

SENATE RESOLUTION

8724

By Senators Hasegawa, Hobbs, Nelson, Brown, Pearson, Dandel, Becker, Conway, Rolfes, Dammeier, Jayapal, Keiser, Cleveland, Roach, Fraser, and Chase

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, personal belongings, farms, businesses, friends, and family
9 and to report to hastily constructed detention centers like Camp
10 Harmony on the grounds of the Western Washington Fair in Puyallup;
11 and

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

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

19 WHEREAS, More than 12,000 volunteers responded to questions of
20 their loyalty and patriotism by amassing a battle record unparalleled
21 in United States military history; and

22 WHEREAS, Equally loyal and patriotic Japanese-Americans fought to
23 protect our constitutional rights and liberties through dissent, like

1 University of Washington student Gordon Hirabayashi who was
2 arrested, convicted, and imprisoned for defying the military
3 curfew on select civilians and refusing to evacuate when
4 ordered; and

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

10 WHEREAS, As a result of this travesty of justice, Japanese-
11 Americans suffered immense economic loss of property and assets,
12 immeasurable physical and psychological harm, and were deprived
13 of their constitutional liberties without due process of law;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, In 1976, President Gerald Ford rescinded Executive
16 Order 9066 calling upon the American people to "resolve that
17 this kind of action shall never again be repeated"; and

18 WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature enacted token
19 compensatory redress to forty state workers who lost their jobs
20 due to their incarceration; and

21 WHEREAS, Congressman Mike Lowry of Washington State
22 introduced H.R. 5977 to provide reparations and an apology to
23 former Japanese-American internees, thus initiating a ten-year
24 legislative quest that ended when President Ronald Reagan signed
25 the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; and

26 WHEREAS, General Douglas MacArthur's chief of intelligence
27 claimed, "The Nisei saved a million lives and shortened the war
28 by two years";

29 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State
30 Senate pause to acknowledge the seventy-fourth anniversary of
31 the signing of Executive Order 9066, to recognize and honor the
32 heroism, sacrifice, patience, and loyalty of the Japanese-
33 American World War II veterans, internees, and civil rights
34 activists, and to remember the lessons and blessings of liberty
35 and justice for all; and

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
37 immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the

1 Nisei Veterans Committee, the Military Intelligence Service —
2 Northwest Association, the Japanese American Citizens League,
3 the Japanese Cultural & Community Center of Washington State,
4 the Consul General of Japan in Seattle, and the Wing Luke Museum
5 of the Asian Pacific American Experience.

6 I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate,
7 do hereby certify that this is a true and
8 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8724,
9 adopted by the Senate
10 February 17, 2016

11 HUNTER G. GOODMAN
12 Secretary of the Senate