

House Resolution 126

By: Representatives Nguyen of the 89th, Park of the 101st, Marin of the 96th, Hutchinson of the 107th, Lopez of the 99th, and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Fred Toyosaburo Korematsu; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia continues to mourn the loss of one of our nation'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 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 Court
21 Judge Marilyn Hall Patel overturned Fred Korematsu's conviction on November 10, 1983;
22 and

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

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

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

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

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

37 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
38 the members of this body join in honoring the life and memory of Fred Toyosaburo
39 Korematsu.

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