SENATE RESOLUTION

8685

By Senators Hasegawa, Kuderer, Fortunato, Conway, Frame, Lovelett, Nobles, Stanford, and Valdez

WHEREAS, The Seattle Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) was established in September 1921 to combat existing and at the time worsening anti-Japanese immigrant prejudice, codified in laws barring immigrant Japanese from attaining citizenship and owning land; and

WHEREAS, The National JACL, which is currently the country's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization, was founded eight years later, and the Seattle JACL hosted the first national JACL convention; and

WHEREAS, During World War II, when all people of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast were incarcerated in government administered prison camps, the Seattle JACL took a leadership position and was later instrumental in resettling and assisting King County Japanese Americans returning from these camps, as they continued to face discrimination both at the hands of the federal and local governments; and

WHEREAS, The Seattle JACL is regarded as the birthplace of the Redress Movement and a leader in the efforts that culminated in the bipartisan passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that resulted in a government apology and provided redress for the loss of civil liberties suffered by Japanese Americans imprisoned during World War II; and

WHEREAS, The Seattle JACL helped in the fight to gain citizenship opportunities for first generation (Issei) Japanese immigrants and conducted a successful 12-year campaign to eliminate the racially discriminatory Alien Land Law; and

WHEREAS, The Seattle JACL advocated for fair housing, an integrated school system, and equal opportunity employment at all levels, and encouraged open discussions during the civil rights struggles of the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, The Seattle JACL helped the National JACL become the nation's first non-LGBTQ organization to endorse marriage equality and has, standing in unwavering solidarity, endorsed every Washington ballot measure against discrimination based on sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, The Seattle JACL actively advocates for the civil rights and civil liberties of ALL Americans, including immigrant and migratory communities; the Arab American community; Muslims, Sikhs, Jews, and other religious minorities; the LGBTQ community; and the Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPoC) communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate honor the Seattle JACL upon its 100th anniversary and acknowledge and celebrate JACL's long standing commitment to fight for justice and social equity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to Seattle JACL for further distribution to the community.