

House Resolution 1700

By: Representative Park of the 107th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and honoring Stephanie Cho, Sonjui Kumar, Sarah Park, Victoria Huynh, and
2 Aparna Bhattacharyya for their extraordinary leadership following the Atlanta-area spa
3 shootings and their ongoing commitment to justice, healing, and the safety of Asian
4 American communities in Georgia; and for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, on March 16, 2021, the State of Georgia and the nation were shaken by the
6 tragic shootings at three Atlanta-area spas that claimed eight lives, including six women of
7 Asian descent, devastating families and communities as well as profoundly impacting the
8 Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community; and

9 WHEREAS, the tragedy highlighted the rise in anti-Asian violence and the intersection of
10 racial bias, gender-based violence, and vulnerabilities faced by immigrant women in
11 marginalized industries; and

12 WHEREAS, the AAPI community in metro Atlanta, one of the fastest-growing and most
13 vibrant in the nation, demonstrated resilience, unity, and compassion by supporting grieving
14 families, advocating for justice, and reaffirming its commitment to dignity, safety, and
15 belonging; and

16 WHEREAS, the event underscored the critical need for culturally and linguistically
17 responsive services for immigrant communities, especially immigrant women who face
18 barriers related to language, economic vulnerability, and fear of seeking help; and

19 WHEREAS, community leaders across Georgia mobilized in the immediate aftermath and
20 in subsequent years to support victims' families, ensure culturally responsive services, and
21 amplify the voices of those most affected; and

22 WHEREAS, Stephanie Cho, then executive director of Asian Americans Advancing
23 Justice-Atlanta and now executive director of Demo Lab South, led a culturally and
24 trauma-informed rapid response, mobilized local and national partners, established and
25 managed a victims' fund, and advanced policy and media engagement to address anti-Asian
26 hate and systemic inequities; and

27 WHEREAS, Sonjui Kumar, board chair of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta and
28 founding member of KPPB Law, provided leadership in the organization's
29 community-centered response, supported the victims' fund, offered probate services to the
30 victims, and strengthened coalitions advocating for civil rights and community protections;
31 and

32 WHEREAS, Sarah Park, president of the Korean American Coalition - Metro Atlanta and
33 the first Korean American elected to the Duluth City Council, served as a strong voice for
34 the Korean American community, mobilizing outreach, multilingual direct services,
35 advocacy, and public awareness to ensure the experiences of Asian American women and
36 immigrant workers were recognized; and

37 WHEREAS, Victoria Huynh, longtime advocate for Asian American communities, former
38 vice president of a local Asian nonprofit, and founder of the Georgia AAPI Hub, coordinated
39 advocacy, remembrance events, engaging community grassroots organizations and leaders
40 through the Georgia Stop AAPI Hate Coalition, and collective responses that honored the
41 victims while strengthening community solidarity and resilience; and

42 WHEREAS, Aparna Bhattacharyya, executive director of Raksha Inc., served as a bridge to
43 victim advocates and mass violence response professionals, connecting the community
44 response to leaders experienced in administering victim funds and providing culturally
45 responsive trauma-informed services while elevating the intersection of gender-based
46 violence and anti-Asian hate; and

47 WHEREAS, the leadership of these women exemplifies the critical role Asian American
48 women play in advocating for justice, healing, and safety, particularly in moments of crisis;
49 and

50 WHEREAS, it is fitting during Women's History Month to recognize their courage,
51 compassion, and determination in organizing rapid community responses, honoring victims,
52 supporting families, and empowering communities to seek justice and healing; and

53 WHEREAS, through collaboration with organizations, faith leaders, advocates, and
54 policymakers, these leaders coordinated vigils, provided culturally competent resources,
55 advocated for victims' families, and elevated discussions on community safety, racial justice,
56 and the dignity of Asian American women; and

57 WHEREAS, as Georgia marks the fifth anniversary of the Atlanta-area spa shootings, it is
58 proper to recognize the individuals whose compassion, leadership, and tireless advocacy
59 continue to guide communities toward justice, healing, and unity; and

60 WHEREAS, the dedication and service of Stephanie Cho, Sonjui Kumar, Sarah Park,
61 Victoria Huynh, and Aparna Bhattacharyya reflect the highest ideals of leadership and civic
62 engagement, strengthening Georgia's commitment to dignity, respect, and safety for all
63 communities.

64 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
65 the members of this body recognize and honor Stephanie Cho, Sonjui Kumar, Sarah Park,
66 Victoria Huynh, and Aparna Bhattacharyya for their extraordinary leadership, unwavering
67 commitment to victims, and dedication to strengthening communities following the
68 Atlanta-area spa shootings.

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
70 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to
71 Stephanie Cho, Sonjui Kumar, Sarah Park, Victoria Huynh, and Aparna Bhattacharyya.