

RCW 43.117.130 Chinese American/Americans of Chinese descent history month. (1) With the rise of economic opportunity in America and other parts of the world in the 19th century, the Chinese diaspora is now one of the largest in the world. As a result, many of those who are, or whose ancestors were, part of the Chinese diaspora have varied perspectives, experiences, and approaches in how they preserve their identity as Chinese Americans and Americans of Chinese descent.

(2) January of each year will be designated as a time for people of this state to commemorate the contributions of Chinese Americans and Americans of Chinese descent to the history and heritage of Washington state and shall be designated as Chinese American/Americans of Chinese descent history month.

(3) Public schools are encouraged to designate time in January for appropriate activities in commemoration of the lives, history, achievements, and contributions of Chinese Americans and Americans of Chinese descent. [2023 c 357 s 2.]

Intent—Findings—2023 c 357: "The legislature intends to designate a time of year to formally remember and recognize the contributions of Chinese Americans and finds that January of each year is a relevant and appropriate time for such recognition. The legislature finds that the California gold rush began on January 24, 1848, which brought thousands of people to the area, approximately 30 percent of whom were Chinese immigrants. With the immigration to the west as a result of the gold rush, Washington became home to many Chinese immigrants. Chinese immigrants contributed greatly to Washington's economy as miners and workers in the salmon canning industry. The Chinese population in Washington also grew when construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad transcontinental line began in 1871, which ran from Wisconsin and Minnesota to Washington and Oregon, as many laborers who were recruited to work on the railroad were Chinese.

The legislature also finds that designating January of each year as a time to recognize the contributions of Chinese Americans is relevant in acknowledging the contributions of notable early Chinese settlers. Goon Dip was well-known as a visionary, philanthropist, and 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." [2023 c 357 s 1.]