



GERALD E. CONNOLLY

August 10, 2013

Dear Friends,

As Co-Chair of the U.S. House of Representatives Korea Caucus, it is my great honor to welcome you to the ICAS Summer Symposium: *The Korean Diaspora: Challenges facing the Korean-American Community*.

On January 13, 1903, the first Korean immigrants came to the United States when 56 men who had been recruited as laborers on sugar plantations, along with 21 women, and 25 children landed in Honolulu, Hawaii. Within two years, the number of Koreans who migrated to Hawaii had grown to more than 7,000.

In 2010, approximately 1.7 million people of Korean descent lived in the United States, which now is home to the second largest Korean population living outside of Korea. The National Capital Region is home to more than 80,000 Korean-Americans, making it the third largest Korean community in the United States. The 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Virginia, which I represent in Congress, is blessed by its great diversity; more than 1 in 4 residents are foreign born and 40% are minorities. Asian-Americans, particularly Korean-Americans, comprise the largest single ethnic population. Fairfax County, which lies mostly within the 11<sup>th</sup> District, has a sister-city relationship with the Songpa-gu district of Seoul, Korea.

The Korean-American community contributes immeasurably to the Northern Virginia region. A large percent of businesses in Northern Virginia are owned and operated by Korean-Americans. The strong character and work ethic displayed by the Korean-American community are consistent with that of so many other immigrant groups who have come to America in search of a better life for themselves and their children. Education is highly regarded, and honesty and integrity are values that are instilled at a young age and continue to develop throughout life.

In recognition of the 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first Korean immigration to the United States, I have prepared a submission to the Congressional Record to honor the countless contributions of Korean-Americans and to celebrate the lasting partnership between the United States and South Korea.

I hope that you enjoy this symposium and wish you continued success.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gerald E. Connolly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress