

Chair Burdick, members of the committee: I'm Jim Azumano,  
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This is in support of Senate Resolution 1. I am a board member for the Friends of Minidoka, an Idaho not for profit which provides advice and assistance to the Minidoka National Historic Site, the concentration camp in Idaho in which my family and most Oregon Japanese-Americans and their families were incarcerated in WW II. I'm born and raised in Oregon, now residing in Tolovana Park.

Last Thursday was National Bagel Day. In preparation for this day, I was amazed how the tiny little bagel could be recognized nationwide. The daily bagel means so much to so many.

Then, why should we remember the Japanese American experience, in particular in support of a National Day of Remembrance? People are beginning to see the 1942 Presidential Order in its perspective in history, and that 120,000 legal Japanese Americans, resident aliens and Alaskan Aleuts were picked up by federal agencies, and taken by train, bus, and fishing boats to wartime internment camps to dampen the fear from people who resembled the enemy. We also can't forget the 442nd Infantry Battalion of Japanese Americans from Hawaii and the mainland who fought in a segregated infantry unit in Europe, which included one action in which they suffered over 800 casualties to save 211 Texans of the 141st Division.

We Oregonians must specifically remember that: before desegregating the military in 1948; before desegregating the schools in 1954; before Rosa Parks kept her seat; before Martin Luther King gave his famous "I have a Dream" speech in 1963; before the President Johnson's landmark Civil Rights act of 1964 and President Bush's Civil Rights Act of 1991; Oregon had its own champion in the evolution of civil liberties, Minoru Yasui.

A national day of remembrance will remind our families that I am the son and grandson of families #16234 and #16187, who lost homes, businesses, personal properties, and their American dignity in the evacuation and detention to the stockyards of Portland and detention at Minidoka.

Perhaps, most of all, a National Day of Remembrance will help fulfill the vision of President Ford when he terminated President Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 with Proclamation 4417 in 1976. His words in the proclamation were, " I call upon the American people to affirm with me this American Promise -- that we have learned from the tragedy of that long-ago experience forever to treasure liberty and justice for each individual American, and resolve that this kind of action shall never again be repeated." At a time in America when civil liberties are again in the political arena for debate and review, it is incumbent on the great state of Oregon to take its place in the evolution of 'liberty and justice for all' and move Senate Resolution 1 forward in support of a National Day of Remembrance. The principles and values of democracy and our civil liberties are worth a lot more than a bagel.