

WASHINGTON, DC – On January 16th, we honor the heroic life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a man who inspired us with his noble vision and compassionate message for humanity. Dr. King preached non-violence in the fight for freedom, shaking the foundations of segregation with peace and love. His "I have a dream" speech in 1963 changed America, sparking a movement that embraced civil rights, justice, equality and human dignity for all.

We have celebrated considerable successes due to Dr. King's Dream. Voting rights, housing, schools and transportation are now accessible to all Americans. Millions of African Americans have joined the middle class, and minority-owned businesses are a vital part of our economy. Moreover, African Americans are graduating from college and entering high-paying jobs in ever increasing numbers. Although these achievements were not easily won, Dr. King's Dream has persevered.

As Representative of Silicon Valley, the most ethnically diverse area of the country, I appreciate Dr. King's message of equality. As Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, coordinating efforts with the Congressional Black Caucus and Hispanic Caucus, we are dedicated to the elimination of racial health disparities, as well as promoting employment and fighting educational inequality. And from personal experience as a third generation Japanese American, I strongly identify with Dr. King's crusade against discrimination.

On this day of remembrance, we must recognize that the fight goes on. Despite many achievements, millions of Americans are still denied social, economic, and educational equality. Poverty persists throughout our country, and affirmative action programs face widespread hostility.

Dr. King's Dream embodies an ideal for our nation to pursue: Americans of all ethnicities and creeds, living together with dignity and hope. To admire Dr. King's life requires us to follow his legacy. Let us honor his life by working together to continue to build an America where every child enjoys all the privileges of equal opportunity and freedom.