

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244  
San Francisco 94102-4689  
Tel. No. 554-5184  
Fax No. 554-5163  
TDD/TTY No. 554-5227

May 22, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the United States House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 233-19**

Dear Madam Speaker:

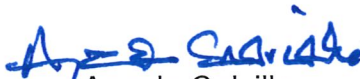
On May 7, 2019, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco adopted Resolution No. 233-19 (Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10), which was enacted on May 17, 2019.

The Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board to forward the following document to your attention:

- One certified copy of Resolution No. 233-19 (File No. 190461)

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Board at (415) 554-5184, or by e-mail: [board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org](mailto:board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org).

Sincerely,

  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

- c. Members of the Board of Supervisors  
Sophia Kittler, Mayor's Liaison to the Board of Supervisors  
Eddie McCaffrey, Mayor's Manager of State and Federal Legislative Affairs  
Andres Power, Mayor's Policy Director  
Rebecca Peacock, Mayor's Office



City and County of San Francisco

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Certified Copy

Resolution

190461 [ Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10 ]

Sponsors: Yee; Fewer, Mar, Walton, Safai, Peskin, Brown, Mandelman, Ronen, Haney and Stefani

Resolution commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad; honoring the contributions of Chinese railroad workers for their significant contributions; and declaring May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter, as Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San Francisco.

5/7/2019 Board of Supervisors - AMENDED, AN AMENDMENT OF THE WHOLE BEARING NEW TITLE

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin

5/7/2019 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED AS AMENDED

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin

5/17/2019 Mayor - RETURNED UNSIGNED

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution is a full, true, and correct copy of the original thereof on file in this office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City and County of San Francisco.

May 20, 2019

Date



1 [Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10]

2  
3 **Resolution commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the**  
4 **Transcontinental Railroad; honoring the contributions of Chinese railroad workers for**  
5 **their significant contributions; and declaring May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter,**  
6 **as Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San**  
7 **Francisco.**

8  
9 WHEREAS, In 1862, President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act, establishing the  
10 Union Pacific Railroad to build west from Omaha, and the Central Pacific Railroad to build  
11 east from Sacramento to connect the country by rail; and

12 WHEREAS, The construction of the Transcontinental Railroad took nearly seven years  
13 to complete and stretched nearly 2,000 miles; and

14 WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad relied heavily on human labor requiring  
15 thousands of workers, including Civil War veterans; 8,000 to 10,000 Irish workers; African  
16 American freed slaves; an unidentified number of Native Americans; 3,000 to 4,000 Latter-  
17 Day Saints; and 12,000 to 20,000 Chinese workers; and

18 WHEREAS, Facing a severe labor shortage, the Central Pacific began reluctantly to  
19 hire Chinese workers from the surrounding area; and upon realizing that Chinese workers  
20 were the answer to the labor problem, hired Chinese throughout California and recruited  
21 workers from the Guangdong area of China, historically known to experience high levels of  
22 poverty and civil unrest; resulting in desperation among residents for employment  
23 opportunities abroad; and

1           WHEREAS, The Chinese workers comprised 80% of the railroad workforce in the west  
2 and consisted of almost 90% of the Central Pacific's entire workforce by 1867, and were  
3 considered indispensable for their work ethic and endurance; and

4           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers took on the lowliest and most dangerous  
5 tasks, were paid between half or two-thirds of what their white counterparts made; with no  
6 provision for housing and were banned from managerial roles; and

7           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers were subjected to extremely dangerous  
8 conditions, grueling hours of work, and substandard pay; and

9           WHEREAS, The Chinese laborers moved tons of rock, chipped and blasted away at  
10 the sides of mountains, carved 15 tunnels through the granite of the Sierra Nevada Mountains  
11 during two horrific winters; and

12           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers built tunnels and tracks through the most  
13 dangerous part of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, taking fifteen months to drill and blast  
14 through 1,659 feet of solid granite rock to complete the Summit Tunnel, the highest point of  
15 the Central Pacific Track; and

16           WHEREAS, The treacherous conditions resulted in the death of 1,200 Chinese railroad  
17 workers; and

18           WHEREAS, In June 1867, after enduring deadly explosions and mistreatment, Chinese  
19 workers organized a strike against the Central Pacific Railroad demanding higher wages and  
20 shorter workdays, marking one of the era's largest labor strikes against any employer; and

21           WHEREAS, On April 28, 1869, teams of Chinese workers and eight Irish tracklayers  
22 set a world record of laying ten miles of track in one day; and

