

Submitter: Kate McBride

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Measure: SB1509

I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 1509, which if passed would designate Hwy 35 as The Oregon Nisei Veterans WWII Memorial Highway.

Nisei soldiers served in World War II, volunteering even when they were not initially allowed to enlist. They fought on the front lines of the France, Italy, and North Africa and served as translators and interpreters in the Pacific Theater. Nisei soldiers served bravely and with honor, even while many of their family members were imprisoned in camps per Executive Order 9066. When they returned home, they encountered racism and hostility. Some lost their farms; others were denied the ability to sell their produce or conduct business. Still others were unable to return to their hometowns, out of fear for their safety.

It is long past time for Oregon to recognize the bravery, patriotism, and sacrifice of our Nisei soldiers. As Mayor of the City of Hood River, I know that local residents would be proud to have The Oregon Nisei Veterans WWII Memorial Highway in our county. It is especially appropriate that Highway 35 be designated in this way, as it runs through the countryside where many of Oregon's Nisei soldiers and their families once lived and worked.

Senate Bill 1509 would recognize heroes of the highest order and has my enthusiastic support. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Kate McBride, Mayor
City of Hood River, Oregon