



King County

Metropolitan King County Council

RECOGNITION

WHEREAS, 75 years ago, on February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing the U.S. military to forcibly remove and incarcerate over 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, including 8,870 residents of King County; and

WHEREAS, this drastic course of action gave the U.S. army power to exclude whomever it saw fit under the guise of "military necessity" in response to racially inflected hysteria following the attack on Pearl Harbor; and

WHEREAS, more than 33,000 Japanese-Americans responded to questions about their patriotism by joining mostly segregated military units and amassing an unparalleled battle record; and

WHEREAS, nearly 300 Japanese Americans resisted the draft, refusing to report until their civil rights had been restored, which proved to be deeply divisive among Japanese Americans, keeping the history of the draft resisters largely suppressed in the community for some 40 years; and

WHEREAS, Japanese Americans challenged the exclusion, and the cases of Gordon Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu, and Minoru Yasui were heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, with the Court ultimately upholding the legality of the racially based expulsion, later vacated in the 1980s; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, the federal Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians found "no military or security reason for the internment" of persons of Japanese ancestry, but determined the cause of the forced removal as "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership"; and

WHEREAS, "Never Again" has been the rallying cry for many Japanese Americans, and this cry reminds us of the trauma of our nation's persecution and unlawful detention of its own citizens; and

WHEREAS, through this travesty of justice, Japanese-Americans suffered immense economic loss of property and assets, immeasurable physical and psychological harm, and deprivation of their constitutional liberties and due process of law;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Metropolitan King County Council recognizes the 75th anniversary of the signing of

EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066

and remembers the sacrifices of Japanese-Americans; defends the rights and liberties of other marginalized groups; and honors the lessons and blessings of liberty and justice for all.

DATED this twenty-first day of February, 2017.

Joe McDermott, Council Chair, District Eight

Rod Dembowski, Council Vice Chair, District One

Kathy Lambert, District Three

Dave Upthegrove, District Five

Pete von Reichbauer, District Seven

Larry Gossett, District Two

Jeanne Kohl-Welles, District Four

Claudia Balducci, District Six

Reagan Dunn, Council Vice Chair, District Nine