

families who share in their sacred sacrifice.

#### ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise today, in honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Every year, throughout the month of May, the people of the United States join together to pay tribute to the contributions and achievements of generations of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, AAPI, who have enriched the history, culture, and traditions of this country.

Today, there are approximately 23,000,000 AAPIs in the United States, representing more than 45 distinct ethnic groups and speaking over 100 language dialects. As the fastest growing minority population, the AAPI community continues to have an increasing impact on our national discourse. There are now 20 AAPI members of Congress, and a record number of AAPIs are serving in State and Territorial legislatures across the Nation.

This year, as we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month amid a pandemic, we recognize the over 2,000,000 AAPIS working on the frontlines as healthcare professionals, first responders, transit operators, and in supermarkets and other essential service industries. Every day, these heroic individuals risk their lives to protect the health and safety of Americans during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

We also reflect broadly on the achievements and contributions of the AAPI community in the areas of politics and government, education and the arts, music, writing and literature, sports, business, medicine, and law. We pay tribute to the leaders before us, who overcame great adversity and paved the way forward.

We honor great statesmen like Daniel Kahikina Akaka, the first person of Native Hawaiian ancestry to serve in the U.S. Senate. Throughout his nearly four decades in Congress, Senator Akaka worked to change the public's perception of the AAPI community and helped to preserve and restore Hawaiian language, culture, and traditions. Although he recently passed away, Senator Akaka's spirit as a true champion of aloha endures.

We also remember influential labor organizers like Larry Itliong, Peter Velasco, and Philip Vera Cruz, who in 1965, led the Filipino-American farmworkers to strike alongside Cesar Chavez, demanding better pay, benefits, and working conditions. The Delano Grape Strike was one of the most pivotal civil rights and labor movements in American history. It opened doors for immigrants and people of color and inspired countless others to stand together and demand their rights.

Around the time that the Filipino-American grape workers began their strike in 1965, Congress enacted the Im-

migration and Nationality Act, INA, also known as the Hart-Celler Act. This landmark legislation overturned discriminatory race- and nationality-based immigration policies that previously barred immigration from Asia. The INA established new policies based on reuniting families and attracting skilled professionals and helped refugees fleeing violence or unrest, notably those escaping war-torn Southeast Asia. By opening the United States to immigration from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the INA's enduring legacy includes diversifying the demographic makeup of our country.

This month, I introduced a resolution in honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. While we commemorate the contributions of the AAPI community, this pandemic has tested the strength of our nation. Anti-Asian racism and attacks are on the rise, stoked by those in the highest levels of government. This recent surge in discrimination and hate crimes against the AAPI community demonstrates how much work must still be done to achieve full equality. As a country of immigrants, we must now, more than ever, embrace the rich diversity of our communities, and stand up for the civil rights and equal treatment of all Americans.

#### CONFIRMATIONS OF DAVID A. WRIGHT AND CHRISTOPHER T. HANSON

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today, the Senate confirmed the nominations of David Wright and Christopher Hanson to serve as Commissioners on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NRC. While I am pleased that these nominees will provide the NRC with a full Commission, I remain deeply concerned with Mr. Wright's history of strongly supporting efforts to move the Yucca Mountain repository forward and oppose his confirmation today.

Shortly after Mr. Wright joined the Commission in 2018, the State of Nevada called for Mr. Wright to recuse himself from matters pertaining to Yucca Mountain licensing. He refused. Mr. Wright is on the record calling for the "expeditious implementation of the Yucca Mountain program" and founded the Yucca Mountain Task Force. His refusal to recuse himself denies Nevada its right to an unbiased Commissioner on the NRC and furthers the distrust that plagues the Nation's management of nuclear waste.

More than 30 years ago, Nevada was thrown into the center of the nuclear waste debate, when Congress dismissed the siting process it established in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 and named Yucca Mountain the sole nuclear waste repository for the Nation over the strong objections of Nevadans. The site is physically unsuitable and puts at risk the safety, security, and economic well-being of the State. The decision broke the trust of the Amer-

ican people in the government's ability to responsibly manage nuclear waste. The reappointment of Mr. Wright to the NRC does nothing to regain the trust of Nevadans or establish confidence in nuclear waste repository licensing processes.

Commissioners serving on the independent agency must be neutral and unbiased in order to ensure confidence in the guidance, regulations, and determinations issued by the NRC. Mr. Wright can make the decision to recuse himself from Yucca Mountain licensing matters, and it is my hope that he will chose to do so to bring integrity to the Commission and to restore the rights of the State of Nevada.

I also acknowledge the importance of Mr. Hanson being confirmed to the NRC today. He will help bring balance to the Commission with his decades of experience on nuclear energy and waste issues.

I will continue to work with my colleagues in the Senate to ensure Congress continues to utilize its authority to oversee the work of the Commission and hope all Commissioners will approach all matters, including those that pertain to Yucca Mountain licensing, without preexisting bias and conflicts of interest.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### NATIONAL DAY OF AWARENESS FOR MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today the Senate passes my annual resolution to designate May 5 as National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls, for the fifth year in a row. We hope to continue drawing attention to this crisis as we work together to find a solution.

I would also like to commend the work that the Trump administration has done to address this crisis. In particular, they have established the Lady Justice Program at the Department of the Interior and issued a proclamation on November 26, 2019, to sustain public attention on this ongoing and important situation.●

##### TRIBUTE TO WILLIE K

• Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, with the passing of Willie K, Hawaii has lost a music legend. Through his raw talent and unmatched musicianship, Willie K blazed a trail that redefined music in Hawaii and across the country.

Born William Kahaialii—and known affectionately as "Uncle Willie" throughout our State—Willie K wouldn't be tied down to any single genre or instrument. Instead, he did it all. Willie could play or sing almost anything.

Willie's love for music came from his family. Raised in a family of musicians in Lahaina, Willie started performing at just 8 years old. Taught by his father and renowned guitarist, Manu