



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

Proclamation

A PROCLAMATION ESTABLISHING MAY 2026 AS ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

WHEREAS, the United States has long recognized May as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, celebrating the extraordinary contributions, rich cultural heritage, and diverse traditions of Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander descent; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders represent more than 30 countries and ethnic groups, speaking over 100 languages, and have strengthened our nation through their achievements in arts, sciences, business, medicine, education, government, and military service; and

WHEREAS, the month of May was chosen because it commemorates the immigration of the first Japanese citizen, Nakahama Manjiro, to the United States on May 7, 1843, and is also the anniversary of the May 10, 1869 completion of the first Transcontinental Railroad, built with the back-breaking labor of nearly 20,000 Chinese immigrants whose vital contributions were long overlooked in the official record; and

WHEREAS, the AAPI population in Arapahoe County is 42,444 Asian Americans and 2,039 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders — the highest numbers in Colorado— enriching every region, profession, and sector of our County; and

WHEREAS, in celebrating AAPI communities, we must also recognize the discrimination, exclusion, and outright violence they continue to face. Throughout our history, AAPIs have been targeted by senseless violence, disenfranchisement, efforts to restrict immigration, and other xenophobic policies at the federal, state, and local level; and

WHEREAS, at a time when federal recognition of AAPI Heritage Month was rescinded in January 2025, local governments and communities bear a special responsibility to affirm the dignity, history, and belonging of AAPI residents — and to ensure that the erasure of recognition at one level of government is met with renewed commitment at another; and

WHEREAS, we honor the courage and resilience of AAPI communities who have overcome prejudice and adversity throughout our history, from the Chinese Exclusion Act and Japanese American incarceration to the surge of anti-Asian violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, and who have met each injustice not with retreat, but with deeper commitment to this nation's founding ideals; and

WHEREAS, in a time when many seek to erase the more troubling chapters of the American story, the lessons of history remind us that ignoring past transgressions puts us at risk of repeating them; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim May 2026 as **ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH** and call upon all residents to celebrate the immeasurable contributions of AAPI communities, to learn about their histories, to stand firmly against discrimination and hatred in all its forms, and to commit to the principles of inclusion, understanding, and respect for all people.

Commissioner Carrie Warren-Gully

Commissioner Jessica Campbell

Commissioner Leslie Summey
Chair of the Board

Commissioner Jeff Baker
Chair Pro Tem

Commissioner Rhonda Fields