23           WHEREAS, On May 10, 1869, the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific  
24 Railroad met at Promontory Summit, Utah, uniting the country by rail and marking the moment  
25 with the driving of a ceremonial gold spike; and

1           WHEREAS, The contributions of Chinese workers has been minimized, overlooked,  
2 sometimes completely ignored in accounts of the construction of the first Transcontinental  
3 Railroad; and

4           WHEREAS, As recently as the 1969 ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary  
5 of the golden spike, then-Transportation Secretary John Volpe ignored the contributions of the  
6 Chinese railroad workers by declaring that only "...Americans could drill ten tunnels in  
7 mountains 30 feet deep in snow...Who else but Americans could chisel through miles of solid  
8 granite?...Who else but Americans could have laid ten miles of track in 12 hours?" despite  
9 knowing full well that the Chinese were barred from becoming Americans until after the  
10 Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943; and

11           WHEREAS, in 1969, the Chinese American community commemorated the  
12 contribution of Chinese workers to the first Transcontinental Railroad by donating two  
13 plaques, one in Sacramento and the other at Promontory Summit; and

14           WHEREAS, In 2014, the United States Department of Labor inducted the Chinese  
15 railroad workers into the Labor Hall of Honor for their contributions and their organized efforts  
16 to fight for fair wages and safe working conditions; and

17           WHEREAS, In the face of discrimination and unfair wages, Chinese railroad workers  
18 made history by building one of the United States' most innovative engineering feats; and

19           WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad changed the face of transportation in the  
20 United States and in its 150th Anniversary this year, continues to be a defining part of modern  
21 economy providing passage for people across the country and the delivery of goods; and

22           WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad's successful completion would not have  
23 been possible without the thousands of workers who made possible its construction; and  
24  
25

1           WHEREAS, By honoring the legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad workers, we  
2 inspire future generations to continue advancing the values of providing dignity, equal  
3 opportunity, civil rights, and equity to working people everywhere; now, therefore, be it

4           RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
5 hereby declares May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter, as Transcontinental Chinese  
6 Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San Francisco; and, be it

7           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
8 Francisco commits to supporting efforts to illuminate the history of Transcontinental Railroad  
9 workers, especially the sacrifices of Chinese railroad workers; and, be it

10          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
11 Francisco urges that the United States Congress recognizes the Chinese railroad workers by  
12 passing House Resolution 165 introduced by Congressman Meng; and, be it

13          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
14 Francisco directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit copies of this resolution to the Offices of  
15 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, United States House of  
16 Representative Jackie Speier, United States Senator Kamala Harris, United States Senator  
17 Dianne Feinstein, respectively, upon passage.



City and County of San Francisco

Tails  
Resolution

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

File Number: 190461

Date Passed: May 07, 2019

Resolution commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad; honoring the contributions of Chinese railroad workers for their significant contributions; and declaring May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter, as Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San Francisco.

May 07, 2019 Board of Supervisors - AMENDED, AN AMENDMENT OF THE WHOLE BEARING NEW TITLE

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin


May 07, 2019 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED AS AMENDED

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin

File No. 190461

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED AS AMENDED on 5/7/2019 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

Unsigned

London N. Breed  
Mayor

5/17/2019

Date Approved

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.



Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

5/17/2019

Date



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May 22, 2019

The Honorable Jackie Speier  
United States House of Representatives  
2465 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 233-19**

Dear Congresswoman Speier:


On May 7, 2019, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco adopted Resolution No. 233-19 (Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10), which was enacted on May 17, 2019.

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Sincerely,

  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

- c. Members of the Board of Supervisors  
Sophia Kittler, Mayor's Liaison to the Board of Supervisors  
Eddie McCaffrey, Mayor's Manager of State and Federal Legislative Affairs  
Andres Power, Mayor's Policy Director  
Rebecca Peacock, Mayor's Office



City and County of San Francisco

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Certified Copy

Resolution

190461 [ Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10 ]

Sponsors: Yee; Fewer, Mar, Walton, Safai, Peskin, Brown, Mandelman, Ronen, Haney and Stefani

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5/7/2019 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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Excused: 1 - Peskin

5/17/2019 Mayor - RETURNED UNSIGNED

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution is a full, true, and correct copy of the original thereof on file in this office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City and County of San Francisco.

