

Date of Hearing: April 23, 2019

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, TOURISM, AND
INTERNET MEDIA

Kansen Chu, Chair

AB 1742 (Santiago) – As Amended March 21, 2019

SUBJECT: Korean American National Museum.

SUMMARY: This bill would appropriate \$4,000,000 from the General Fund to the Natural Resources Agency to be distributed as a grant, during the 2019–2020 fiscal year, by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency to the Korean American National Museum located in the City of Los Angeles for the purpose of assisting construction of that museum. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Provides that the sum of four million dollars (\$4,000,000) be appropriated from the General Fund to the Natural Resources Agency to be distributed by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency (Secretary) as a grant to the Korean American National Museum located in the City of Los Angeles for the purpose of assisting construction of that museum.
- 2) Further provides that, before the Secretary distributes those funds, the Secretary shall confirm, in the manner as determined by the Secretary, that the Korean American National Museum satisfies all of the following criteria:
 - a) The museum will showcase the impact of Korean American culture on American society.
 - b) The museum will exhibit and display the global trends of Korean and Korean American culture.
 - c) The museum will provide school programs, tours, and exhibits specifically designed for school groups.
 - d) The museum has adopted a mission statement that states that the museum will work towards the goal of building an international network of corporate and cultural partnerships between the United States and Korea and find avenues to showcase the cross-cultural influences prevalent in the state and in the City of Los Angeles.
- 3) Requires the Secretary to distribute the funds provided by this section during the 2019–2020 fiscal year.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Cultural and Historical Endowment within the California Department of Natural Resources, consisting of 10 members as specified. Requires that those appointed be persons with distinguished achievements in specified fields, representative of diverse ethnic and other groups, and be geographically balanced.
- 2) Provides that the endowment may apply for and accept federal grants, and allows the endowment to receive gifts, donations, subventions, rents, royalties, and other financial support from public and private sources.

- 3) Allows the endowment to award grants and loans on a competitive basis to public agencies and non-profit organizations, including museums. Requires that priority be given, among others, to projects to preserve, interpret, and enhance understanding and appreciation of the state's subsequent cultural, social, and economic evolution. Allows the endowment to create financial and other incentives to support specified projects.
- 4) Requires public agencies requesting a grant to provide a matching amount of resources which may include resources obtained from other funding agencies, and may include in-kind resources.
- 5) Allows funds to be granted or loaned to a non-profit organization if the non-profit organization enters into an agreement with the endowment on such terms and conditions as the endowment specifies. Specifies requirements relating to non-profits and to grants for real property acquisition.
- 6) Requires the endowment, to the extent that funding is available, to establish a program to assist and enhance the services of the state's museums and of other groups and institutions that undertake cultural projects that are rooted in and reflective of previously underserved communities. Specifies priorities for the program.
- 7) Creates the California Cultural and Historical Endowment Fund, and requires the endowment to report annually to the Legislature on the condition and status of the fund.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, but at least \$4 million dollars. This measure has been keyed fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

- 1) Author's statement of need: *to serve a large and deserving population with a stand-alone museum to preserve their heritage and cultural contributions.* According to the Author, "This bill would approve funds in the amount of \$4 million to go towards the construction and establishment of the Korean American National Museum (KANM) located in Koreatown in LA.

"KANM is currently under construction and set to open in Fall 2020. The institution has received funding from several sources, including \$3.5 million from the City of Los Angeles, \$9.26 million from private donors, \$1.24 million from corporate donors, and \$5 million from banking lenders. In total, the project will cost \$23 million, and this \$4 million appropriation from the Legislature would complete the museum's funding.

"Building this museum is essential to protecting the history and influence of the millions of Koreans and Korean Americans who have made the United States their home, and particularly the over 350,000 Korean Americans living in Southern California. There are several other museums similar to KANM, including the Japanese American Museum and Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles. There is also the Los Angeles County Museum of Art that includes an exhibit on Korean art and culture, however, KANM will be the first and only standalone Korean American museum in the country."

