

Introduced by Senator Pan

January 7, 2016

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 96—Relative to a Day of Remembrance.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 96, as introduced, Pan. Day of Remembrance.

This measure would declare February 19, 2016, as a Day of Remembrance in order to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D.
2 Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066, under which more
3 than 120,000 Americans and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry
4 were incarcerated in 10 internment camps scattered throughout
5 western states during World War II; and

6 WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 9066 deferred the American
7 dream for more than 120,000 Americans and resident aliens of
8 Japanese ancestry by inflicting a great human cost of abandoned
9 homes, businesses, careers, professional advancements, and
10 disruption to family life; and

11 WHEREAS, Despite their families being incarcerated behind
12 barbed wire in the United States, approximately 33,000 veterans
13 of Japanese ancestry fought bravely for our country during World
14 War II, serving in the 100th Infantry Battalion, the 442nd
15 Regimental Combat Team, and the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion;
16 and

1 WHEREAS, On June 21, 2000, President William Jefferson
2 Clinton elevated 20 Japanese Americans, who served in the 100th
3 Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and
4 who were among 52 individuals who received the nation's second
5 highest military decoration, the Distinguished Service Cross, to
6 receive the nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of
7 Honor, bringing the total number of Japanese Americans who so
8 received the Medal of Honor to 21; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2010, President Barack Obama granted the
10 Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the 100th Infantry
11 Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and the Military
12 Intelligence Service in recognition of their bravery, valor, and
13 dedication to their country while fighting a two-fronted battle of
14 discrimination at home and fascism abroad; and

15 WHEREAS, Nearly 6,000 veterans of Japanese ancestry served
16 with the Military Intelligence Service and have been credited for
17 shortening the war by two years by translating enemy battle plans,
18 defense maps, tactical orders, intercepted messages and diaries,
19 and interrogating enemy prisoners; and

20 WHEREAS, Many Japanese American veterans continued a
21 life of public service after the war, including Medal of Honor
22 recipient and United States Senator Daniel Inouye, who passed
23 away in December 2012 while representing his home state of
24 Hawaii; and

25 WHEREAS, Nearly 40 years after the United States Supreme
26 Court decisions upholding the convictions of Fred Korematsu,
27 Min Yasui, and Gordon Hirabayashi for violations of curfew and
28 Executive Order No. 9066, it was discovered that officials from
29 the United States Department of War and the United States
30 Department of Justice had altered and destroyed evidence regarding
31 the loyalty of Americans and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry
32 and withheld information from the United States Supreme Court;
33 and

34 WHEREAS, Dale Minami, Peggy Nagae, Dennis Hayashi, Rod
35 Kawakami, and many attorneys and interns contributed
36 innumerable hours to win a reversal of the original convictions of
37 Korematsu, Yasui, and Hirabayashi in 1983 by filing a petition
38 for writ of error coram nobis on the grounds that fundamental
39 errors and injustice occurred; and

1 WHEREAS, On August 10, 1988, President Ronald Wilson
2 Reagan signed into law the federal Civil Liberties Act of 1988,
3 finding that Executive Order No. 9066 was not justified by military
4 necessity and, hence, was caused by racial prejudice, war hysteria,
5 and a failure of political leadership; and

6 WHEREAS, The federal Civil Liberties Act of 1988 apologized
7 on behalf of the people of the United States for the evacuation,
8 internment, and relocation of Americans and permanent resident
9 aliens of Japanese ancestry during World War II. The act also
10 provided for restitution to those individuals of Japanese ancestry
11 who were interned; and

12 WHEREAS, February 19, 2016, marks 74 years since the signing
13 of Executive Order No. 9066 and a policy of grave injustice against
14 American citizens and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry; now,
15 therefore, be it

16 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
17 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California
18 declares February 19, 2016, as a Day of Remembrance in this state
19 to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the
20 internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War
21 II; and be it further

22 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
23 this resolution to the Governor, the Superintendent of Public
24 Instruction, the State Library, and the California State Archives.