May 20, 2019

Date



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9 WHEREAS, In 1862, President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act, establishing the  
10 Union Pacific Railroad to build west from Omaha, and the Central Pacific Railroad to build  
11 east from Sacramento to connect the country by rail; and

12 WHEREAS, The construction of the Transcontinental Railroad took nearly seven years  
13 to complete and stretched nearly 2,000 miles; and

14 WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad relied heavily on human labor requiring  
15 thousands of workers, including Civil War veterans; 8,000 to 10,000 Irish workers; African  
16 American freed slaves; an unidentified number of Native Americans; 3,000 to 4,000 Latter-  
17 Day Saints; and 12,000 to 20,000 Chinese workers; and

18 WHEREAS, Facing a severe labor shortage, the Central Pacific began reluctantly to  
19 hire Chinese workers from the surrounding area; and upon realizing that Chinese workers  
20 were the answer to the labor problem, hired Chinese throughout California and recruited  
21 workers from the Guangdong area of China, historically known to experience high levels of  
22 poverty and civil unrest; resulting in desperation among residents for employment  
23 opportunities abroad; and  
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1           WHEREAS, The Chinese workers comprised 80% of the railroad workforce in the west  
2 and consisted of almost 90% of the Central Pacific's entire workforce by 1867, and were  
3 considered indispensable for their work ethic and endurance; and

4           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers took on the lowliest and most dangerous  
5 tasks, were paid between half or two-thirds of what their white counterparts made; with no  
6 provision for housing and were banned from managerial roles; and

7           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers were subjected to extremely dangerous  
8 conditions, grueling hours of work, and substandard pay; and

9           WHEREAS, The Chinese laborers moved tons of rock, chipped and blasted away at  
10 the sides of mountains, carved 15 tunnels through the granite of the Sierra Nevada Mountains  
11 during two horrific winters; and

12           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers built tunnels and tracks through the most  
13 dangerous part of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, taking fifteen months to drill and blast  
14 through 1,659 feet of solid granite rock to complete the Summit Tunnel, the highest point of  
15 the Central Pacific Track; and

16           WHEREAS, The treacherous conditions resulted in the death of 1,200 Chinese railroad  
17 workers; and

18           WHEREAS, In June 1867, after enduring deadly explosions and mistreatment, Chinese  
19 workers organized a strike against the Central Pacific Railroad demanding higher wages and  
20 shorter workdays, marking one of the era's largest labor strikes against any employer; and

21           WHEREAS, On April 28, 1869, teams of Chinese workers and eight Irish tracklayers  
22 set a world record of laying ten miles of track in one day; and

23           WHEREAS, On May 10, 1869, the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific  
24 Railroad met at Promontory Summit, Utah, uniting the country by rail and marking the moment  
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14           WHEREAS, In 2014, the United States Department of Labor inducted the Chinese  
15 railroad workers into the Labor Hall of Honor for their contributions and their organized efforts  
16 to fight for fair wages and safe working conditions; and

17           WHEREAS, In the face of discrimination and unfair wages, Chinese railroad workers  
18 made history by building one of the United States' most innovative engineering feats; and

19           WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad changed the face of transportation in the  
20 United States and in its 150th Anniversary this year, continues to be a defining part of modern  
21 economy providing passage for people across the country and the delivery of goods; and

22           WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad's successful completion would not have  
23 been possible without the thousands of workers who made possible its construction; and  
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1           WHEREAS, By honoring the legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad workers, we  
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3 opportunity, civil rights, and equity to working people everywhere; now, therefore, be it

4           RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
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10          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
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16 Representative Jackie Speier, United States Senator Kamala Harris, United States Senator  
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City and County of San Francisco

Tails  
Resolution

City Hall  
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Excused: 1 - Peskin


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File No. 190461

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED AS AMENDED on 5/7/2019 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

Unsigned

\_\_\_\_\_  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

5/17/2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.



\_\_\_\_\_  
A Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

5/17/2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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May 22, 2019

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 233-19**

Dear Senator Feinstein:


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City and County of San Francisco

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May 20, 2019

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9 WHEREAS, In 1862, President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act, establishing the  
10 Union Pacific Railroad to build west from Omaha, and the Central Pacific Railroad to build  
11 east from Sacramento to connect the country by rail; and

12 WHEREAS, The construction of the Transcontinental Railroad took nearly seven years  
13 to complete and stretched nearly 2,000 miles; and

