirmation of the
3 principle of the equality of all nations, and we proclaim
4 it to our posterity, preserving in perpetuity the right
5 of national survival;

6 and

7 WHEREAS, Approximately 2 million Koreans joined in
8 widespread, nonviolent mass demonstrations; and

9 WHEREAS, The following spring, Japanese military forces
10 brutally suppressed the citizen-led campaign known as the March
11 First Movement; and

12 WHEREAS, More than 7,000 demonstrators were killed, 16,000
13 wounded and 46,000 arrested during this period of Korean
14 resistance; and

15 WHEREAS, The First Korean Congress convened in Philadelphia
16 from April 14 through 16, 1919, to broadly declare Korean
17 nationalism and activate supporters in the United States; and

18 WHEREAS, Dr. Philip Jaisohn, a Korean political refugee who
19 settled in Delaware County in the 1880s, worked to establish
20 Philadelphia as a central overseas base; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Jaisohn and other activists recognized
22 Philadelphia as a symbol of freedom for oppressed people and a
23 site where the First and Second Congresses of the United States
24 drafted foundational documents; and

25 WHEREAS, The Korean Information Bureau and a League of
26 Friends of Korea chapter later formed in Philadelphia; and

27 WHEREAS, From April 12 through 14, 2019, the Korean-American
28 community is coming together in Philadelphia to celebrate the
29 centennial of the March First Movement and First Korean
30 Congress; and

1 WHEREAS, The First Korean Congress Centennial Celebration
2 Committee is presenting events recognizing this milestone and
3 the friendship between Korea and the United States; and

4 WHEREAS, The Korean American Association of Greater
5 Philadelphia, Philip Jaisohn Memorial Foundation, Council of
6 Korean Churches of Greater Philadelphia and Philadelphia Chapter
7 of the National Unification Advisory Council of the Republic of
8 Korea are represented on the committee; and

9 WHEREAS, The Korean Senior Citizens Association of Greater
10 Philadelphia, Syngman Rhee Memorial Foundation, Mid-Atlantic
11 Chapter of the National Association for Korean Schools, Korean
12 American Association of Southern New Jersey, Philadelphia
13 Chapter of the Young Korean Academy (Hung Sa Dahn), Greater
14 Philadelphia Korean American Association of Five Northern
15 Provinces, Korean Veterans Association of the Philadelphia
16 Region and Delaware Korean American Association are also
17 represented on the committee; and

18 WHEREAS, A symposium on the First Korean Congress,
19 reenactment of a First Korean Congress-led march, centennial
20 concert at Church of the Holy Trinity in Rittenhouse Square and
21 closing celebration are slated; and

22 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives express sincere
23 appreciation for the acts of nonviolent resistance and ideals of
24 independence associated with the rise of Korean nationalism; and

25 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives further recognize the
26 contributions of Korean Americans in our Commonwealth and
27 beyond; therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the
29 centennial of the March First Movement and First Korean Congress
30 and note their historic roles in Korea's nationwide resistance

1 against imperial Japan; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to

3 the First Korean Congress Centennial Celebration Committee.