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**1882 PROJECT APPLAUDS THE INTRODUCTION OF
CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTIONS ADDRESSING
CHINESE EXCLUSION LAWS**

WASHINGTON, DC – The 1882 Project applauds the bipartisan introductions of H. Res. 282 and S. Res. 201, expressing regret for the passage of discriminatory laws against the Chinese in America, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The passage of this Act marked the first time in our nation’s history that Congress expressly singled out a group of immigrants for denial of citizenship rights.

“The 1882 Project deeply appreciates the leadership and commitment from the resolutions’ cosponsors and will work tirelessly to help Congress pass these resolutions,” said Michael Lin, Chair of the 1882 Project Steering Committee. “We are dedicated to educating the American public on the discriminatory effects that the Chinese Exclusion Laws had on other Asian Pacific American communities in the years following the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and of their significance to all Americans.”

The resolutions address a series of legislative measures passed between 1879 and 1904 that severely restricted the immigration of Chinese persons to the United States and violated the civil rights of Chinese immigrants already living in America. H. Res. 282 was introduced by **Representatives Judy Chu (D-CA), Judy Biggert (R-IL), Mike Coffman (R-CO), and Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA)**, and S. Res. 201 was introduced by **Senators Scott Brown (R-MA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Marco Rubio (R-FL), and Daniel Akaka (D-HI)**.

“It is long overdue that Congress officially acknowledges these ugly laws, and expresses the sincere regret that Chinese Americans deserve,” said Rep. Chu, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), in a national press conference announcing the introduction of the House resolution. “The last generation of settlers impacted by this legislation are leaving us, giving Congress a short window to make amends to those who were directly affected.”

While the laws were repealed in 1943 in order to strengthen the alliance between the United States and China during World War II, Congress has never formally acknowledged or expressed regret for the pain and suffering endured by Chinese immigrants as a result of the discriminatory laws. In addition to finally providing such acknowledgment, H. Res. 282 and S. Res. 201

recognize the significant contributions of Chinese Americans to the growth and success of the United States.

Rep. Chu was joined by fellow House cosponsors Reps. Biggert and Coffman in a press conference that closed out Asian Pacific American Heritage month on Capitol Hill. The press conference also included in attendance grassroots constituents and national Asian Pacific American community leaders.

“America’s strength has always derived from the principles of our founders and our ongoing struggle to live up to those ideals,” said Rep. Biggert.

Rep. Coffman added that the resolution represented “an important step in acknowledging a great injustice in American history when Congress, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, enacted a series of discriminatory measures against Chinese Americans that not only limited their rights but denied them citizenship.”

The Senate companion resolution was also filed on Thursday, spearheaded by Senators Brown and Feinstein.

“Today we take a step toward expressing regret over an unfortunate period in U.S. history when Chinese immigrants were discriminated against because of their race,” said Sen. Brown. “Chinese Americans have been a critical component of our national fabric and have contributed to our country in so many ways. This resolution expresses our nation’s gratitude for their contributions.”

Sen. Feinstein remarked that “[t]he enactment of Chinese exclusionary laws is a shameful part of our history that must not be forgotten. I hope this resolution will serve to inform those who may not be aware of this regrettable chapter in our history, and bring closure to the families of immigrants who lived through this difficult time.”

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The 1882 Project is a nonpartisan, grassroots effort spearheaded by the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, the Committee of 100, the Japanese American Citizens League, the National Council of Chinese Americans, and OCA. The Project’s larger mission is to educate the American public about the history and consequences of the Chinese Exclusion Laws, their extended impact on persons of Asian descent, and their continuing significance for all Americans. For more information on the 1882 Project, please visit www.1882project.org.