

SENATE RESOLUTION

8678

By Senators Hasegawa, Hobbs, Brown, Billig, Darneille, Muzzall, Nguyen, and Wagoner

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State
32 Senate pause to acknowledge the seventy-eighth anniversary of
33 the signing of Executive Order 9066; to recognize and remember
34 Japanese American veterans, incarcerated, and civil rights
35 activists from the State of Washington, and to honor the lessons
36 and blessings of liberty and justice for all; and

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

1 Nisei Veterans Committee, Densho, the Japanese American Citizens
2 League, the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Washington
3 State, and the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American
4 Experience.

5 I, Brad Hendrickson, Secretary of the Senate,
6 do hereby certify that this is a true and
7 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8678,
8 adopted by the Senate
9 February 19, 2020

10 BRAD HENDRICKSON
11 Secretary of the Senate