

# *Campaign for Justice: Redress Now for Japanese Latin Americans!*

February 1, 2008

Honorable Jerrold Nadler  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler:

The undersigned organizations write to respectfully request a hearing on **H.R. 662, the “Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act”** in February as we observe and commemorate the Day of Remembrance.

H.R. 662 would create a commission to investigate the World War II-era abduction, internment, and deportation of Japanese Latin Americans and to recommend appropriate remedies for the manner in which they were treated.

The U.S. government uprooted approximately 2,300 men, women and children of Japanese descent from their homes in thirteen Latin American countries and detained them in internment camps in the United States. Over 800 of these individuals were deported to Japan in prisoner exchanges. While the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 addressed the plight of Japanese Americans and provided compensation payments to former internees pursuant to Executive Order 9066, it did not bring relief for Japanese Latin Americans who were abducted and unlawfully interned in the United States.

H.R. 662 is an important step in bringing this regrettable chapter in American history to closure. It would establish a nine member commission to investigate the relocation, internment and deportation of Japanese Latin Americans, the impact of those actions, and it would make appropriate recommendations. Within one year, the commission would conclude its work by submitting a written report to Congress.

**A hearing on this bill is urgent because with each passing day, those people who were directly affected by this horrific human rights violation are passing, and unless this bill advances, they may not live to see the possibility of justice realized.**

This year, we commemorate two important dates. First, we observe the Day of Remembrance in commemoration of the anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s issuance of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, which led to the mass internment of persons of Japanese ancestry. We also remember the 20th anniversary of the historical 1988 Civil Liberties Act that recognized the wrongs of our government and granted reparations to Japanese Americans. **As the American people commemorate these two important events in American history, we urge you to hold this historic hearing to commemorate these monumental and civil and human rights anniversaries.**

***Campaign for Justice:  
Redress Now for Japanese Latin Americans!***

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Christine Oh at the Campaign For Justice at 213-500-9346 or at [JLAcampaign@gmail.com](mailto:JLAcampaign@gmail.com).

Signed:

1. Asian American Justice Center
2. Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
3. Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance –AFL-CIO
4. Campaign For Justice: Redress Now For Japanese Latin Americans!
5. Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
6. Global Rights
7. Japanese American Bar Association (JABA)
8. Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)
9. Japanese Peruvian Oral History Project
10. Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
11. League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
12. Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)
13. National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF)
14. Nihonmachi Outreach Committee
15. Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress
16. Washington Office on Latin America

CC:

Members of Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Hon. Artur Davis (AL-07)

Hon. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-20)

Hon. Keith Ellison (MN-05)

Hon. John Conyers Jr. (MI-14)

Hon. Bobby Scott (VA-03)

Hon. Mel Watt (NC-12)

Hon. Steve Cohen (TN-09)

Hon. Trent Franks (AZ-02)

Hon. Mike Pence (IN-06)

Hon. Darrell Issa (CA-49)

Hon. Steve King (IA-05)

Hon. Jim Jordan (OH-04)