

(4) establish the voluntary grant and technical assistance program in accordance with subsection (e).

(c) **COORDINATION.**—In establishing the Program, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall consult with—

(1) the heads of Federal agencies, including—

(A) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(B) the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and

(2) the Governor of each State in which restoration efforts will be carried out pursuant to the Program.

(d) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of the Program include—

(1) coordinating restoration and conservation activities among Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities and conservation partners to address white oak restoration priorities;

(2) improving and regenerating white oak and upland oak forests and the wildlife habitat such forests provide;

(3) carrying out coordinated restoration and conservation activities that lead to the increased growth of species of white oak in native white oak regions on Federal, State, Tribal, and private land;

(4) facilitating strategic planning to maximize the resilience of white oak systems and habitats under changing climate conditions;

(5) engaging the public through outreach, education, and citizen involvement to increase capacity and support for coordinated restoration and conservation activities for species of white oak; and

(6) increasing scientific capacity to support the planning, monitoring, and research activities necessary to carry out such coordinated restoration and conservation activities.

(e) **GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—To the extent that funds are available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall establish a voluntary grant and technical assistance program (referred to in this subsection as the “grant program”) to achieve the purposes of the Program described in subsection (d).

(2) **ADMINISTRATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (referred to in this subsection as the “Foundation”) to manage and administer the grant program.

(B) **FUNDING.**—After the Secretary enters into a cooperative agreement with the Foundation under subparagraph (A), the Foundation shall—

(i) for each fiscal year, receive amounts to carry out this subsection in an advance payment of the entire amount on October 1, or as soon as practicable thereafter, of that fiscal year;

(ii) invest and reinvest such amounts for the benefit of the grant program; and

(iii) otherwise administer the grant program to support partnerships between the public and private sectors in accordance with this section.

(3) **APPLICATION OF NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHMENT ACT.**—Amounts received by the Foundation to carry out the grant program shall be subject to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.), excluding section 10(a) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3709(a)).

#### **SEC. 7. WHITE OAK TREE NURSERY SHORTAGES.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall develop and implement a national strategy to increase

the capacity of Federal, State, Tribal, and private tree nurseries to address the nationwide shortage of white oak tree seedlings.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be based on the best available science and data, as established by land-grant colleges and universities that have demonstrated—

(A) scientific expertise relating to white oak;

(B) the ability to rapidly transfer technologies to the stove industry;

(C) geographic proximity to concentrated areas of white oak; and

(D) support for regional economic development; and

(2) identify and address—

(A) regional shortages of bareroot and container white oak tree seedlings;

(B) regional white oak reforestation opportunities and the seedling supply necessary to fulfill those opportunities;

(C) opportunities to enhance white oak seedling diversity and close gaps in seed inventories; and

(D) barriers to expanding, enhancing, or creating new infrastructure to increase nursery capacity for white oak tree seedlings.

#### **SEC. 8. WHITE OAK RESEARCH.**

(a) **RESEARCH.**—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with a land-grant college or university to conduct research on—

(1) white oak genes with resistance and stress tolerance;

(2) white oak trees that exhibit vigor for the purpose of increasing survival and growth;

(3) establishing a diverse white oak seed bank capable of responding to stressors;

(4) providing a sustainable supply of white oak seedlings and genetic resources;

(5) reforestation of white oak through natural and artificial regeneration; and

(6) the best methods for white oak reforestation on abandoned mine land sites.

(b) **CONSULTATION.**—In carrying out the research under subsection (a), the land-grant college or university may consult with such States, nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, and other scientific bodies as the land-grant college or university determines to be appropriate.

#### **SEC. 9. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE.**

(a) **PARTNERSHIPS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall enter into a partnership with an eligible entity described in paragraph (2) to conduct research on improving white oak species resiliency, health, and preservation, including research on—

(A) population-scale sequencing;

(B) stress response traits;

(C) seedling physiology and performance; and

(D) white oak product development.

(2) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—An eligible entity referred to in paragraph (1) is a land-grant college or university that has demonstrated—

(A) scientific expertise relating to white oak;

(B) the ability to rapidly transfer technologies to the stove industry;

(C) geographic proximity to concentrated areas of white oak; and

(D) support for regional economic development.