14 WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad relied heavily on human labor requiring  
15 thousands of workers, including Civil War veterans; 8,000 to 10,000 Irish workers; African  
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18 WHEREAS, Facing a severe labor shortage, the Central Pacific began reluctantly to  
19 hire Chinese workers from the surrounding area; and upon realizing that Chinese workers  
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21 workers from the Guangdong area of China, historically known to experience high levels of  
22 poverty and civil unrest; resulting in desperation among residents for employment  
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1           WHEREAS, By honoring the legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad workers, we  
2 inspire future generations to continue advancing the values of providing dignity, equal  
3 opportunity, civil rights, and equity to working people everywhere; now, therefore, be it

4           RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
5 hereby declares May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter, as Transcontinental Chinese  
6 Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San Francisco; and, be it

7           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
8 Francisco commits to supporting efforts to illuminate the history of Transcontinental Railroad  
9 workers, especially the sacrifices of Chinese railroad workers; and, be it

10          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
11 Francisco urges that the United States Congress recognizes the Chinese railroad workers by  
12 passing House Resolution 165 introduced by Congressman Meng; and, be it

13          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
14 Francisco directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit copies of this resolution to the Offices of  
15 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, United States House of  
16 Representative Jackie Speier, United States Senator Kamala Harris, United States Senator  
17 Dianne Feinstein, respectively, upon passage.



City and County of San Francisco

Tails  
Resolution

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

File Number: 190461

Date Passed: May 07, 2019

Resolution commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad; honoring the contributions of Chinese railroad workers for their significant contributions; and declaring May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter, as Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San Francisco.

May 07, 2019 Board of Supervisors - AMENDED, AN AMENDMENT OF THE WHOLE BEARING NEW TITLE

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin


May 07, 2019 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED AS AMENDED

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin

File No. 190461

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED AS AMENDED on 5/7/2019 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

Unsigned

\_\_\_\_\_  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

5/17/2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved





BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244  
San Francisco 94102-4689  
Tel. No. 554-5184  
Fax No. 554-5163  
TDD/TTY No. 554-5227

May 22, 2019

The Honorable Kamala Harris  
United States Senator  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 233-19**

Dear Senator Harris:

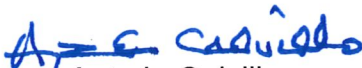
On May 7, 2019, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco adopted Resolution No. 233-19 (Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10), which was enacted on May 17, 2019.

The Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board to forward the following document to your attention:

- One certified copy of Resolution No. 233-19 (File No. 190461)

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Board at (415) 554-5184, or by e-mail: [board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org](mailto:board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org).

Sincerely,

  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

- c. Members of the Board of Supervisors  
Sophia Kittler, Mayor's Liaison to the Board of Supervisors  
Eddie McCaffrey, Mayor's Manager of State and Federal Legislative Affairs  
Andres Power, Mayor's Policy Director  
Rebecca Peacock, Mayor's Office



City and County of San Francisco

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Certified Copy

Resolution

190461 [ Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10 ]

Sponsors: Yee; Fewer, Mar, Walton, Safai, Peskin, Brown, Mandelman, Ronen, Haney and Stefani

Resolution commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad; honoring the contributions of Chinese railroad workers for their significant contributions; and declaring May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter, as Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San Francisco.

5/7/2019 Board of Supervisors - AMENDED, AN AMENDMENT OF THE WHOLE BEARING NEW TITLE

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin

5/7/2019 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED AS AMENDED

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin

5/17/2019 Mayor - RETURNED UNSIGNED

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution is a full, true, and correct copy of the original thereof on file in this office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City and County of San Francisco.

May 20, 2019

Date



1 [Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day - May 10]

2  
3 **Resolution commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the**  
4 **Transcontinental Railroad; honoring the contributions of Chinese railroad workers for**  
5 **their significant contributions; and declaring May 10, 2019, and every May 10 thereafter,**  
6 **as Transcontinental Chinese Railroad Workers Day in the City and County of San**  
7 **Francisco.**

8  
9 WHEREAS, In 1862, President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act, establishing the  
10 Union Pacific Railroad to build west from Omaha, and the Central Pacific Railroad to build  
11 east from Sacramento to connect the country by rail; and

12 WHEREAS, The construction of the Transcontinental Railroad took nearly seven years  
13 to complete and stretched nearly 2,000 miles; and

14 WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad relied heavily on human labor requiring  
15 thousands of workers, including Civil War veterans; 8,000 to 10,000 Irish workers; African  
16 American freed slaves; an unidentified number of Native Americans; 3,000 to 4,000 Latter-  
17 Day Saints; and 12,000 to 20,000 Chinese workers; and

