

Date:

My Representative in the U.S. Congress:

Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Honorable _____:

I am writing to ask that you, as my representative in Congress, be a co-sponsor and actively seek the passage of the Wartime Parity and Justice Act of 2005 (H.R. 893, introduced this session by Rep. Xavier Becerra (CA-31) that will 1) provide full funding for the public education mandate of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; 2) provide redress for those Japanese Americans who suffered deprivation of liberty due to the U.S. internment, but were denied redress under the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; and 3) ensure redress equity for the former Japanese Latin American internees.

Public Education Funding: Public education is an essential component of redress. It is only with continuing education that the recurrence of such civil and human rights violations can be prevented. The Civil Liberties Act was passed with the expectation that \$50 million would go to public education about this tragic episode in U.S. history. However, the government failed to invest the redress funds as required by the Civil Liberties Act, and an estimated \$200 million was lost in interest. As a result, only \$5 million was spent for public education and research grants, which lasted only one year. Without an ongoing fund, the educational curricula will soon become technologically obsolete, and the truth will be forgotten. **The U.S. must fulfill its original commitment to the \$50 million, so that future generations will know the complete history of this shameful era and not allow such fundamental injustice to be repeated to any others.**

Redress Equity for Japanese Americans: The World War II story of the U.S. government's massive violation of civil liberties of more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry is well known. **While the majority of affected Japanese Americans have received redress, hundreds of Japanese Americans who were deprived of liberty have wrongly been denied justice and have not received redress.** Denied individuals include: U.S. residents denied redress due to legal technicalities and narrow interpretations of the law; dependent children of railroad and mine workers who were fired from their jobs and made destitute by U.S. government actions; and those U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry who were born within the barbed wire fences of the U.S. internment camps after June 30, 1946. (The Civil Liberties Act's time limitation was based on erroneous internment camp closing dates.)

Redress Equity for Japanese Latin Americans: During World War II, the U.S. government forcibly uprooted over 2,200 Latin American citizens and residents of Japanese ancestry from their homes in Peru and 12 other countries in Latin America, and incarcerated them in prison camps in the U.S. More than 800 Japanese Latin Americans served the government's purpose for the scheme: they were exchanged for U.S. civilian prisoners held by Japan. When the war finally ended, most of the JLAs were not allowed to return to their native countries, but were deported to war devastated Japan, where they endured starvation conditions, tremendous hardship, and trauma.

A class action lawsuit filed in federal court in 1996 resulted in a settlement in which the U.S. government acknowledged its wrongdoing in a letter of apology, but provided only \$5,000 in redress payments. **Part of that settlement agreement explicitly allowed for further action by Congress to fund JLA redress, in light of the fact that Japanese Americans were awarded \$20,000 under the Civil Liberties Act.** JLAs deserve to have their records corrected to remove the false label of "illegal entry" stamped in their U.S. immigration records by the very same government which had kidnapped them, and to receive redress at least equal to that received by other persons of Japanese ancestry who were wrongfully imprisoned by the U.S. government.

Please let me know that you will act to support the righting of this terrible wrong.

Sincerely,

Additional Comments:

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____