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A Tribute to Iris S. Chang

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**HONORABLE MICHAEL M. HONDA
OF CALIFORNIA**

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Iris Chang, a courageous historian, author and champion of Asian and Asian American history, human rights and historical redress. During her brief yet remarkable professional career, Iris touched the lives of countless people, shedding light on past injustices and atrocities that had been forgotten or ignored. In her personal life, she was a loving wife and mother, a close friend and an inspiration to many. Iris is survived by her husband, Dr. Brett Douglas, her son, Christopher Douglas, her parents, Shau-Jin and Ying-Ying Chang, and her brother, Michael Chang.

Iris Shun-Ru Chang was born on March 28, 1968 in Princeton, New Jersey. She studied journalism at the University of Illinois, and received her Master's in Science Writing from Johns Hopkins University. While at Johns

Hopkins, Iris was commissioned to research the life of Tsien Hsue-Shen, a Chinese American scientist who was deported to China during the Communist scare of the 1960s and subsequently founded China's ballistics program. Her research led to her critically acclaimed debut, *The Thread of the Silkworm*, which addressed the paranoia and racism of the McCarthy era.

As a historian and an activist, Iris fought passionately for historical justice and reconciliation. Her book, *The Rape of Nanking*, chronicled the horrific capture of Nanking during Japan's invasion of China in 1937, and was instrumental in educating the international community about Japanese military atrocities during World War II—human rights violations that had gone unwritten and unacknowledged for decades. Her efforts to seek redress for the crimes at Nanking brought her in

conflict with the Japanese government and communities worldwide, but Iris was unwavering in her commitment to justice and truth.

Her most recent book, *The Chinese in America: A Narrative History*, is a nonfiction work that captures the sentiment, perspective, and feelings of the Chinese American community. Several weeks ago, East/West Bank presented 420 copies of the book to schools throughout California to spread understanding of the historic challenges faced by Chinese Americans.

In addition to her books, which decried social and historical injustices against the Asian and Asian American communities in the United States and internationally, Iris was also a member of the Committee of 100, a national nonpartisan organization of Chinese-American leaders who work to address issues important to

the Chinese-American community. For her work, she earned the Peace and International Cooperation Award from John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and was named “Woman of the Year” by the Organization of Chinese-American Women.

Iris will be remembered for her work and service to the community. Certainly, the millions of people whom she touched through her writings and her activism will not forget the moral vision she brought on past injustices to the international community and the public impact of her work in promoting peace between peoples of differing races and backgrounds. Her fierce pride of her Chinese-American heritage empowered others with the certainty that they were truly Americans despite their ancestry. Our community has lost a role model and close friend; the world has lost one of its finest and most passionate advocates of social and historical justice.

Michael M. Honda

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致敬张纯如

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迈克尔·M·本田，加州众议员

议长先生,今天我提议纪念张纯如，一位勇敢的历史学者、作家，亚洲和亚裔美国史、人权与史实真相的捍卫者。她在短暂却卓越非凡的职业生涯中，揭露了历史上被人们忘却或者漠视的不公与暴行，触动了无数人的心灵。在个人生活中，她是一位贤妻良母、一名亲密的朋友、一个激励众人的榜样。张纯如在世的亲人有：她的丈夫布瑞特·李·道格拉斯博士、儿子克里斯托弗·道格拉斯、她的父母张绍进和张盈盈、以及弟弟迈克尔·张。

张纯如于 1968 年 3 月 28 日生于新泽西州的普林斯顿市。她在伊利诺伊大学学习了新闻学，随后又在约翰霍普金斯大学获得了科学写作硕士学位。在约翰霍普金斯大学期间，张如纯潜心研究钱学森。这位美籍华人科学家由于当局对共产主义的恐惧在二十世纪六十年代被驱逐出境返回中国，随后缔造了中国的弹道工程事业。她的研究最终形成了她备受好评的处女作：《蚕丝：钱学森传》，这本书细致地描述了麦卡锡主义时期的多疑偏执与种族偏见。

作为一名历史学者和社会活动家，张纯如倾其一生寻求历史正义与和解。她的著作，《南京浩劫：被遗忘的大屠杀》，详细记载了 1937 年侵华日军在南京犯下惨绝人寰的罪行，成为了教育国际社会就日军在二战期间犯下的种种暴行的有力史料——这些残酷践踏人权的事件几十年以来始终未被记载或者未被公开承认。她积极参与向侵华日军在南京罪行的索赔，这使她与日本政府和一些组织产生了冲突，但这丝毫不能动摇张纯如对正义与真相的追求。

她最新出版的书，《华人在美国》，是一部反映美国华人群体的情感、视角和体验的纪实著作。几个星期前，华美银行将 420 册《华人在美国》赠送给加州的学校，以传播对华裔美国人曾经面临的那些历史性挑战的理解。

张纯如，除了她的书籍谴责了美国和国际社会对亚洲和美国亚裔人群的在社会和历史上的不公，她本人还是“百人会”的成员。这是一个由致力于解决美国华人社会重大相关问题的美籍华人领袖组成的全国性无党派组织。由于她的贡献，张纯如荣获了由约翰·D·和凯瑟琳·T·麦克阿瑟基金颁发的“和平与国际合作奖”。同时她还被美国华裔妇女协会评为“年度杰出女性”。

我们将铭记张纯如的事迹以及她对亚裔社区做出的卓越贡献。被她的著作和社会活动感动的几百万人，永远不会忘记她正视国际社会中历史的不公平的道德观，也不会忘记她一生所致力于的不同族裔不同背景人群之和平共处的事迹，以及其产生的公众影响。张纯如有着强烈的华裔自豪感；这种自豪感激励着人们，让大家坚信，不管个人的祖先是哪个族裔，每个人都可以成为真正的美国人。张纯如离开了我们，我们亚裔社群痛失了一个楷模、一位挚友；世界失去了一名最杰出、最有激情的为社会与历史正义而奋战的勇士。

（陈昕 译， 马海宁 & 杨惠 校译）