

House Resolution 1502

By: Representatives Nguyen of the 89th, Park of the 101st, Gonzalez of the 117th, Marin of the 96th, and Lopez of the 99th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Commending Fred Korematsu; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia continues to mourn the loss of one of the country's most
3 loyal, patriotic, and distinguished citizens with the passing of Fred Toyosaburo Korematsu
4 on March 30, 2005; and
- 5 WHEREAS, Fred Korematsu was born on January 30, 1919, in Oakland, California, a
6 beloved son of Japanese immigrants; and
- 7 WHEREAS, on December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the United States military base at Pearl
8 Harbor, Hawaii, forcing the United States to enter World War II against Japan, Germany, and
9 Italy; and
- 10 WHEREAS, the United States Army issued the Civilian Exclusion Order Number 34, which
11 stated that all persons of Japanese ancestry, who were then considered a security threat, were
12 to be removed from designated areas of the West Coast; but when his family reported to
13 Tanforan, one of ten War Relocation Authority camps, he refused to go based on his belief
14 that he was a loyal American; and
- 15 WHEREAS, after being jailed and unsuccessfully challenging the Order in the United States
16 Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, he appealed his conviction to the United States Supreme
17 Court, where his conviction was also upheld; and
- 18 WHEREAS, he continued to maintain his innocence for decades following World War II,
19 and in light of new information that the federal government suppressed findings that
20 Japanese Americans on the West Coast were not security threats, United States District Judge
21 Marilyn Hall Patel overturned Fred Korematsu's conviction on November 10, 1983; and

22 WHEREAS, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians concluded
23 that "a grave personal injustice was done to the American citizens and resident aliens of
24 Japanese ancestry"; and

25 WHEREAS, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, issuing an
26 apology and symbolic payment of compensation to persons of Japanese ancestry; and

27 WHEREAS, on January 15, 1998, President Bill Clinton awarded the Medal of Freedom to
28 Fred Korematsu; and

29 WHEREAS, Fred Korematsu once stated words that remain true today, that "No one should
30 ever be locked away simply because they share the same race, ethnicity, or religion as a spy
31 or terrorist. If that principle was not learned from the internment of Japanese Americans,
32 then these are very dangerous times for our democracy."; and

33 WHEREAS, Fred Korematsu remained a tireless advocate for civil liberties and justice
34 throughout his life and was a role model for all Americans who love the United States and
35 the promises contained in the Constitution.

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
37 the members of this body join in commending Fred Korematsu.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
39 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
40 Georgia Asian American and Pacific Islander, the Georgia Latino House Caucus, and the
41 Fred T. Korematsu Institute.