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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Jun Fujita was born Junnosuke Fujita in a village near Hiroshima, Japan on December 13, 1888; he was among the Issei, the first generation to leave Japan; he settled in Canada first, where he worked odd jobs to save enough money to move to the United States; he then moved to Chicago and graduated from Wendell Phillips Academy High School; he studied mathematics at the Armour Institute of Technology, now known as the Illinois Institute of Technology, and planned to become an engineer; and

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WHEREAS, The Japanese community in Chicago numbered only in the hundreds, and Jun Fujita made a home for himself among the creative class; to help pay his way through college, he took a job as the first and only photojournalist at the Chicago Evening Post, which later became the Chicago Daily News; he soon fell in love with Florence Carr; recognized as a mixed-race couple, they opted not to have children out of concerns over how a biracial child would be perceived and were prevented from marrying for many years due to laws prohibiting interracial marriages and relationships; and

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WHEREAS, Jun Fujita established himself as a master in photojournalism when the profession was still in its infancy in 1919; he was one of the first photojournalists and the first

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1 Japanese-American photojournalist; he was the only
2 photographer to capture two of the century's biggest events,
3 the aftermath of the St. Valentine's Day massacre and the
4 sinking of the S.S. Eastland; and

5 WHEREAS, Jun Fujita also photographed and documented the
6 racism against African-Americans in the Chicago area; his
7 photograph of a black man who was beaten unconscious and lying
8 on the ground inches away from the bloodied brick used by his
9 assailants is one of the most viscerally powerful images from
10 Chicago's 1919 race riots; and

11 WHEREAS, Jun Fujita typically let his images speak for
12 themselves; in the case of the photograph of the man beaten
13 during the riots, the photographer took the injured man to the
14 hospital, where he later died, and only then rushed back to the
15 newspaper offices with his film of the murder; and

16 WHEREAS, Noted images from the 1919 race riots are among
17 the few photographs Jun Fujita actually saved of his own work,
18 an indicator of their significance; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
20 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
21 we recognize the importance of Jun Fujita's photography and the
22 impact it had on highlighting the realities of racism at the

1 time; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That we urge that the history of Jun Fujita and
3 his work be included in the African American history curriculum
4 that is currently mandated and taught in all schools in the
5 State; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
7 presented to the family of Jun Fujita, the Chicago History
8 Museum, the Illinois Museum Association, the DuSable Museum of
9 African American History, and the Illinois Press Photographers
10 Association.