



## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 14-1017

**BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Dore, Becker, Buck, Buckner, Conti, Coram, Court, DelGrosso, Duran, Everett, Exum, Fields, Fischer, Foote, Garcia, Gerou, Ginal, Hamner, Holbert, Hullinghorst, Humphrey, Joshi, Kagan, Labuda, Landgraf, Lawrence, Lebsock, Lee, May, McCann, McLachlan, Melton, Mitsch Bush, Moreno, Murray, Navarro, Nordberg, Pabon, Peniston, Pettersen, Primavera, Priola, Rankin, Rosenthal, Ryden, Saine, Salazar, Schafer, Scott, Singer, Sonnenberg, Stephens, Swalm, Szabo, Tyler, Vigil, Waller, Williams, Wilson, Wright, Young, Ferrandino;**

**also SENATOR(S) Crowder, Aguilar, Balmer, Baumgardner, Brophy, Cadman, Grantham, Guzman, Harvey, Heath, Herpin, Hodge, Jahn, Johnston, Jones, Kefalas, Kerr, King, Lambert, Lundberg, Marble, Newell, Nicholson, Renfroe, Rivera, Roberts, Scheffel, Schwartz, Steadman, Tochtrop, Todd, Ulibarri, Zenzinger, Carroll.**

### **CONCERNING THE RECOGNITION OF AMACHE'S TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.**

WHEREAS, Amache, also known as the Granada Relocation Center, is located in Prowers County, Colorado, near the town of Granada, Colorado, and served as a World War II-era prison camp for Japanese and Japanese-American citizens between October 1942 and October 1945; and

WHEREAS, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing military commanders to exclude "any or all persons from designated military zones"; and

WHEREAS, President Roosevelt created the War Relocation Authority (WRA) to establish and supervise the Granada Relocation Center, along with nine other Japanese prison camps; and

WHEREAS, The creation of the prison camps represented an official effort to quell unfounded public fears that Japanese nationals and Japanese-American citizens living on the west coast of the United States mainland served as spies and saboteurs for the Japanese Empire; and

WHEREAS, This anti-Japanese sentiment was initiated by a farmer association in northern California just after the start of World War II as a way to acquire the farms owned and operated by Japanese Americans, and quickly many other businesses in competition with the Japanese in California joined in spreading these false rumors in order to remove Japanese competition; and

WHEREAS, Colorado Governor Ralph L. Carr stood alone among Western political leaders by taking a principled stand against race hatred and the unconstitutional incarceration of American citizens without due process, at the expense of his political career; and

WHEREAS, The United States government assembled the 10,000-acre Amache site through condemnation of 13 private agricultural holdings and one voluntary sale; and

WHEREAS, On August 27, 1942, the first 212 Japanese Americans to arrive in Amache were from the Merced Assembly Center, where they had been incarcerated for over three months, to help complete the building of their own prison, and in the following days they were joined by 4,220 others from the same center; and

WHEREAS, With only a portion of Amache actually finished, these initial prisoners, selected for their skills as artisans, stenographers, clerks, cooks, and other specialists, aided WRA officials in preparing the center as a self-sustaining facility; and

WHEREAS, In mid-September 1942, trainloads of persons began to arrive from the Santa Anita Assembly Center, and by the end of October 1942, Amache had reached its peak population of 7,566, two-thirds of whom possessed American citizenship, making it the 10th largest city in Colorado at the time; and

WHEREAS, Between October 1942 and October 1945, more than 10,000 men, women, and children of Japanese descent passed through Amache; and

WHEREAS, Prisoners at Amache organized and operated a camp council, a newspaper, hospital, store, Buddhist and Christian churches, and a silkscreen shop that produced 250,000 posters for the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, These incarcerated farmers and families produced millions of pounds of wheat and vegetables, as well as raised livestock, poultry, and eggs to support the war effort; and

WHEREAS, Two Amacheans were recruited to work in Denver between February 1943 and 1945 for the British Political Warfare Mission, which hired four Japanese Americans to do translation work and radio broadcasting to wartime Japan. The BPWM worked in tandem with the Office of War Information in a Joint Anglo-American Partnership doing radio propaganda; and

WHEREAS, Nine hundred fifty-three Japanese-American men and women residing in Amache served honorably in the United States armed forces, of which 105 were wounded and 31 died in action during the Second World War; and

WHEREAS, These Amache prisoners fought in Italy, France, and Germany with the famed 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion and 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team and also served with the Military Intelligence Service in the Pacific, and over 40 adults left Amache to work as instructors in the U.S. Navy Japanese Language School at the University of Colorado in Boulder, teaching Japanese to Navy officers who would be serving in the Pacific and later in Japan; and

WHEREAS, Private First Class Kiyoshi K. Muranaga, an Amache resident, posthumously received the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism in action on June 26, 1944, near Suvereto, Italy; and

WHEREAS, An additional 35 to 40 qualified Japanese Americans refused to report to their draft boards as an act of civil disobedience to protest the injustice of incarceration; and

WHEREAS, Some residents in the neighboring towns of Granada and Lamar, Colorado, and of Prowers County and other nearby counties overcame anti-Japanese prejudice to provide goods, services, employment, and a much-needed sense of community to the prisoners of Amache; and

WHEREAS, The WRA dismantled the Amache site following its October 15, 1945, closure; and

WHEREAS, The last remaining prisoners constructed a stone memorial to commemorate the 114 prisoners who died at Amache; and

WHEREAS, Former prisoners resettled in California, Denver, the Arkansas River Valley, and states east of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, The town of Granada purchased the site from the federal government; and

WHEREAS, The Denver Central Optimists Club, today known as the Friends of Amache and whose membership includes former prisoners and their families, began making annual pilgrimages to the site's cemetery and war memorial in 1980; and

WHEREAS, The Japanese American Association of Colorado has been a major donor to the Amache Pilgrimage and the Amache Club for decades, providing and presenting scholarships to deserving high school seniors for their support of the preservation of Amache and the museum; and

WHEREAS, The Amache Historical Society, based in Los Angeles where many former Amacheans resettled, is comprised of former prisoners who organize Amache reunions at the site and at locations across the West and contribute to the preservation, restoration, and memorabilia of Amache; and

WHEREAS, In 1992, Granada High School students, under the leadership of social studies teacher John Hopper, organized the Amache Preservation Society in Granada, Colorado, in order to study and understand the tragedy of the unlawful uprooting and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. Since the Society's inception, Mr. Hopper and his students have not only restored and maintain the Amache Cemetery and created and continue to operate a museum that preserves the objects, place, and memories of the prison camp, but Mr. Hopper travels throughout the state to teach Coloradans about Japanese forced incarceration; and

WHEREAS, The Amache Relocation Center was deemed historically significant in the areas of military history, legal history, and ethnic history under the United States Secretary of the Interior's standards for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994 and was subsequently designated a National Historic Landmark in 2006; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, the General Assembly passed a Senate Joint Resolution concerning the creation of a memorial on the state Capitol grounds honoring Governor Ralph Carr and the Japanese-American community; and

WHEREAS, The memorial pod, including a planter and plaques honoring Governor Ralph Carr and prisoners at Amache, was dedicated on September 18, 1996, and funding for the memorial was provided by the Colorado Bar Association, the Japanese-American community, and the general public of Colorado; now, therefore,

*Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:*

That we, the members of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly, hereby recognize the 20th anniversary of Amache's listing on the National Register of Historic Places and honor all Coloradans who stood up against this unconstitutional act of moving and imprisoning American citizens without due process of law and hope all Coloradans remember this important part of our history.

*Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to Governor John Hickenlooper; Lieutenant Governor Joseph Garcia; William Convery, State Historian, History Colorado; Edward C. Nichols, President and CEO, History Colorado; J.J. Rutherford, Director of Education, History Colorado; Dr. Bonnie Clark, Professor of Anthropology, University of Denver; Ikuhiko Ono, Consul-General of Japan in Denver; Minoru Tonai, President of the Amache Historical Society in Los Angeles; James Hada, President of the Amache Club; Jane Daniels, President of Colorado Preservation Inc.; Rob Witwer, former state legislator; Adam Schrager; Vicki Taniwaki, President of the Friends of Amache; John Hopper, teacher and Head of the Amache Preservation Society; Dr. Robert Fuchigami, Professor Emeritus, Amache historian; Joe Marble, Chair of the Board of Commissioners, Prowers County, Colorado; Clayton DeForest, Mayor of Granada, Colorado; Derek Okubo, Executive Director, Human Rights and Community Partnerships and former President of the Denver Optimist Club; the Colorado Board of Education; Judge Kerry Hada; and Colorado's Congressional delegation.

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Mark Ferrandino  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Morgan Carroll  
PRESIDENT OF  
THE SENATE

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Marilyn Eddins  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Cindi Markwell  
SECRETARY OF  
THE SENATE