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Statement by Representative Gerald E. Connolly

Commemorating August 13, 2013 as the 110th Anniversary of the First Korean Immigrants Arriving in America

MR. CONNOLLY: I rise to join with Korean-Americans in my district and through the nation in celebrating August as the 110th anniversary of the first Korean immigrants arriving here in the United States. The Institute for Corean-American Studies (ICAS) is hosting its summer symposium on this very topic: *The Korean Diaspora: Challenges facing the Korean-American Community*.

The first Korean immigrants – 102 men, women, and children -- arrived in in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1903 to work as laborers on sugar plantations. Since then, Korean Americans have settled across America, which is now home to the second largest Korean population outside of Korea itself. More than 80,000 Korean-Americans live in the National Capital Region, making this the third largest Korean community in the United States. In the 11th Congressional District of Virginia, which I represent, is home to a thriving Korean-American community. Asian-Americans comprise the largest ethnic group in our District, which is more than 40% minority and in which more than 1-in-4 is foreign born.

Earlier this spring, I was pleased to join my colleagues in welcoming President Park Geun-hye of the Republic of Korea, who addressed a joint session of Congress. She spoke eloquently about her long-term hope for restoring trust across the Korean peninsula and fostering a shared sense of economic vitality across Asia. As a co-chair of the Congressional Korea Caucus, I and my colleagues are committed to preserving and further growing the strong relationship we have enjoyed with South Korea for the past 60 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the countless contributions of Korean-Americans and in commemorating the 110th anniversary of the arrival of the first Korean immigrants here in America. I wish ICAS success with its upcoming symposium.