

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4026

As Reported by House Committee On:

State Government

Brief Description: Requesting a memorial to remember the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Sponsors: Representatives Rockefeller, Woods, Jackley, Murray, Lovick, Tokuda, Ogden, Romero, Hunt, McDermott, Veloria, Doumit, Jarrett, Talcott, Cox, Ballasiotes, Ahern, Orcutt, Schmidt, Esser, Santos, Cooper, Cody, Simpson, Benson, Carrell, Kessler, Schual-Berke, Linville, McIntire, Mulliken, Upthegrove, Chase and Van Luven.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

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

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Request to designate the former Eagledale Ferry landing on Bainbridge Island as a national memorial to remember the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Romero, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; 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 Substitute Bill:

Requests Congress to designate the former Eagledale Ferry landing on Bainbridge Island as a national memorial to remember the unconstitutional internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Includes, as part of the memorial, references that the first Japanese-Americans were from Bainbridge Island, and that not all of these residents were sent to internment camps. Some were drafted into the military, some were imprisoned, and some moved away, but all were forced to leave.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Testimony For: Almost 60 years have passed since the first Japanese from Bainbridge Island, were sent to concentration camps. This resolution will help us in our efforts to get funding for a national memorial so that we may always remember these events.

On March 30, 1942, 227 Japanese citizens from Bainbridge Island were escorted from their homes to an internment camp in the California desert. They were the very first people of over 110,000 Japanese-Americans to be removed from their homes to spend the next three years incarcerated at internment camps. They were given only six days notice to get their affairs in order and could only take with them what they could carry. We have a unique opportunity to have the Eagledale Ferry site declared a national memorial to communicate the message, "let it not happen again."

This is a significant part of Bainbridge Island's history. Walter C. Woodard, publisher of the local newspaper, the only newspaper in the U.S. that opposed the executive order, kept in contact with the interned Japanese from the island and reported about them in the paper. As a result, the Bainbridge Island Japanese were welcomed back after the war.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Representative Rockefeller, prime sponsor; Clarence Moriwaki, Bainbridge Island Japanese-American Community; and Darlene Krodonowy, Mayor, city

of Bainbridge Island.