

SENATE RESOLUTION
8617

By Senators Hasegawa, Hobbs, Brown, Dammeier, Roach, Chase, McCoy, Fraser, Liiias, Jayapal, Cleveland, Kohl-Welles, Miloscia, Pearson, Darneille, Becker, Conway, Frockt, Keiser, and Rolfes

1 WHEREAS, On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt
2 issued Executive Order 9066 which authorized the military to forcibly
3 remove and incarcerate more than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry
4 from the West Coast, including 12,000 Japanese-American residents of
5 Washington State; and

6 WHEREAS, The first Civilian Evacuation Order gave Japanese-
7 Americans from Bainbridge Island less than one week to leave behind
8 homes, farms, businesses, friends, and family and to report to
9 hastily constructed detention centers like Camp Harmony on the
10 grounds of the Western Washington Fair in Puyallup; and

11 WHEREAS, This drastic course of action allegedly aimed to prevent
12 acts of espionage and sabotage by Japanese-Americans who were deemed
13 untrustworthy and disloyal to the United States; and

14 WHEREAS, On March 23, 1943, the War Department organized a
15 segregated unit of Japanese-Americans, many of whom reported for
16 military duty from concentration camps surrounded by barbed wire in
17 which they and their families were detained; and

18 WHEREAS, More than 12,000 volunteers responded to unfounded
19 questions of their loyalty and patriotism by amassing a battle record
20 unparalleled in United States military history that, according to
21 General Douglas MacArthur's chief of intelligence, "saved a million
22 lives and shortened the war by two years"; and

23 WHEREAS, Equally loyal and patriotic Japanese-Americans fought to
24 protect our constitutional rights and liberties through dissent and
25 civil disobedience, like University of Washington student Gordon
26 Hirabayashi who was arrested, convicted, and imprisoned for defying
27 the military curfew on select civilians and refusing to evacuate when
28 ordered; and

29 WHEREAS, In 1982, the Congressional Commission on Wartime
30 Relocation and Internment of Civilians found "no military or security
31 reason for the internment" of persons of Japanese ancestry, but
32 determined it "was caused by racial prejudice, war hysteria, and a
33 failure of political leadership"; and

1 WHEREAS, As a result of this travesty of justice, Japanese-
2 Americans suffered immense economic loss of property and assets,
3 immeasurable physical and psychological harm, and were deprived
4 of their constitutional liberties without due process of law;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, President Gerald Ford rescinded Executive Order
7 9066 in 1976, calling upon the American people to "resolve that
8 this kind of action shall never again be repeated"; and

9 WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature enacted token
10 compensatory redress for forty state workers who lost their jobs
11 due to their incarceration, while Congressman Mike Lowry of
12 Washington State introduced federal legislation to provide
13 reparations and an apology to all living former Japanese-
14 American internees, initiating a ten-year quest that ended when
15 President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988;

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State
17 Senate, along with the people of Washington, pause to
18 acknowledge the seventy-third anniversary of the signing of
19 Executive Order 9066, as well as the seventieth anniversary of
20 the end of World War II, to recognize and honor the heroism,
21 sacrifice, patience, and loyalty of the Japanese-American World
22 War II veterans and internees, and to remember the lessons and
23 blessing of liberty and justice for all; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
25 immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the
26 Nisei Veterans Committee, the Military Intelligence Service —
27 Northwest Association, the Japanese American Citizens League,
28 the Japanese Cultural & Community Center of Washington State,
29 and the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American
30 Experience.

31 I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate,
32 do hereby certify that this is a true and
33 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8617,
34 adopted by the Senate
35 February 19, 2015

36 HUNTER G. GOODMAN
37 Secretary of the Senate