H-1028.1

HOUSE BILL 1759

State of Washington   **68th Legislature**   **2023 Regular Session**

By Representatives Santos and Barnard

1   AN ACT Relating to establishing January of each year as Chinese
2 American month; adding a new section to chapter 43.117 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5   NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature intends to designate a
6 time of year to formally remember and recognize the contributions of
7 Chinese Americans and finds that January of each year is a relevant
8 and appropriate time for such recognition. The legislature finds that
9 the California gold rush began on January 24, 1848, which brought
10 thousands of people to the area, approximately 30 percent of whom
11 were Chinese immigrants. With the immigration to the west as a result
12 of the gold rush, Washington became home to many Chinese immigrants.
13 Chinese immigrants contributed greatly to Washington's economy as
14 miners and workers in the salmon canning industry. The Chinese
15 population in Washington also grew when construction of the Northern
16 Pacific Railroad transcontinental line began in 1871, which ran from
17 Wisconsin and Minnesota to Washington and Oregon, as many laborers
18 who were recruited to work on the railroad were Chinese.
19   The legislature also finds that designating January of each year
20 as a time to recognize the contributions of Chinese Americans is
21 relevant in acknowledging the contributions of notable early Chinese

settlers. Goon Dip was well known as a visionary, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and is said to be the most influential Chinese immigrant in the Pacific Coast during the early 20th century. Goon Dip created a garment industry in Portland, Oregon where he taught Chinese men who were disabled and unable to perform manual labor how to sew. Goon Dip later expanded his business ventures to Seattle when in January 1909, the Chinese government appointed him as honorary consul for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Washington's first world's fair, held in Seattle. Anticipating large crowds for the fair, Goon Dip built the Milwaukee Hotel at 662 King Street, which would house hundreds of tourists. Goon Dip was also influential in persuading Chinese businessmen to move Chinatown away from the Elliott Bay tidelands to the area around the new King Street Station at 2nd Avenue and Jackson Street. After his role as honorary consul during the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Goon Dip was named permanent consul and served under both the Manchu dynasty and the Kuomintang. Goon Dip died on September 12, 1933, at the Milwaukee Hotel and is buried in the family plot in Lake View cemetery in Seattle. January is also the birth month of notable contemporary Chinese Americans in the state, including Gary Locke, who graduated from Seattle's Franklin High School and was the first Chinese American elected as Governor in the continental United States, the first Chinese American Secretary of Commerce, and the first Chinese American ambassador to China.

The legislature finds that these and other contributions to the state's rich history and economy by Chinese Americans is worthy of recognition and celebration. The legislature further finds that teaching this history in schools will help to commemorate the important achievements of Chinese Americans.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.117 RCW to read as follows:

(1) January of each year will be known as Chinese American month. Each January is designated as a time for people of this state to commemorate the contributions of Chinese Americans to the history and heritage of Washington state and the United States.

(2) Public schools are encouraged to designate time for appropriate activities in commemoration of Chinese American month and

1 the lives, history, achievements, and contributions of Chinese
2 Americans.

--- END ---