(b) **PRIORITIES.**—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall prioritize research relating to the resistance of white oak to disease, pest, heat,

and drought in cultivated, new, and old-growth white oak timber stands.

#### **SEC. 10. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE INITIATIVE.**

The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, shall establish an initiative on white oak—

(1) to re-establish white oak forests where appropriate;

(2) to improve the management of existing white oak forests to foster natural regeneration of white oak; and

(3) to provide technical assistance to private landowners to re-establish, improve management of, and naturally regenerate white oak.

#### **SEC. 11. AUTHORITIES.**

To the maximum extent practicable, to carry out activities under this Act and the amendments made by this Act, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall use the authorities provided under this Act and those amendments, in combination with authorities under other provisions of law, including—

(1) good neighbor agreements under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a); and

(2) stewardship contracting projects under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c).

### **SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS**

#### **SENATE RESOLUTION 856—RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2024 AS FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF FILIPINO AMERICANS AND THEIR IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED STATES**

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. HELMY, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. DUCKWORTH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 856

Whereas the earliest documented Filipino presence in the continental United States was October 18, 1587, when the first “Luzones Indios” arrived in Morro Bay, California, on board the Nuestra Señora de Esperanza, a Manila-built galleon ship;

Whereas the Filipino American National Historical Society recognizes 1763 as the year in which the first permanent Filipino settlement in the United States was established in St. Malo, Louisiana;

Whereas the recognition of the first permanent Filipino settlement in the United States adds a new perspective to the history of the United States by bringing attention to the economic, cultural, social, and other notable contributions made by Filipino Americans to the development of the United States;

Whereas the Filipino American community is the third largest Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander group in the United States, with a population of approximately 4,500,000;

Whereas, from 2000 to 2019, the Filipino American community grew 78 percent, and Filipinos are the largest Asian community in Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada,

New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and West Virginia;

Whereas, from the Civil War to the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, Filipinos and Filipino Americans have a longstanding history of serving in the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas more than 250,000 Filipinos fought under the United States flag during World War II to protect and defend the United States in the Pacific theater;

Whereas a guarantee to pay back the service of Filipinos through veterans benefits was reversed by the First Supplemental Surplus Appropriation Rescission Act, 1946 (Public Law 79-301; 60 Stat. 6) and the Second Supplemental Surplus Appropriation Rescission Act, 1946 (Public Law 79-391; 60 Stat. 221), which provided that the wartime service of members of the Commonwealth Army of the Philippines and the new Philippine Scouts shall not be deemed to have been active service, and, therefore, those members did not qualify for certain benefits;

Whereas 26,000 Filipino World War II veterans were granted United States citizenship as a result of the Immigration Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-649; 104 Stat. 4978), which was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on November 29, 1990;

Whereas, in 1991, the Filipino American National Historical Society made efforts to recognize October as Filipino American History Month for the first time;

Whereas, in 2009, Congress first recognized October as Filipino American History Month (S. Res. 298; H. Res. 780);

Whereas, on February 17, 2009, President Barack Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 123 Stat. 115), which established the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund to compensate Filipino World War II veterans for their service to the United States;

Whereas, since June 8, 2016, the Filipino World War II Veterans Parole Program has allowed Filipino World War II veterans and certain family members to be reunited more expeditiously than the immigrant visa process allowed at that time;

Whereas, on December 14, 2016, President Barack Obama signed into law the Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-265; 130 Stat. 1376) to award Filipino veterans who fought alongside troops of the United States in World War II the highest civilian honor bestowed by Congress;

Whereas, on October 25, 2017, the Congressional Gold Medal was presented to Filipino World War II veterans in Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Building, a recognition for which the veterans had waited for more than 70 years;

Whereas Filipino Americans have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force that may be bestowed on an individual serving in the Armed Forces, and continue to demonstrate a commendable sense of patriotism and honor in the Armed Forces;

Whereas the late Peter Aquino Aduja of Hawaii and the late Thelma Garcia Buchholdt of Alaska became the first Filipino American elected to public office and the first Filipina American elected to a legislature in the United States, respectively, inspiring their fellow Filipino Americans to pursue public service in politics and government;

