

Submitter: Dwight Onchi
On Behalf Of: Epworth UMC
Committee: House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Management
Measure: SB1509

My name is Dwight Onchi. I am a 3rd generation Japanese American (Sansei) and I am a retired Sherwood, Oregon police officer.

My father, Jim Onchi and my 2 Uncles, Joe Onchi and Arthur Iwasaki were all Congressional Gold Medal recipients, as members of the famous all Japanese American Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team of World War II, who fought for the freedom that we have to this day.

My father was a US Army Master Sergeant, who trained the troops in combat Judo and once overseas in Germany he was there at the Dachau concentration camp with other 442nd Unit members to help liberate the prisoner's there.

My Uncle Joe Onchi was wounded in combat in France and my Uncle Arthur Iwasaki was a member of the 442nd Unit that rescued the Texas Lost Battalion and was also wounded in combat.

I am also a Goldstar family member. On March 24, 1969 our oldest brother, US Army 1st Lt Curtis Onchi was killed in combat in South Vietnam. During the time of my brothers death I was a US Army Reserve Sgt stationed at Fort Vancouver, WA. The news of my brothers death brought to home the tremendous sacrifices that many of our soldiers give to our Nation that seem to over time become forgotten.

The emence sacrifices that my father, my Uncles and the other Nisei soldiers gave during World War II made them the most decorated Unit for its size and length of time in service in the history of all wars to this day.

The enormity of this was that these brave and patriotic soldiers accomplished their duties while their families were imprisoned on US soil and once home continued to face tremenous peregridous and racism, yet they prevailed.

Voting in favor of Senate Bill 1509 for signage along Oregon's US Hwy 35, honoring the Oregon Nisei Veterans of WWII, will remind future generations of the history of heroism and great patriotism that these Japanese American citizens exhibited during a time of tremendous uncertainty, yet they prevailed.