- 2) Supporters: *The Museum will be a center for cultural exchange and education, a catalyst for sharing ideas and resources, and a center for promoting and celebrating the diversity of culture in this country.* According to the Sponsor, the KANM, “The mission of the Korean American National Museum (‘KANM’ or ‘Museum’) is to preserve and interpret the history, experiences, culture, and achievements of Americans of Korean ancestry. In accomplishing its mission, the Museum works to become a center for cultural exchange and education, a catalyst for sharing ideas and resources, and a center for promoting and celebrating the diversity of culture in this country.

Through this permanent museum, we hope to reaffirm the dedication and sacrifice of all the families that have immigrated to this country. The need for a Korean American museum is essential to protecting the vital history and influence of the millions of Koreans and Korean Americans who have made this country their home. We hope the museum will be a touchstone where young and old, new and familiar, can encounter the unique Korean-American experience and witness how it has shaped and been shaped by the American dream.

The Korean American narrative is one with familiar themes to many immigrant cultures, yet unique in its own right. As home to the largest Korean community outside of Korea, the Korean American identity is closely tied to the history of California, especially the development of Los Angeles’ Koreatown. The first Korean immigrant came to California in 1904. Early immigrants were made up primarily of labor workers and political activists. ...1965 marked a watershed moment in both U.S. and Korean American history, with the passing of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. The bill reversed strict immigration policies that systematically excluded Asian immigrants, and with its passing, unprecedented numbers of Koreans entered the US. Since then, Korean Americans have made substantial cultural, financial, and political contributions to the country. *Currently, over 1.8 million Koreans resided in the United States with over 500,000 living in the State of California.*

“The Korean American National Museum was founded in 1991 and began presenting cultural programs spotlighting the Korean American experience. In 1995, KANM opened a temporary site in the heart of LA’s Koreatown. From 1993 to 2014, KANM curated over 20 exhibitions that focused on the culture, history, and arts specific to the Korean American journey. As the only major museum to showcase the impact of Korean American culture on American society, KANM will be the first of its kind in the United States and will be a cultural destination for generations to come. It is anticipated that the Museum’s permanent site will open in 2021.

“With a 20 year history of partnering with local schools, non-profits, and community members, KANM plans on deepening their reach with past partners and creating long-term collaborations with area schools. It plans on providing special school programs/tours/exhibits specifically designed for school- groups with the intention to have these funded through philanthropic partnerships and grants. In addition, KANM will generate a significant amount of both short-term and long-term jobs that will have a direct impact on the local community. KANM will produce approximately 109 FTE construction jobs, 30 FTE consultant jobs, and 20 FTE KANM employees to be serviced by the construction of the Museum. KANM also affords local vendors and suppliers business opportunities with KANM and estimates an additional 88 indirect jobs will be generated from the Project.

Finally, the Museum offers, “The Museum provides an appropriate setting in California to exhibit and showcase the global phenomenon of the Korean and Korean-American culture-wave. In addition to providing a destination for tourists visiting Los Angeles, we hope to build an international network of corporate and cultural partnerships between the United States and Korea. An institution of this kind will provide opportunities for investment and engagement from overseas businesses and provide an avenue to showcase the cross-cultural influences prevalent in our society. From food, film, music, and technology, the Museum will be a leading symbol of international partnership and growth and will engage leading Korean businesses such as Samsung, LG Electronics, Korean Airlines, as well as technology start-ups and creative enterprises.”

3) Prior related legislation.

- a) The Budget Act of 2016 contained \$1 million dollars earmarked for the Armenian American Museum, to be built in Glendale. The following year the 2017-18 Budget Act contained an additional \$3 million dollars for the project to be allocated over the next three years at \$1 million dollars per year, bringing the total commitment to \$4 million.
- b) AB 482 (Atkins), Chapter 590, Statutes of 2013, authorized the CCHE to create a small museum competitive grant program as specified, and required the CCHE to apply to the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for a specialized license plate to fund the grant program, aka the Snoopy Plate.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Korean American National Museum

Opposition

There is no opposition on file.

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