

STATE OF ILLINOIS



Proclamation

WHEREAS, over 803,000 Illinoisans of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) heritage have strengthened Illinois through their leadership and resilience and make up the fastest-growing racial demographic in the state; and,

WHEREAS, AAPI individuals, families, communities, organizations, and businesses are an important part of our society in Illinois and have made essential contributions to our economy; and,

WHEREAS, there are over 23,000 AAPI-owned businesses in Illinois, making up nine percent of all businesses with employees in the state while there are over 87,000 AAPI-solopreneurs in Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, inflammatory rhetoric and xenophobic violence, incidents of anti-Asian bias and harassment have put AAPI individuals, families, communities, organizations, and businesses at risk and the State of Illinois condemns and denounces acts of racism, xenophobia, and intolerance against AAPI communities; and,

WHEREAS, AAPI-owned businesses nationwide have been targeted disproportionately and suffered significant losses during the COVID-19 pandemic and as part of our ongoing efforts to support minority communities hardest hit by the pandemic, the State of Illinois provided more than \$130 million in awards to nearly 3,600 AAPI-owned businesses, accounting for 19 percent of the total funds throughout the state since 2020; and,

WHEREAS, to address systemic and underlying challenges facing the AAPI community, the State of Illinois will continue to advance policies and programs centered around equitable access to opportunities and resources, including the newly created position of AAPI Business Development Manager in the Office of Minority Economic Empowerment at the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, to expand targeted outreach and advocacy supporting AAPI-owned businesses; and,

WHEREAS, Illinois has demonstrated its commitment to building a business community that is equitable, business-friendly, and supports businesses and entrepreneurs in every corner of the state and acknowledges the extraordinary efforts and contributions of the AAPI community;

THEREFORE, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim May 2024 as **Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month** in Illinois.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,

this THIRTEENTH day of MAY, in

the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and

TWENTY-FOUR, and of the State of Illinois,

two hundred and FIFTH.



Alexi Giannouli
SECRETARY OF STATE

JB Pritzker
GOVERNOR