

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2017-4613, by Representatives Stonier, Santos, Appleton, Bergquist, Chapman, Dolan, Frame, Graves, Johnson, Kirby, Ortiz-Self, Orwall, Ryu, Sells, Senn, Slatter, Pettigrew, and Tharinger

1 WHEREAS, Seventy-five years ago, on February 19, 1942, President
2 Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which authorized
3 the United States military to forcibly remove and incarcerate more
4 than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast,
5 including 12,000 Japanese-American residents of 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 report to hastily constructed detention centers like Camp Harmony
10 on the grounds of the Washington State 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 the concentration camps surrounded by barbed wire
17 in which they and their families were detained; and

18 WHEREAS, More than 12,000 volunteers responded to questions about
19 their loyalty and patriotism by amassing a battle record unparalleled
20 in United States military history with 7 Presidential Unit Citations,
21 21 Medals of Honor, 29 Distinguished Service Crosses, 1 Distinguished
22 Service Medal, 588 Silver Stars, more than 4,000 Bronze Stars, 22
23 Legion of Merit Medals, 145 Soldier's Medals, 9,486 Purple Hearts, 16

1 decorations from France and Italy, and, in 2010, the Congressional
2 Gold Medal; and

3 WHEREAS, Equally loyal and patriotic Japanese-Americans fought to
4 protect our constitutional rights and liberties through dissent, like
5 University of Washington student Gordon Hirabayashi who was arrested,
6 convicted, and imprisoned for defying the military curfew on select
7 civilians and refusing to evacuate when ordered; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1982, the Congressional commission on wartime
9 relocation and internment of civilians found "no military or security
10 reason for the internment" of persons of Japanese ancestry, but
11 determined the cause of the internment as "racial prejudice, war
12 hysteria, and a failure of political leadership"; and

13 WHEREAS, Through this travesty of justice, Japanese-Americans
14 suffered immense economic loss of property and assets, immeasurable
15 physical and psychological harm, and were deprived of their
16 constitutional liberties without due process of law; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1979, Washington State Congressman Mike Lowry
18 introduced H.R. 5977 to provide reparations and an apology to the
19 Japanese-American internees, thus initiating a ten-year legislative
20 quest that ended when President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil
21 Liberties Act of 1988; and

22 WHEREAS, Throughout Washington State, the few remaining survivors
23 of the European and Asian Pacific battlefields of World War II and of
24 American incarceration camps live their golden years in quiet
25 contrast to their extraordinary acts of conscience and valor while
26 all of America continues to benefit from their heroic patriotism;

27 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State House
28 of Representatives pause to acknowledge the seventy-fifth anniversary
29 of the signing of Executive Order 9066; to recognize and remember
30 Japanese-American veterans, internees, and civil rights activists
31 from the State of Washington; and to honor the lessons and blessings
32 of liberty and justice for all; and

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
34 immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of
35 Representatives to the Nisei Veterans Committee, the Military
36 Intelligence Service-Northwest Association, Densho, the Japanese-
37 American Citizens League, the Japanese Cultural and Community Center

1 of Washington State, and the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific
2 American Experience.

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I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4613 adopted by the House of Representatives
February 15, 2017

Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk