
Higher Education Committee

SB 6467

Brief Description: Authorizing honorary degrees for students who were ordered into internment camps.

Sponsors: Senators Shin, Kastama, Delvin, Hobbs, Berkey, Rockefeller, Marr, Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Roach and Kline.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows honorary degrees to be conferred by institutions of higher education upon persons who were students at those institutions in 1942 but did not graduate because they were ordered into an internment camp.
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Hearing Date: 2/19/10

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

On February 19, 1942, United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 authorizing the Secretary of War "to prescribe military areas in such places and of such extent as he ... may determine, from which any or all persons may be excluded, and with respect to which, the right of any persons to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restriction the Secretary of War...may impose in his discretion." Although the order did not specify any particular nationality or ethnic group, it was used against those with Japanese, Italian, and German ancestry.

More than 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated in 10 camps throughout the United States during World War II. Of these, 62 percent were Nisei (American-born, second generation Japanese American) or Sansei (third-generation Japanese American). The rest were Issei (Japanese immigrants and resident aliens, first-generation Japanese American). Americans of Italian and German ancestry were also targeted by these restrictions. About 11,000 persons of

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German ancestry and 3,000 persons of Italian ancestry were interned. In addition, some Jewish refugees and some members of ethnic groups from other Axis countries were interned.

Summary of Bill:

Honorary degrees may be conferred, by the University of Washington, Washington State University, Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Western Washington University, or community and technical colleges in existence in 1942, upon persons who were students at those institutions in 1942 but did not graduate because they were ordered into an internment camp. An honorary degree may also be requested by a representative of a deceased person who meets these conditions. "Internment camp" is defined as a relocation center to which persons were ordered pursuant to Executive Order 9066.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.