Whereas Filipino American farmworkers and labor leaders, such as Philip Vera Cruz and Larry Itliong, played an integral role in the multiethnic United Farm Workers movement, alongside Cesar Chávez, Dolores Huerta, and other Latino workers;

Whereas, on August 3, 1948, the late Victoria Manalo Draves became the first Filipino American and Asian American to win a gold medal at the Olympics;

Whereas, on April 25, 2012, President Barack Obama nominated Lorna G. Schofield to be a United States District Judge for the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, and she was confirmed by the Senate on December 13, 2012, to be the first Filipina American in United States history to serve as an Article III Federal judge;

Whereas Filipino Americans play an integral role in the healthcare system of the United States as nurses, doctors, first responders, and other medical professionals, and approximately 1 in 4 working Filipino adults in the United States is a frontline healthcare worker;

Whereas Filipino Americans contribute greatly to music, dance, literature, education, business, hospitality, journalism, sports, fashion, politics, government, science, technology, the fine arts, and other fields that enrich the United States;

Whereas, as mandated in the mission statement of the Filipino American National Historical Society, efforts should continue to promote the study of Filipino American history and culture because the roles of Filipino Americans and other people of color have largely been overlooked in the writing, teaching, and learning of the history of the United States;

Whereas it is imperative for Filipino American youth to have positive role models to instill—

(1) the significance of education, complemented by the richness of Filipino American ethnicity; and

(2) the value of the Filipino American legacy; and

Whereas it is essential to promote the understanding, education, and appreciation of the history and culture of Filipino Americans in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the celebration of Filipino American History Month in October 2024 as—

(A) a testament to the advancement of Filipino Americans;

(B) a time to reflect on and remember the many notable contributions that Filipino Americans have made to the United States; and

(C) a time to renew efforts toward the research and examination of history and culture so as to provide an opportunity for all people of the United States to learn more about Filipino Americans and to appreciate the historic contributions of Filipino Americans to the United States; and

(2) urges the people of the United States to observe Filipino American History Month with appropriate programs and activities.

# SENATE RESOLUTION 857—EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT THE SPREADING PROBLEM OF BOOK BANNING AND THE PROLIFERATION OF THREATS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. REED, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KING, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. MARKEY) sub-

mitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 857

Whereas the overwhelming majority of adults in the United States oppose book bans;

Whereas an overwhelming majority of adults in the United States support educators teaching about the civil rights movement, the history and experiences of Native Americans, enslaved Africans, immigrants facing discrimination, and the ongoing effects of racism;

Whereas, according to a survey by the Knight Foundation, an overwhelming majority of adults are confident that their community's public schools select appropriate books for students to read;

Whereas, in 1969, the Supreme Court of the United States held in *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969), that students do not “shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate”;

Whereas, in 1982, a plurality of the Supreme Court of the United States wrote in *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853 (1982), that schools may not remove library books “in a narrowly partisan or political manner”, as this kind of censorship will result in “official suppression of ideas”;

Whereas the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States protects freedom of speech and the freedom to read and write;

Whereas Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”;

Whereas PEN America identified over 10,000 instances of individual books banned between July 2023 and June 2024, which is over double the instances of recorded book bans in public schools between July 2022 and June 2023 when PEN America counted nearly 3,400 instances of individual books banned;

Whereas PEN America identified 5,894 instances of books banned between July 2021 and June 2023, affecting 2,823 unique titles and censoring the works of 2,598 authors, illustrators, and translators;

Whereas the overwhelming majority of recent book bans were enacted without following the best practice guidelines for book challenges outlined by the American Library Association, the National Coalition Against Censorship, and the National Council of Teachers of English;

Whereas the unimpeded sharing of ideas and the freedom to read are essential to a strong democracy;

Whereas books do not require readers to agree with topics, themes, or viewpoints but instead allow readers to explore and engage with differing perspectives to form and inform their own views;

Whereas suppressing the freedom to read and denying access to literature, history, and knowledge are repressive and antidemocratic tactics used by authoritarian regimes against their people;

Whereas book bans violate the rights of students, families, residents, and citizens based on the political, ideological, and cultural preferences of the specific individuals imposing the bans;

Whereas book bans have multifaceted, harmful consequences on—