



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen T. Chan

Senator Chan Recognizes The Legacy and Sacrifice of Chinese American Pioneers

BENJAMIN LIANG May 14, 2025

| ISSUE: **CHINESE-AMERICANS, COMMUNITY RECOGNITION, ASIAN AMERICAN HISTORY**



Senator Chan Honors Chinese Laborers Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 14, 2025

Albany, NY — Today, the New York State Senate passed Resolution J958, commemorating the invaluable contributions of Chinese laborers in the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad and honoring their enduring legacy in American history.

Speaking in support of the resolution, Senator Chan delivered a powerful and personal address to the Senate chamber, recounting the often-overlooked story of the “coolie” laborers- many of whom came from the Taishan region () of China and were subjected to brutal working conditions, racism, and violence. Senator Chan shared that he is a direct descendant of one such laborer, offering a poignant reminder that history lives on through today’s generations.

q

Most of the coolie laborers came from a province in China, a region called Taishan. That's where a lot of my constituents are from, Taishan, and that's where my ancestors are from Taishan. So a lot of us are descendants of these taishanese people, and Taishan was number one feeder region, region of coolie laborers to the United States in the 1800s some of my distant cousins still live in Idaho and California today, as well as Wyoming.

Senator Chan recounted the horrific events of that day in Rock Springs, Wyoming, when white miners attacked and killed dozens of Chinese residents in an explosion of racial violence. “Homes were burned, people were mutilated and driven out. These are chapters of American history that are rarely taught but must never be forgotten.”

Resolution J958 marks the anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad and aims to formally recognize the contributions of Chinese workers, many of whom endured unimaginable hardship to make one of the greatest infrastructure feats in history a reality.

b

q

The Chinese that came after that, contributed greatly and became a very important community that helped drive America forward. The Transcontinental Railroad was completed, as we know today is the anniversary, and America rocket slid it into a new era of growth and prosperity like never seen before, and we have to thank among others, the Cooley Laborers

This resolution stands as a solemn recognition of their legacy and a commitment by the New York State Senate to remember the full scope of American history, including the immigrant labor that helped shape it.

Watch the full speech [here: https://youtu.be/VzMJk4XFBxM](https://youtu.be/VzMJk4XFBxM)

For more information:

CONTACT:

The Office of Senator Stephen T. Chan

Phone: (718) 333-0311

Email: Chan@NYsenate.gov