

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 4, 2009

Dear Day of Remembrance Participants:

As members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), we thank you for your observance of the "Day of Remembrance." We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the organizers for their steadfast work to increase public awareness about the significance of this day in our nation's history.

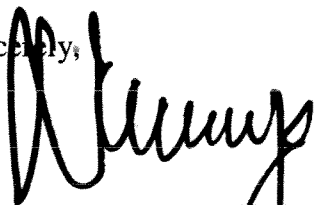
The "Day of Remembrance" was first commemorated in Seattle, Washington, on February 19, 1978. On that same day in 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 leading to the reprehensible internment of persons of Japanese ancestry. Even as thousands of Japanese Americans fought in the European theater as part of the U.S. Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team, their loved ones at home suffered severe travel restrictions, loss of personal property and forced relocation. With President Gerald R. Ford's promulgation of Proclamation 4417 to formally terminate EO 9066, America finally began a healing process that continues to this day.

The "Day of Remembrance" has become an important institution in the Japanese American community; however, its message of tolerance has transcended the cultural and ethnic divide. On this day, Americans of all backgrounds come together to unite against bigotry and extremism that threaten the values and traditions that make America the shining symbol of democracy, freedom and human rights. In 2004, the House of Representatives unanimously affirmed this unity with the passage of H.Res.56, a resolution recognizing a national Day of Remembrance to increase education about communities impacted by internment and to provide an opportunity for all people to reflect on the importance of justice and civil liberties during times of crisis and war.

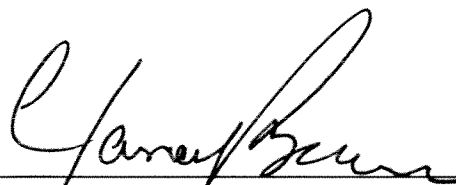
It has been over two decades since the enactment of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 in which Congress and the president recognized the egregious actions against persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II. Despite this historic legislation, the official narrative on this troubling period remains incomplete. There are hundreds of people of Japanese, German and Italian descent who also suffered similar indignities continue to wait to tell their stories and to receive the recognition they deserve. While we work to ensure timely passage of legislation that would address the harm suffered by these groups, we encourage you, as leaders, activists and volunteers to redouble efforts to increase awareness of this vitally important cause.

Thank you for continuing the tradition of the "Day of Remembrance."


Sincerely,



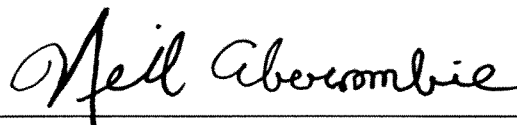
Senator Daniel K. Inouye
Member of Congress



Representative Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress



Representative Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress

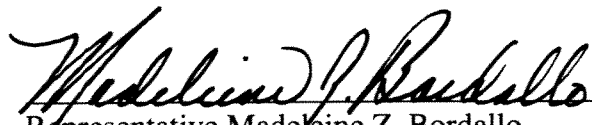


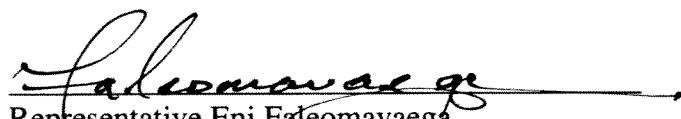
Representative Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress

Day of Remembrance Participants


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Representative Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress



Representative Eni Faleomavaega
Member of Congress

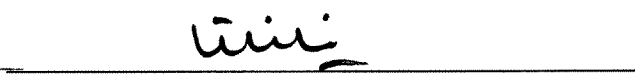

Representative Al Green
Member of Congress

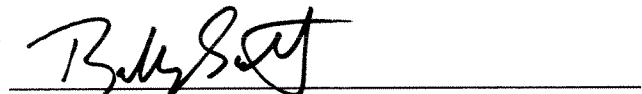

Representative Mazie K. Hirono
Member of Congress

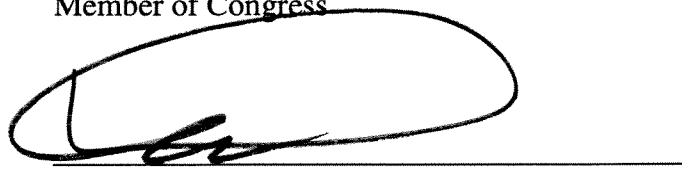

Representative Barbara Lee
Member of Congress


Representative Doris Matsui
Member of Congress


Representative Laura Richardson
Member of Congress


Representative Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress


Representative Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress


Representative David Wu
Member of Congress