



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, on February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which authorized the United States military to forcibly remove and incarcerate more than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast, including 12,000 Japanese American residents of Washington State; and

WHEREAS, the first civilian evacuation order gave Japanese Americans from Bainbridge Island less than one week to leave behind homes, personal belongings, farms, businesses, friends, and family and report to hastily constructed detention centers like Camp Harmony on the grounds of the Washington State fair in Puyallup; and

WHEREAS, this drastic course of action allegedly aimed to prevent acts of espionage and sabotage by Japanese Americans who were deemed untrustworthy and disloyal to the United States; and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 1943, the War Department organized a segregated unit of Japanese Americans, many of whom reported for military duty from the concentration camps surrounded by barbed wire in which they and their families were detained; and

WHEREAS, more than 12,000 volunteers responded to questions about their loyalty and patriotism by amassing a battle record unparalleled in the United States military history with a casualty rate of 314% and earning a collective 7 Presidential Unit Citations, 21 Medals of Honor, 29 Distinguished Service Crosses, 1 Distinguished Service Medal, 588 Silver Stars, more than 4,000 Bronze Stars, 22 Legion of Merit Medals, 145 Soldier's Medals, 9,486 Purple Hearts, 1 decoration from France and Italy, and, in 2010, the Congressional Gold Medal; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, the Congressional 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 incarceration as "racial prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership"; and

WHEREAS, through this travesty of justice, Japanese Americans suffered immense economic loss of property and assets, immeasurable physical and psychological harm, and were deprived of their constitutional liberties without due process of law; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Washington State Congressman Mike Lowry introduced H.R. 5977 to provide reparations and an apology to the Japanese American incarcerated, thus initiating a ten-year legislative quest that ended when President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; and

WHEREAS, throughout Washington State, the last remaining survivors of the European and Asian Pacific battlefields of World War II and of American incarceration camps live their golden years in quiet contrast to their extraordinary acts of conscience and valor while all of America continues to benefit from their heroic patriotism.

WHEREAS, there were no Japanese or Japanese American residents in the Lake Forest Park development due to restrictive racial covenants, there were several families of Japanese descent within the current Lake Forest Park city limits who were relocated;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Lake Forest Park pause to acknowledge the anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066; to recognize and remember Japanese American veterans, incarcerated, and civil rights activists from the State of Washington, and to honor the lessons and blessings of liberty and justice for all and to proclaim February 19, 2024, as

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

in the City of Lake Forest Park, and we urge all citizens to join us in this special observance.

Signed this 8th day of February 2024.

Tom French, Mayor