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Think about the few people who would come to a baseball stadium and get excited about the opportunity to be near Buck O'Neil. If given an opportunity, Buck O'Neil could be one of the greatest ambassadors in the history of Major League Baseball.

It is rare that an entire community rallies around a single person; but our community loves Buck, what he stands for and his indomitable spirit. Once again, Buck O'Neil is teaching us that disappointments are to be cremated, not embalmed.

Buck's baseball career spans seven decades and has helped make him a foremost authority on baseball history and one of the game's greatest advocates.

I have never met a man who loves baseball and his community more than Buck O'Neil; but more than that, Buck loves life. And for that inspired love, Buck is adored by all those who know him and all who have heard him.

Literally hundreds of thousands of people have been touched by Buck's kind smile. He has traveled the country teaching children and adults about the Negro Leagues, baseball and life in general. Many of you may know his voice as the one in Ken Burns's documentary on baseball. We know him as the man you can find sitting behind home plate at Kansas City Royals baseball games talking to everyone who stops by to say hello.

As Kansas City's mayor, I was inspired by O'Neil to revitalize 18th and Vine, the historical center for black culture and life in Kansas City from the late 1800s to the 1960s. It was the hub of activity for African American homeowners, businesses, jazz and baseball enthusiasts. One block from the district stands the Paseo YMCA building, which was built as a black YMCA in 1914. It served as a temporary home for baseball players, railroad workers, and others making the transition to big-city life.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to introduce a resolution calling for the commissioner of baseball to give a special recognition to Buck O'Neil at the All Star Game. I will nominate through a bill Buck O'Neil for the Congressional Gold Medal.

This week Kansas City and our entire community celebrates our hometown hero, Buck O'Neil—a Hall-of-Famer in our hearts. It is clear the Baseball Hall of Fame has made a terrible shameful error in not inducting Buck on this ballot. As one of the Hall's own officials said, "The Hall of Fame is not complete without Buck O'Neil."

Buck is the reason 17 members of the Negro League's will be inducted this summer. Without his national visibility as an ambassador of the Negro Leagues, they would not have this honor. Without his efforts, very few would know the intimate details of segregated baseball in the U.S. during the 1930's, 40's and even into the 1950's.

Buck, the classy man that he is, will never complain about not being elected to the Hall. In fact, when told he had not made it, he smiled and said, "that's the way the cookie crumbles." And so, on behalf of a community in tears, and a 94 year old baseball legend, I will stand and complain. The omission of Buck O'Neil was wrong-headed and an insult to Buck and baseball fans everywhere. Buck O'Neil is a man who has done more than anyone to popularize and keep alive the history of the Negro Leagues. The fact that he was not voted into Baseball's Hall of Fame is a wrong that only Major League baseball can make right, and I hope they make it right next year.

This humble man who is careful not to slight anyone has been slighted—apparently by a single vote—by a group who looked short-sightedly at his batting average, but not at what he has done for the game of baseball. There is one thing for sure, Buck's exploits on the field were not steroid aided. At a time when the game has become an American past-time in search of credibility, there is a need for a living symbol of all that is good and wholesome about the sport. Who better than Buck O'Neil?

Think about the fan appeal of Buck O'Neil, a bitterless black baseball legend visiting each major league ballpark during the upcoming season. He could attract African American youngsters back to the game, and in doing so, keep the game going for another generation.

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Buck joined the Kansas City Monarchs in 1938. He left the team to serve in the U.S. Navy in World War II. When he returned from the Philippines in 1943, Buck played and managed with the Monarchs until 1955. As a manager, Buck guided the team to five pennants and two Negro World Series titles. As the major leagues' first African-American coach, Buck signed Ernie Banks and Lou Brock to their first minor-league contracts with the Cubs.

I have never met a man who loves baseball and his community more than Buck O'Neil. But, more than that, Buck loves life. And for that inspired love, Buck is adored by all those who know him and all who have heard of him. Literally hundreds of thousands of people have been touched by Buck's kind smile.

He has traveled the country teaching children and adults about the Negro Leagues, baseball, and life. Many of you probably know him as the voice and face of Ken Burns's documentary on baseball. We know him as the man you can find sitting behind home plate at Kansas City Royals games talking to everyone who sops by to say hello.

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ball players, railroad workers, and others making the transition to big city life in the Midwest. It was there that the Negro National League was founded in 1920.

The 18th and Vine Historic District is now home to the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, where Buck O'Neil serves as Board Chairman. I have introduced House Concurrent Resolution 227, which would designate the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum as America's National Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. It is the least I can do for Buck and all those great players who played magnificently and in many cases incomparably on segregated fields where their peerless talents were hidden from the nation.

Buck, a long time member of the Bethel AME church in Kansas City, has never been bitter about what happened to him and all the other Negro Leagues players, about the exclusion they felt. He acted out the beliefs of his faith. He has preached a superb sermon with his life. The best sermons are lived and not preached. His reaction to the news that he had not made it into the Hall was a Sunday school lesson in humility and love.

Buck O'Neil represents some of our most noble values: determination, dignity, humility and excellence. He is a pioneer and a trail-blazer throughout his life and illustrious career and demonstrates in his everyday actions that determination is the pathway to success.

Buck has said that all that matters to him is that he is in our Kansas City Hall of Fame, the Hall of Fame of those who know and care for him. On behalf of the millions of people who live around Kansas City I can say with absolute certainty—you are a Hall-of-Famer to us, Buck.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GILCHREST addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HISTORY OF THE INTERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a day that many Americans, loyal Americans and true patriots of this country rise to remember as well during the month of February.

February 19 marks an important day of remembrance for many Americans who remember the ravages of World War II and many Americans who suffered from the ravages of World War II.

