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SUSAN C. LEE
SECRETARY OF STATE

January 26, 2024

To the friends and loved ones of Mr. I-Yao Shen,

As Maryland's Secretary of State, I extend my sincere condolences on the passing of the esteemed Professor I-Yao Shen on January 22nd at his home in Clarksville, Maryland. The State of Maryland mourns the loss of a remarkable individual whose contributions have left an indelible mark on the fields of academia, international relations, and philanthropy.

Born on November 9, 1926, I-Yao Shen led a distinguished life. A graduate of Columbia University and a professor from the University of the District of Columbia, his scholarly pursuits, particularly his work at the Library of Congress and his advocacy for understanding Chinese Exclusion laws and practices around the world, have been instrumental in shedding light on the history that has shaped our nation and the world. Author of the influential book "A Century of Chinese Exclusion Aboard," which has been a classical work of reference in the study of overseas Chinese in many colleges and universities in China, is a testament to Professor Shen's commitment to preserving and sharing knowledge.

Of Hakka Chinese ancestry, I-Yao Shen's legacy extends beyond academic pursuits. His philanthropic endeavors, including a generous donation to a school in his hometown of Meizhou, Guangdong Province, China, underscore his commitment to education causes and the betterment of communities. Furthermore, his dedication to fostering better relations between the United States and China was further exemplified by being among the first Chinese-Americans to visit China after the normalization of diplomatic ties in the early 1970s and by serving as a bridge between the Chinese American community in the Washington, DC area and visiting diplomats from China.

As we reflect on the life of I-Yao Shen, we are reminded of his pioneering spirit, his tireless efforts in promoting cultural understanding, and his selfless contributions to education. His impact on our state and the global community will be remembered with admiration and gratitude.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan C. Lee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan C. Lee

Maryland Secretary of State