

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 97-4614, by Representatives Tokuda, Veloria, Clements, Sterk, Mulliken, Wolfe, Schoesler, Constantine, Mason, Doumit, Dickerson, L. Thomas, Talcott, Hatfield, Conway, Cooke, D. Schmidt, Cody, B. Thomas and Regala

WHEREAS, On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which authorized the forced assembly, evacuation, and internment of approximately 12,000 Japanese Americans residing in the state of Washington; and

WHEREAS, The order for assembly and detention at Camp Harmony in Puyallup, Washington, prior to evacuation and subsequent internment caused the Japanese Americans from the state of Washington to lose millions of dollars in property and assets, to suffer immeasurable physical and psychological damage, and to be deprived of their constitutional liberties without due process of law; and

WHEREAS, The alleged purpose of this drastic course of action was to prevent Japanese Americans, all of whom were deemed disloyal and untrustworthy, from committing acts of espionage and sabotage against the United States during the period of its involvement in World War II; and

WHEREAS, An overwhelming number of Japanese Americans from the state of Washington responded to questions of their loyalty and patriotism by volunteering from within barbed wire camps to serve in the United States Military Intelligence Service and the U.S. Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the latter of which became the most decorated American unit of its size in World War II with seven Presidential Unit Citations, a Congressional Medal of Honor, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses, 588 Silver Stars, 4,000 Bronze Stars, 9,486 Purple Hearts, and a total of 18 decorations from France and Italy; and

WHEREAS, A few equally patriotic Japanese Americans like Gordon Hirabayashi, then a student at the University of Washington, were willing to face imprisonment to seek justice by challenging the constitutionality of the evacuation and internment orders; and

WHEREAS, Hindsight has proven that the predominant factor that actually led to the internment of Japanese Americans was not a military necessity to protect the United States from possible espionage or sabotage, but was the result of "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership"; and

WHEREAS, Japanese American internees from the state of Washington endured economic, physical, and psychological hardship and suffered in silence for over forty years before the state of Washington provided monetary redress and reparations to municipal and state employees;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives, along with the people of Washington, pause in its endeavors this day to recognize the Japanese American internees from the state of Washington and honor their patience, heroism, sacrifice, and patriotic loyalty, and to remember the lessons and blessings of liberty and justice for all; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to the Nisei Veterans Committee, the Military Intelligence Service - Northwest Association, and the Japanese American Citizens League.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4614 adopted by the House of Representatives
February 19, 1997.

Timothy A. Martin, Chief Clerk