

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 118

Supporting the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and internment of individuals and families during World War II.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 10, 2003

Mrs. BOXER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and internment of individuals and families during World War II.

Whereas, on February 19, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the exclusion of 120,000 Japanese Americans and legal resident aliens from the West coast of the United States and the internment of United States citizens and legal permanent residents of Japanese ancestry in internment camps during World War II;

Whereas the freedom of Italian Americans and German Americans was also restricted during World War II by measures that branded them as enemy aliens and included required identification cards, travel restrictions, seizure of personal property, and internment;

Whereas President Gerald Ford formally rescinded Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1976, in his speech, “An American Promise”;

Whereas Congress adopted legislation which was signed by President Jimmy Carter on July 31, 1980, which established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (the “Commission”) to investigate the claim that the incarceration of Japanese Americans and legal resident aliens during World War II was justified by military necessity;

Whereas the Commission held 20 days of hearings and heard from over 750 witnesses on this matter and published its findings in a report entitled “Personal Justice Denied”;

Whereas the Commission concluded that the promulgation of Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity and that the decision to issue the order was shaped by “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership”;

Whereas Congress enacted the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, in which it apologized on behalf of the Nation for “fundamental violations of the basic civil liberties and constitutional rights of these individuals of Japanese ancestry”;

Whereas President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 into law on August 10, 1988, proclaiming that day to be a “great day for America”;

Whereas the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 established the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund, the purpose of which is “to sponsor research and public educational activities and to publish and distribute the hearings, findings, and recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians so that the events surrounding the exclusion, forced removal, and internment of civilians and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry will be remembered, and so that the causes and circumstances of this and similar events may be illuminated and understood”;

Whereas Congress adopted the Wartime Violation of Italian Americans Civil Liberties Act, which was signed by President Bill Clinton on November 7, 2000, and which resulted in a report containing detailed information on the types of violations that occurred and lists of individuals of Italian ancestry that were arrested, detained, and interned;

Whereas the Japanese American community recognizes a National Day of Remembrance on February 19th of each year to educate the public about the lessons learned from the internment to ensure that such an event never happens again; and

Whereas the Day of Remembrance provides an opportunity for all people to reflect on the importance of justice and civil liberties during times of uncertainty and emergency: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the historical significance of Feb-
3 ruary 19, 1942, the date President Roosevelt signed
4 Executive Order 9066, which restricted the freedom

1 of Japanese Americans, German Americans, Italian
2 Americans, and legal resident aliens through re-
3 quired identification cards, travel restrictions, sei-
4 zure of personal property, and internment; and
5 (2) supports the goals of the Japanese Amer-
6 ican, German American, and Italian American com-
7 munities in recognizing a National Day of Remem-
8 brance to increase public awareness of the restric-
9 tions endured by the people in those communities as
10 a result of Executive Order 9066.

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