

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT NIKKI FORTUNATO BAS

RESOLUTION CELEBRATING FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH AND HONORING FILIPINO ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE (FAJ) ON THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, Filipino American History Month (FAHM) is October 1 to 31, 2023 and is a special celebration that honors the history and heritage of Filipino Americans and shows appreciation for their contributions to American society since they first landed in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, WHEREAS, with Filipino Americans being one of the biggest Asian American groups, it is important to recognize their pursuits, triumphs, and legacies, listen to stories of their lived experiences, and get to know the culture that they brought with them to America, which forms part of the diverse landscape of the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, Filipino Americans have called Oakland and the greater Bay Area home since at least the turn of the 20th century with the first wave of Filipino migration beginning and continuing until the start of World War II. During this time span, sponsored students, veterans of the Philippine-American War and their families, and young men recruited in the Philippines to serve in the U.S. military or work in California and Hawaii's expanding agricultural industries would all arrive in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Filipino presence in the labor force transitioned with the region's economic and social evolution from mainly farm and service laborers to industrial workers to professional, administrative, and service workers. Today the East Bay is a vibrant center of the Filipino community's deeply rooted and rich cultural, political, and economic life; and

WHEREAS, Filipino Americans make up a significant portion of Oakland's Asian American and Pacific Islander population as the third largest AAPI group in the city, and Filipino Americans also comprise a notable portion of employees of the City of Oakland; and

WHEREAS, since 1973, Filipino Advocates for Justice (FAJ)'s vision has been for a Filipino community empowered to advance social and economic justice as well as democratic and human rights for all; and

WHEREAS, FAJ's mission is to build a strong and empowered Filipino community by organizing constituents, developing leaders, providing services, and advocating for policies that promote social and economic justice and equity; and

WHEREAS, FAJ's work is rooted in the Filipino values of: *Bayanihan*, coming together to help those in need; *Kapwa*, community interconnectedness; and *Makibaka*, to fight for collective power; and

WHEREAS, FAJ serves the 200,000+ Filipinos in the East Bay through offices in Oakland's Chinatown and Union City. They are a direct beneficiary of the Civil Rights and Third World people's movements of the 1960's and early 70's, and believe that all immigrants, workers, and people of color deserve dignity, a living wage, decent workplace conditions and protections, free healthcare and affordable housing, mental health wellness and a life free of discrimination; and

WHEREAS, FAJ are advocates for immigrant, worker, and civil rights; committed to helping the most vulnerable navigate life's challenges and hurdles, particularly at-risk middle and high school-age youth, low-wage workers, newly arrived immigrants and the undocumented; and

WHEREAS, FAJ works with 100+ youth a year through in-school youth development programs and an afterschool leadership development program. The in-school program provides prevention education and peer support and helps young people develop healthy relationships and decision making skills. The year-round afterschool program is aimed at youth-led leadership development, political education, and civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, FAJ operates a caregiver empowerment project to support low-wage workers in this exploitative industry. They helped found the California Domestic Workers Coalition that won a CA Domestic Worker Bill of Rights and the Health and Safety for All Workers Act. We organize caregivers through Know Your Rights education, a wellness support group called Kapwa Ko, and provide wage theft support. FAJ has helped caregivers recover over 1 million dollars in lost wages; and

WHEREAS, FAJ provides free assistance in completing the naturalization application and referrals of complicated naturalization cases to nonprofit immigration attorneys; and

WHEREAS, over the last decade, FAJ has built a voter empowerment program to engage the 800,000 Filipinos eligible to register to vote in California. They register, educate, and

mobilize voters locally and statewide in partnership with coalitions like AAPI's for Civic Empowerment. In 2022, they started FAJ Action Fund, our 501c4 sister organization; and

WHEREAS, FAJ's community organizing priorities are to fight for renter protections, domestic worker protections, and to advocate for immigrant rights, including legalization of the undocumented; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland celebrates Filipino American Heritage Month to recognize the achievements and contributions of Oakland's Filipino American community and City of Oakland employees; and

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland honors Filipino Advocates for Justice on their 50th anniversary.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, JENKINS, KALB, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, REID, AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____

ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California

Date of Attestation: _____