



**DATE:** July 10, 2018

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** City Manager

**SUBJECT** Approval of a Resolution in Support of HR 2358 - The Chinese American World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approves the attached resolution in support of HR 2358 - The Chinese American World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act.

### **SUMMARY**

In recognition of the service that World War II Chinese American veterans gave to their country, the U.S. Congress introduced HR 2358 – The Chinese American World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act. If passed by Congress, the Congressional Gold Medal, which is the highest civilian honor awarded by Congress, will be awarded collectively to these soldiers who, despite the racism and prejudice that they experienced, fought bravely both in combat and by providing vital military support services during World War II. The awarded Congressional Gold Medal will be displayed at the Smithsonian Institute and other locations throughout the United States so that visitors can learn about the contributions of these brave Americans of Chinese descent, and so that they can be honored for their service to the United States of America during a critical time in our country’s history.

### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

During World War II (WWII), 20,000 Chinese Americans served in the United States armed forces, approximately 17% of the 120,000 people of Chinese ancestry who lived in the United States at that time. Due to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the 40% of the soldiers who were Chinese immigrants had been denied the right to citizenship and denied both the right to vote and to testify in court. Despite the racism and prejudice that they experienced, these soldiers fought bravely both in combat and by providing vital military support services.

In recognition of the service that WWII Chinese American veterans gave to their country, the U.S. Congress introduced HR 2358 that, if passed, will award the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to these soldiers. The medal, which is the highest civilian honor awarded by Congress, will be displayed at the Smithsonian Museum so that visitors can learn about their contributions, and so that they can finally be honored for their service to the United States of America during a critical time in our country’s history.

Today, there are over 5,600 Hayward residents who are of Chinese ancestry, many of them descendants or relatives of those who served in the U.S. military during WWII. On behalf of these veterans and their families, the City Council is being asked to adopt a resolution in support of HR 2358, introduced by Representative Edward R. Royce (CA, District 39) on May 4, 2017.

HR 2358 reflects several of the values and principles that are included in the Hayward Commitment for an Inclusive, Equitable, and Compassionate Community (CIECC), including recognizing and honoring diversity, building community, and supporting persons impacted by discrimination. Specifically, this item supports the following section of the CIECC:

**Action Item A.2.1.** – The City of Hayward will sponsor, co-sponsor, or otherwise support community events designed to encourage inclusion, increase cultural and religious awareness, and celebrate diversity in the Hayward Community.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund with the approval of this item.

## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

This consent item supports the City's Complete Communities Initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to create and support structures, services and amenities that provide inclusive and equitable access with the goal of becoming a thriving and promising place to live, work, and play for all. This item supports the following specific goal and objectives of this initiative:

Goal 1: Improve the quality of life for residents, business owners, and community members in all Hayward neighborhoods.

Objective 2: Foster a sense of place and support neighborhood pride; and

Objective 5: Actively value diversity and promote inclusive activities.

## **NEXT STEPS**

If Council approves the attached resolution, staff will transmit copies along with a letter conveying the City of Hayward's support of HR 2358 to the members of the United States House of Representatives, to the United States Senators from California, as well as to other appropriate legislative representatives, to local residents including the members of the Hayward / Yixing Sister City Committee, and post a copy of the resolution on the City of Hayward's Legislative Program website.

*Prepared by:* David Korth, Assistant to the City Manager  
Laurel James, Management Analyst II

*Recommended by:* Maria A. Hurtado, Assistant City Manager

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. McAdoo', written in a cursive style.

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Kelly McAdoo, City Manager