18 WHEREAS, Facing a severe labor shortage, the Central Pacific began reluctantly to  
19 hire Chinese workers from the surrounding area; and upon realizing that Chinese workers  
20 were the answer to the labor problem, hired Chinese throughout California and recruited  
21 workers from the Guangdong area of China, historically known to experience high levels of  
22 poverty and civil unrest; resulting in desperation among residents for employment  
23 opportunities abroad; and

1           WHEREAS, The Chinese workers comprised 80% of the railroad workforce in the west  
2 and consisted of almost 90% of the Central Pacific's entire workforce by 1867, and were  
3 considered indispensable for their work ethic and endurance; and

4           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers took on the lowliest and most dangerous  
5 tasks, were paid between half or two-thirds of what their white counterparts made; with no  
6 provision for housing and were banned from managerial roles; and

7           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers were subjected to extremely dangerous  
8 conditions, grueling hours of work, and substandard pay; and

9           WHEREAS, The Chinese laborers moved tons of rock, chipped and blasted away at  
10 the sides of mountains, carved 15 tunnels through the granite of the Sierra Nevada Mountains  
11 during two horrific winters; and

12           WHEREAS, The Chinese railroad workers built tunnels and tracks through the most  
13 dangerous part of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, taking fifteen months to drill and blast  
14 through 1,659 feet of solid granite rock to complete the Summit Tunnel, the highest point of  
15 the Central Pacific Track; and

16           WHEREAS, The treacherous conditions resulted in the death of 1,200 Chinese railroad  
17 workers; and

18           WHEREAS, In June 1867, after enduring deadly explosions and mistreatment, Chinese  
19 workers organized a strike against the Central Pacific Railroad demanding higher wages and  
20 shorter workdays, marking one of the era's largest labor strikes against any employer; and

21           WHEREAS, On April 28, 1869, teams of Chinese workers and eight Irish tracklayers  
22 set a world record of laying ten miles of track in one day; and

23           WHEREAS, On May 10, 1869, the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific  
24 Railroad met at Promontory Summit, Utah, uniting the country by rail and marking the moment  
25 with the driving of a ceremonial gold spike; and

1           WHEREAS, The contributions of Chinese workers has been minimized, overlooked,  
2 sometimes completely ignored in accounts of the construction of the first Transcontinental  
3 Railroad; and

4           WHEREAS, As recently as the 1969 ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary  
5 of the golden spike, then-Transportation Secretary John Volpe ignored the contributions of the  
6 Chinese railroad workers by declaring that only "...Americans could drill ten tunnels in  
7 mountains 30 feet deep in snow...Who else but Americans could chisel through miles of solid  
8 granite?...Who else but Americans could have laid ten miles of track in 12 hours?" despite  
9 knowing full well that the Chinese were barred from becoming Americans until after the  
10 Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943; and

11           WHEREAS, in 1969, the Chinese American community commemorated the  
12 contribution of Chinese workers to the first Transcontinental Railroad by donating two  
13 plaques, one in Sacramento and the other at Promontory Summit; and

14           WHEREAS, In 2014, the United States Department of Labor inducted the Chinese  
15 railroad workers into the Labor Hall of Honor for their contributions and their organized efforts  
16 to fight for fair wages and safe working conditions; and

17           WHEREAS, In the face of discrimination and unfair wages, Chinese railroad workers  
18 made history by building one of the United States' most innovative engineering feats; and

19           WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad changed the face of transportation in the  
20 United States and in its 150th Anniversary this year, continues to be a defining part of modern  
21 economy providing passage for people across the country and the delivery of goods; and

22           WHEREAS, The Transcontinental Railroad's successful completion would not have  
23 been possible without the thousands of workers who made possible its construction; and  
24  
25

1           WHEREAS, By honoring the legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad workers, we  
2 inspire future generations to continue advancing the values of providing dignity, equal  
3 opportunity, civil rights, and equity to working people everywhere; now, therefore, be it

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City and County of San Francisco

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City Hall  
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May 07, 2019 Board of Supervisors - AMENDED, AN AMENDMENT OF THE WHOLE BEARING NEW TITLE

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Excused: 1 - Peskin


May 07, 2019 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED AS AMENDED

Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

Excused: 1 - Peskin

File No. 190461

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED AS AMENDED on 5/7/2019 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

Unsigned

\_\_\_\_\_  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

5/17/2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.



Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

5/17/2019

Date