



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0184-2026, **Version:** *

Res. No. 184

Resolution declaring October 3 as Korean Cultural Awareness Day annually in the City of New York to commemorate the mythological beginning of the Korean people and to celebrate their continued pride in their shared ancestry

By Council Members Farías, Won, Lee, Louis and Morano

Whereas, Koreans celebrate October 3 as Gaecheonjeol, or National Foundation Day, in commemoration of the founding of Gojoseon, the first Korean kingdom, in 2333 BCE by the god Dangun, the mythological founder of the Korean race; and

Whereas, Gaecheonjeol, which means “opening of heaven,” marks the beginning of Korean history and celebrates the unity, pride, and shared ancestry of the Korean people; and

Whereas, The Korean creation story begins with Hwanung, third son of the Heavenly Emperor Hwanin, who descended from heaven to reign over the mortal world, bringing clouds, rain, and wind with him to his newly established City of the Gods on what is now Mount Baekdu, a volcanic mountain on the border between North Korea and China; and

Whereas, After a test devised by Hwanung for a tiger and a bear, who had asked to become human, the tiger ran off and the bear became a beautiful woman, Ungnyeo, or Bear Woman; and

Whereas, When Ungnyeo wanted a child, the god Hwanung himself took on human form, and they conceived a son, Dangun, who became the father of the Korean people and stayed in human form for 1,908 years before ascending from the mortal realm to become Mountain God; and

Whereas, Not long after Korea’s liberation from Japan in 1945, National Foundation Day was established as a national commemorative day, with the date of October 3 being set for the holiday for the first

time according to the solar calendar rather than the lunar calendar; and

Whereas, October 3 is now marked in South Korea with ceremonies at sacred sites, including at the Jongmyo Shrine in Seoul, and with ceremonies at home where families set up altars to honor their ancestors, followed by parades, traditional music and dance in traditional dress, reenactments of historical events, cultural performances, displays of flags, and fireworks; and

Whereas, According to 2020 data from the Asian American Federation, approximately 90,000 Koreans and Korean Americans live in New York City (NYC), with about 57 percent residing in Queens, about 24 percent in Manhattan, about 14 percent in Brooklyn, about 3 percent in Staten Island, and about 2 percent in the Bronx; and

Whereas, The Korean American community in NYC honors core Korean values of pride in their ancestry, unity, and resilience and celebrates that pride even though far from Korean soil on National Foundation Day; and

Whereas, NYC has reaped the social, economic, and intellectual rewards of having a large and vital Korean American community as a significant and valuable part of NYC's multicultural fabric; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York declares October 3 as Korean Cultural Awareness Day annually in the City of New York to commemorate the mythological beginning of the Korean people and to celebrate their continued pride in their shared ancestry.

LS #18194
1/14/2025
RHP