

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—

(1) students, who have a right to access a diverse range of stories and perspectives, especially students from historically marginalized backgrounds whose communities are often targeted by thought control measures;

(2) educators and librarians, who are operating in some States in an increasingly punitive and surveillance-oriented environment and are experiencing a chilling effect in their work;

(3) authors whose works are targeted and suppressed;

(4) parents who want their children to attend public schools that remain open to curiosity, discovery, and the freedom to read; and

(5) community members who want free access to a range of uncensored information and knowledge from their public libraries;

Whereas classic and award-winning literature and books that have been part of school curricula for decades have been challenged, removed from libraries pending review, or outright banned from schools, including—

(1) “Brave New World” by Aldous Huxley;

(2) “The Handmaid’s Tale” by Margaret Atwood;

(3) “Anne Frank’s Diary: The Graphic Adaptation” adapted by Ari Folman;

(4) “Their Eyes Were Watching God” by Zora Neal Hurston; and

(5) “To Kill a Mockingbird” by Harper Lee;

Whereas books, particularly those written by and about outsiders, newcomers, and individuals from marginalized backgrounds, are facing a heightened risk of being banned;

Whereas a substantial number of the instances of books banned or otherwise restricted in the United States have LGBTQ+ characters or themes that recognize the equal humanity and dignity of all individuals despite differences, including—

(1) “And Tango Makes Three” by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell; and

(2) “This Book Is Gay” by Juno Dawson;

Whereas a significant proportion of the instances of books, both fiction and nonfiction, that have been banned or otherwise restricted in the United States are books about race, racism, or feature characters of color, including—

(1) “The Story of Ruby Bridges” by Robert Coles and illustrated by George Ford;

(2) “Letter from Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr.;

(3) “Thank You, Jackie Robinson” by Barbara Cohen;

(4) “Malala: A Hero For All” by Shana Corey;

(5) “Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story” by Kevin Noble Maillard;

(6) “Hair Love” by Matthew A. Cherry;

(7) “Good Trouble: Lessons From the Civil Rights Playbook” by Christopher Noxon; and

(8) “We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures”;

Whereas the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund has reported a dramatic surge in challenges at libraries and schools to the inclusion of graphic novels that depict the diversity of civic life in the United States and the painful and complex history of the human experience, including—

(1) “New Kid” by Jerry Craft;

(2) “Drama” by Raina Telgemeier;

(3) “American Born Chinese” by Gene Luen Yang; and

(4) “Maus” by Art Spiegelman;

Whereas books addressing death, grief, mental illness, and suicide are targeted alongside nonfiction books that discuss feelings and emotions written for teenage and young adult audiences that frequently confront these topics;

Whereas, during congressional hearings on April 7, 2022, May 19, 2022, September 12, 2023,

and October 19, 2023, students, parents, teachers, librarians, and school administrators testified to the chilling and fear-spreading effects that book bans have on education and the school environment; and

Whereas, according to PEN America, from July 2021 to June 2023, over 40 States across the country limited access to certain books for limited or indefinite periods of time, including—

(1) Florida, where at least 1,972 books in total have been banned or restricted in 37 school districts;

(2) Texas, where at least 1,426 books in total have been banned or restricted in 28 school districts;

(3) Pennsylvania, where at least 644 books in total have been banned or restricted in 16 school districts;

(4) Missouri, where at least 360 books in total have been banned or restricted in 16 school districts;

(5) Tennessee, where at least 360 books in total have been banned or restricted in 9 school districts;

(6) Utah, where at least 293 books in total have been banned or restricted in 10 school districts;

(7) South Carolina, where at least 128 books in total have been banned or restricted in 7 school districts;

(8) Virginia, where at least 94 books in total have been banned or restricted in at least 6 school districts;

(9) Michigan, where at least 80 books in total have been banned or restricted in at least 6 school districts;

(10) North Carolina, where at least 74 books in total have been banned or restricted in at least 5 school districts;

(11) Wisconsin, where at least 72 books in total have been banned or restricted in at least 12 school districts;

(12) Idaho where at least 51 books in total have been banned or restricted in at least 1 school district; and

(13) Oklahoma, where at least 45 books in total have been banned or restricted in at least 3 school districts: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of the week of September 22 through September 28, 2024, as “Banned Books Week”;

(2) expresses concern about the spreading problem of book banning and the proliferating threats to freedom of expression in the United States;

(3) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to supporting the freedom of expression of writers that is protected under the First Amendment to the Constitution and the freedom of all individuals in the United States to read books without government censorship;

(4) calls on local governments and school districts to follow best practice guidelines when addressing challenges to books; and

(5) calls on local governments and school districts to protect the rights of students to learn and the ability of educators and librarians to teach, including by providing students with the opportunity to read a wide array of books reflecting the full breadth and diversity of viewpoints and perspectives.

SENATE RESOLUTION 858—RECOGNIZING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUTDOOR AFRO

Mr. KING (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, and Mr. PADILLA) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 858

Whereas, in 2009, Outdoor Afro started as a blog about nature written by Ms. Rue Mapp,

and has grown into a national not-for-profit network with volunteer leaders in 33 States and the District of Columbia, guiding hundreds of outdoor events each year based on a simple mission to celebrate and inspire Black-American connections to nature through recreational activities, including camping, hiking, birding, fishing, gardening, skiing, biking, camping, environmental education, conservation stewardship, and more;

Whereas, in the past 15 years, Outdoor Afro has cultivated and trained more than 1000 outdoor leaders, led thousands of outdoor events, and engaged well over 150,000 participants;

Whereas Outdoor Afro has disrupted the false perception that Black Americans do not have a relationship with nature and is inspiring access to remote and pristine nature, as well as urban nature, including local parks, trails, and open spaces;

Whereas Outdoor Afro promotes a healthy lifestyle and helps communities find healing, connects to Black history found in natural areas, and inspires an increased desire to protect vulnerable public lands for all to enjoy;

Whereas Outdoor Afro held its first international expedition in 2018 to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania;

Whereas, in response to the disproportionate number of Black children who drown while swimming, Outdoor Afro launched Making Waves, a program to strengthen relationships with water through water safety and swimming lessons provided by certified swim instructors;

Whereas, since its inception, Making Waves has funded nearly 1,950 “Swimmership” scholarships and aims to reach 1,500 new swimmers in 2024;

Whereas Outdoor Afro has engaged millions of people through digital outreach and is changing visual representations of who can connect with and lead in the outdoors through this digital outreach;

Whereas Outdoor Afro’s growing network comprises civically engaged men and women, many of whom plan outdoor activities on behalf of children and senior community members, restoring Black-American leadership in nature;

Whereas Outdoor Afro is a leading voice in the Black-American community for advice on where to recreate, the best outdoor gear to use, and environmental causes that need the greatest attention; and

Whereas October 25, 2024, marks 15 years since the establishment of Outdoor Afro as a community that supports connecting Black Americans with natural spaces and one another through recreational activities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 15th anniversary of Outdoor Afro; and

(2) commends the leadership of Outdoor Afro for leading the way for inclusion in outdoor recreation and nature for all.

SENATE RESOLUTION 859—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF SEPTEMBER 2024 AS “NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH”

Mr. KING (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 859

Whereas the theme for National Recovery Month is “Every Person. Every Family. Every Community.”;

Whereas nearly 108,000 individuals in the United States suffered a fatal drug overdose