

Submitter: James Iwasaki
On Behalf Of: Akira Iwasaki Arthur Iwasaki
Committee: House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Management
Measure: SB1509

February 17, 2022

Members of the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management:

Dear Chair Grayber and Committee Members:

Akira (Ike) and Arthur (Art) Iwasaki were my paternal uncles. They served with distinction in the United States Army during World War II. As 2nd generation Japanese, SB 1509 is a long overdue memorial to their patriotism!

Thirty-three thousand Japanese American (Nisei) soldiers served our country honorably during World War II while many of their families were among 120,000 incarcerated in American concentration camps. They were heroic. One unit, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team is the most decorated unit in our country's military history for its size and length of service. Still, they faced discrimination when they returned home.

I strongly endorse Senate Bill 1509 to dedicate Highway 35 as the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway. We can honor these heroes with permanent roadside markers to help our youth and next generations ask questions and learn how American citizens demonstrated pride over prejudice.

Respectfully,

James K. Iwasaki
Portland, OR