



Legislation Text

File #: 49392, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Celebrating and honoring the life and work of Paul H. Kusuda.

Body

WHEREAS, Paul H. Kusuda devoted his life to helping others and had an immense impact in the City of Madison, Dane County and the State of Wisconsin, especially in addressing the needs of the elderly, refugees, immigrants, underprivileged youth, Asian community, the homeless and the advancement of affordable health care for all; and,

WHEREAS, Paul obtained his Masters of Social Work in 1949, from the University of Chicago, worked for the State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections and was Chief of the Bureau of Research. He retired as the Deputy Director of Juvenile Services for the Department of Corrections in 1987; and,

WHEREAS, upon his retirement in 1987, his wife expressed concern that he might succumb to being a do-nothing homebody. Because of his deep-seated values, Paul felt the need to “give back to the community” for the good life he had had and the comfortable retirement he was about to enter. For Paul, retirement was not an entitlement or a reward for work previously performed, it was another opportunity to personally identify inequity and engage in actions of change to the best of his ability for the betterment of his community; and,

WHEREAS, it was Paul’s awareness and understanding of the importance of voluntary action in order to create change within a community, as Paul states, “I changed from being an ‘inward thinking’ person to one of ‘outward thinking’. I became interested in making a difference for others”; and,

WHEREAS, locally, his involvement in advocacy included:

- City of Madison Committee on Aging (Paul also served on its predecessor Senior Citizen Advisory Committee). His efforts included having the City’s Committee on Aging moved to be directly under the Mayor, thus enabling it to provide a stronger advocacy role for Madison older adults.
- Dane County Area Agency on Aging Board; Legislative Advocacy Committee, including service as past Chair. He proposed that Dane County add to its legislative agenda action to advocate inclusion of resources in the state budget for special employment training and placement services for adults age 50 and over.
- SOS Senior Council; past chair. The Council enrolls participants in the Capitol Care Program, which SOS negotiated with Meriter and University Hospitals. The program allows enrollees, at or below the federal poverty level, to obtain health care at either hospital without having to pay the Medicare co-pay.
- Elderly Services Network of Dane County. Paul represented the SOS Senior Council to this group, which is organized to educate itself, share information on elderly issues and concerns, and enable staff networking with one another.
- WI Organization for Asian Americans. Originally created as a place for Asian American state workers to share information and obtain support, it also encouraged younger Asian Americans to consider state

and local government as a career. It now serves primarily as a means to share culture and to socialize and secondarily to raise Asian visibility in the local community; and,

WHEREAS, Paul was the recipient of many awards including South Central Wisconsin Social Worker of the Year, Special Recognition Award by the American Civil Liberties Union, Dane County Martin Luther King, Jr. Recognition Award, Appreciation Award by the Wisconsin Japanese American Citizens League, Asian Wisconsin Editors Award and The Capital City Hues Appreciation Award; and,

WHEREAS, Paul Kusuda will be remembered as optimistic, cheerful and a tireless advocate for those in need, even up to the time he passed away on November 10, 2017, at age 95,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Madison extends its condolences to Paul's family and friends and invites all Madisonians to celebrate and honor the life and work of Paul H. Kusuda by giving back to their community.