

# H.R. 826

## Divided Families Reunification Act

**Status:** Introduced by Rep. Grace Meng and Rep. Van Taylor, 26 co-sponsors.

### What the bill does:

- Directs the U.S. Secretary of State to consult with his South Korean counterpart to identify opportunities for Korean Americans to participate in future family reunions, including by video.
- Directs the State Department's Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues to work with the Korean American community to identify those same opportunities.

### Background:

At one point, an estimated 100,000 separated families of the Korean War resided in the United States. Many of them have passed away, and most who remain are in their 80s or 90s. They long to reunite with their families in North Korea, but time is running out.

**“There are nearly two million people of Korean descent in the U.S. I have had the honor to meet some of the divided Korean American family members, and it breaks my heart that their chance of a reunion with their loved ones grows less likely each day. Many of them are in their 70s–90s, and time is of the essence to be reunited with their families. We have the technology and resources to make this happen—we just need the leadership to see this through.”**

— Rep. Grace Meng

**“While many Americans are fortunate enough to be able to sit around a table with relatives, recall shared memories, and embrace the ones we love, Korean American families across our country haven't been able to communicate with family members living in North Korea for decades.”**

— Rep. Van Taylor

### Why the timing is critical:

- Many separated families of the Korean War have passed away, and most who remain are in their 80s or 90s. Time is running out for aging Korean Americans hoping to reunite with loved ones in North Korea.
- The division of the Korean Peninsula due to the unresolved Korean War has separated more than an estimated 10 million families, including some who are now citizens of the United States and have not been able to see their families in nearly 70 years.
- Since 1985, 21 family reunions have been held between North and South Korea. But Korean Americans who may have family members in North Korea, have not been able to participate.