

RAY SATO ORCHARDS

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Feb. 15, 2002

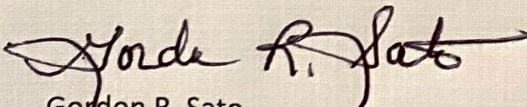
Members of the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management:

Dear Chair Grayber and Committee Members:

I am writing in support of Oregon Senate bill #1509

I am a third generation sansei orchardist in Parkdale Oregon, where my grandfather came in the early 1900's and cleared the land where I now farm. The issei & nissei worked seven days a week to create farmland for their families to exist. They had a strong desire to assimilate to the American way of life, and contributed to build a strong community in the Hood River Valley. When the war broke out, they were interned to concentration camps, where they lived for five years. Many Japanese men signed up to join the armed forces, and became part of the 442 regiment fighting in Europe as Americans. After reading the book, Facing the Mt., by Daniel James Brown, it gave me a better understanding of the loyalty that these men possessed to the United States. After returning to the Hood River Valley after the war, the discrimination and hatred that faced them was almost insurmountable. My dad, Ray Sato, along with Sat Noji & Min Asai were the first three Japanese-Americans back to the valley after the war, and lived in the house that I now live in, fearful for their lives. Altho my dad did not serve in the armed forces, which both Min & Sat had, they worked hard, along with the other returning Japanese Americans to assimilate in a positive manner to the Hood River Valley. I think by renaming hwy 35 to the Oregon Nisei Veterans WW2 Memorial Hwy would be an amazing way to remember the sacrifices of this incredible group of men. Thanks for proposing this name change.

Sincerely,


Gordon R. Sato