

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2842

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government

Title: An act relating to a Washington state day of remembrance.

Brief Description: Creating a civil liberties day of remembrance.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos, Tokuda, Veloria, Conway, Kenney, Dickerson, O'Brien, Ogden, Schual-Berke, Kessler, Lovick, McIntire, Ruderman, Upthegrove, Linville, Rockefeller, Simpson, Haigh and McDermott.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/5/02, 2/8/02 [DP].

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">February 19 is recognized as a Civil Liberties Day of Remembrance.
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Romero, Chair; McMorris, Ranking Minority Member; McDermott, Schindler, Schmidt and Upthegrove.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

On February 19, 1942, just a little over two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing the military to exclude any person from designated military areas. This order authorized the military to: 1) designate military areas; and 2) to remove any persons considered a danger. On March 2, 1942, the West Coast commander of the United States Army issued Public Proclamation No. 1 which designated the entire West Coast a restricted military area and, 22 days later, on March 24, 1942, the army issued the first Civilian Exclusion Order resulting in the evacuation of approximately 227 Japanese on Bainbridge Island. By June 1942, over 110,000 Japanese-Americans were moved to concentration camps for the remainder of World War II.

Summary of Bill:

February 19 is recognized as a Civil Liberties Day of Remembrance, but is not considered a legal holiday.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill would establish an official Civil Liberties Day of Remembrance in the state of Washington. Sixty years ago my grandmother, at the time 36 years old with four children, was subjected to military governance, and she and her family were evacuated from their home in Northern California to the desolate inland areas of Colorado. The Civil Liberties Remembrance Day is a day I can honor them, as well as a day we can honor all of the members of the Japanese community who were "scapegoats" and questioned as to their loyalty during World War II. The most fragile of our rights can be jeopardized. We must continually bring forward the idea that there is nothing more important than our commitment to freedom, justice and equality.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Santos, prime sponsor.