File #: 20-2522, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY AS ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

WHEREAS, the month of May commemorates the rich and diverse culture of Asian American Pacific Islanders, and the many contributions they have made to both Cook County, and our country as a whole; and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a joint resolution designating the annual celebration of Asian/Pacific Heritage Week during the first 10 days of May; in May 1990, the holiday was further expanded when Congress designated May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, the more than 300,000 Asian American residents of Cook County have contributed significantly to the development of our neighborhoods and cities; and

WHEREAS, Asian, along with Irish immigrants and African Americans among others, constructed and operated the transcontinental railroads that passed through Cook County and provided the basis for our county's economic strength as a transportation center; and

WHEREAS, Cook County is home to Asian American veterans who fought heroically for our nation through many of her conflicts in the 20th century, including Filipinos who, alongside soldiers from Maywood Illinois, survived the Bataan Death March in the Philippines during World War II, and Japanese Americans of the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Teams who served our nation with the highest military honors despite being designated for internment in American concentration camps on the west coast; and

WHEREAS, Asian American immigrants have made -and continued to make- tremendous efforts in professional fields such as medicine, engineering, education, accounting and chemistry; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans, both native born and naturalized immigrants, are making strides in a wider range of professional fields including government, the arts, journalism, the legal profession, athletics, international trade, higher learning and the entertainment industry; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans are among the ranks of elected and appointed officials at the local municipalities, city, county, state and national levels, and are helping to share the future of our nation and society; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Joseph Tecson, former Cook County Board Commissioner, served as the first Asian American Cook County Commissioner from 1977-1982; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans are in key positions in the news, entertainment and social media industries as co-founders of firms such as Yahoo, YouTube, Sun Microsystems; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans are a major force in various business and education sectors; and

WHEREAS, Asian American athletes, and Asian athletes in America are excelling individually and are leading national sports teams and American professional sports teams to Olympic medals and world championships; and

WHEREAS, Cook County employs the largest number and percentage of Asian Americans in any governmental workforce in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Cook County values the diversity of the Asian American community and has sought out the advice of Asian Americans in Cook County and has convened the first ever, Cook County Asian American Advisory Council; and

WHEREAS, Asian American Heritage Month provides Cook County and opportunity to restate its firm stand against any and all discrimination on the basis of race, creed or national origin of Cook County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the County of Cook is proud to recognize the leadership and contributions of Asian Pacific Americans throughout our history; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners, along with the entire Board of Commissioners, do hereby recognize May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, in recognition of the contributions made to our economy and culture by Asian Pacific Americans, and in tribute to all Asian Pacific Americans who call Cook County home.