

ACT 8

H.B. NO. 1950

A Bill for an Act Relating to Kimchi Day.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that 2024 is the one hundred twenty-first anniversary of the arrival of the first Korean immigrant workers in Hawaii. Since that time, Korean Americans in Hawaii have greatly contributed to the diverse and vibrant culture of the State. Today, approximately 50,000 residents in Hawaii consider themselves ethnically Korean.

The legislature further finds that kimchi is a traditional Korean dish with a long, rich history that began over two millennia ago during the time of the Three Kingdoms of Korea. Kimchi has been a part of meals shared between friends and family in the Hawaiian Islands for as long as the State has been welcoming Korean immigrants. The legislature notes that Hawaii island is the birthplace of the first commercialized bottled kimchi in the country. Hannah Sun Nai Kim, the daughter of a Korean immigrant family who arrived in Honolulu Harbor in 1904, started her Kohala Kim Chee business in Hawaii in the 1940s.

The legislature also finds that currently, there are three hundred thirty-five different types of kimchi registered in South Korea. In 2013, the traditional process of preparing kimchi, “kimjang”, was recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Kimchi can increasingly be found for sale at many major retailers across the United States and is becoming an international staple, particularly as it is used in the place of slaws, pickles, and sauerkraut in fusion cuisine. Kimchi is an excellent source of probiotics, folate, beta-carotene, choline, potassium, calcium, and vitamins A, C, and K. Many of these nutrients can contribute to lower rates of stroke, cancer, and diabetes. South Korea celebrates “National Kimchi Day” each November 22, as the date represents the eleven major ingredients in kimchi and the twenty-two health benefits of the food. In 2021, California passed a resolution designating November 22 as Kimchi Day, and Virginia passed a similar resolution in 2022.

In 2023, the legislature passed House Concurrent Resolution No. 33 to establish the first Kimchi Day in Hawaii on November 22, 2023. Across the State, the Korean-American community celebrated with festivals, cultural performances, and kimchi making demonstrations, and shared kimchi traditions. Additionally, on November 22, 2023, the first Kimchi Museum opened in Hawaii to celebrate the State’s first Kimchi Day and share the rich history of kimchi and the many different types of kimchi.

The legislature additionally finds that the establishment of an annual Kimchi Day will foster economic commercial relations with Korean American businesses in the State and across the continental United States. By celebrating Kimchi Day, the State will be able to offer an additional annual attraction to draw tourists and locals interested in experiencing and celebrating kimchi and Korean history and culture.

Therefore, the legislature now finds it appropriate to designate November 22 of each year as “Kimchi Day” in the State.

SECTION 2. Chapter 8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§8- Kimchi Day. November 22 of each year shall be known and designated as “Kimchi Day”. This day is not and shall not be construed to be a state holiday.”

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved April 19, 2024.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.