February 19, 1942, is the year in which Executive Order 9066 was signed, and this was the order that called for the exclusion and internment of all Japanese Americans living on the west coast during World War II.

I wish to join with my colleague Mr. MIKE HONDA, and other of my colleagues who will speak today, to recognize the hard work and struggle of so many Americans who for years have been loyal to this country, who finally

were rewarded for their loyalty with the recognition they deserve for having served this country and having always considered it their love.

This year happens to mark the 25th anniversary of the 1981 hearings by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. This commission concluded in 1983 that the internment of Japanese Americans was a result of racism and wartime hysteria back in the 1940s.

Five years after publishing its findings, then-President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that provided an official apology and financial redress to most of the Japanese Americans who were subjected to wrongdoing and who were confined in U.S. internment camps during World War II.

Those loyal Americans were vindicated finally by the fact that we have never once found even a single case of sabotage or espionage involving a Japanese American during World War II. The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was a culmination of half a century of struggle to bring justice to those whom it had been denied. I am proud that our Nation did the right thing.

But 18 years after the passage of the Civil Liberties Act, there still remains unfinished work to completely rectify and close this regrettable chapter in our Nation's history.

Between December 1941 and February 1948, approximately 2,300 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry became the victims of mass abduction and forced deportation from 13 Latin American countries to the U.S.

During World War II, the U.S. Government orchestrated and financed the deportation of Japanese Latin Americans to be used as hostages in exchange for Americans held by Japan. Over 800 individuals were included in two prisoner-of-war exchanges between the U.S. and Japan. The remaining Japanese Latin Americans were imprisoned in internment camps without the benefit of due process rights until after the end of the war.

□ 1700

Japanese Latin Americans were not only subjected to gross violations of civil rights in the U.S. by being forced into internment camps much like their Japanese American counterparts, but additionally, they were victims of human rights abuses merely because of their ethnic origin.

Today, I want to announce that I soon will be introducing legislation that will create a commission to study the relocation, internment, and deportation of Japanese Latin Americans. It is the right thing to do to affirm our commitment to democracy and the rule of law by exploring this unclosed chapter in our history.

Just 2 weeks ago, I had the privilege of joining with citizens in Los Angeles, in my home city, at the Japanese American National Museum to commemorate the Day of Remembrance.

This day, first observed in 1978 in Seattle, has become very important in the Japanese American community. It is a time to reflect, to educate, and to act.

As we meet today to remember and reflect on the tragedy that innocent people experienced during World War II, it is my hope our government will continue to strive to right any wrongs and to prove once again that the strength of our national values and our eye towards redemption will continue to guide us. A necessary first step to achieving this altruistic goal is swift passage of the legislation which I will soon be introducing.

Mr. Speaker, today we should remember because many Americans have.

THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, 64 years ago, on February 19, 1942, tens of thousands of Japanese Americans were forcibly removed from their homes and communities in one of the great suspensions of liberty in our Nation's history. We recall the day President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 as a Day of Remembrance. This was the day the constitutional rights of Japanese Americans and legal residents along the West Coast were suspended and they were incarcerated during World War II.

Families and communities were uprooted from the life they had known. This memory is actually quite bitter-sweet for me and my family. My grandparents and parents were uprooted from their communities, their lives, their homes, their businesses, despite the fact that they were American citizens. My parents actually met and married at the Poston Internment Camp, my birthplace. In fact, my father says that that was probably the only good thing that came out of that camp.

Growing up, my parents protected me from the experience they went through of having the loyalty they held for this Nation being questioned. And as I was growing up, my parents made a concerted effort to teach me to believe in this country and love this country despite what it did to them.

I shared this sense of patriotism with my husband, Bob, who despite spending his toddler years in a camp, grew up to have a staunch and steadfast belief in our country and our Constitution, including the ideals of justice and equality firmly embedded in both.

Because of the implications of this incarceration, my grandparents, my parents like Bob's and so many others of this generation, did not speak of their experience in the internment camp. It wasn't until my father was much older that this time period was brought up.

But this is an experience that we cannot allow to fade. The government at all levels was blinded by war, and it is imperative that we learn the lesson this moment in history has taught us, including this Nation's ability to recognize and acknowledge our mistakes.

As we mark this tragic anniversary, I hope every American will take this day to affirm their commitment to our Constitution and the rights and protections it guarantees for all of us.

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY: A TRIBUTE TO BLACK FRATERNAL, SOCIAL AND CIVIC INSTITUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I just want to join my colleagues tonight, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) in reminding us of the terrible scar on our Nation's history: the internment of Japanese Americans. And I want to say to them that as an African American, as a person of color in our country, from California, that we join you in making sure that this body continues to remind the entire country that never again shall we allow such a gross violation of the human rights of any, any people in our country and throughout the world.

So thank you, Mr. HONDA and Ms. MATSUI, for once again allowing us to participate and reminding us of this great atrocity.

I want to also add tonight my voice to those of my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus in honoring an organization whose fight against the oppression and discrimination that all of us have felt in this country, whether we were directly victimized by it or not, it affected all of us, which gave birth to the modern-day civil rights movement, and that is the NAACP.

Today, this body unanimously passed H. Con. Res. 355, which was a bipartisan resolution honoring the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on their 97th anniversary. This is the largest and the oldest civil rights organization in our country.

Late last night, we concluded Black History Month by commemorating this month with activities led by the Congressional Black Caucus Chair, our great leader, Chairman MEL WATT, on the floor. But it was very late last night, and I hope people had an opportunity to listen to the few Members who were here to talk about the glorious history of African Americans in America.

Today, in keeping with the ideals of Black History Month and the tradition of our ancestors, we must recommit ourselves to a plan of action. For generations, the NAACP has provided the blueprint for organizing the African American community and other communities, communities of color,