

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

EASTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NEW YORK

PHILADELPHIA

SEABROOK

WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 8, 1980

Dear Friend:

I am writing to ask for your help. The campaign to establish a national commission to make an inquiry into the evacuation and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II is now at a crucial stage. The next few weeks will be decisive as to whether two bills pending in Congress will be passed this year or be put off to an uncertain future.

A great deal of momentum has been built up in Washington for the passage of both S. 1647 in the Senate and H.R. 5499 in the House. As of today, 147 Congressmen from 32 states and 22 Senators from 16 states are formally co-sponsoring the legislation pertaining to redress for those Americans affected by Executive Order 9066. Within the past several weeks, the House Majority Leader (Jim Wright of Texas), together with Representatives Peter Rodino, Jr., Norman Mineta, and Robert Matsui, have written to all their colleagues asking for support for the redress bills. If the momentum can be continued and intensified through public support, there is an excellent chance of passage within the next eight weeks. On the other hand, if the legislation lacks sufficient support for a floor vote this year, it may be difficult in future years to rebuild the strength we now have.

We in New England can play an important role in the political process now under way. There are eleven Senators and twenty-five Representatives in this Region. We can assure you that these individuals are both sensitive and responsive to constituent letters requesting support for specific legislation. Although it takes you or me only a few moments to write letters to our Senators and Representatives, these letters can have a strong impact upon voting behavior.

What I ask is this: 1) Write brief letters to your two Senators and one Representative requesting their support, either co-sponsorship or a favorable vote for passage of S. 1647 and HR 5499. The letters can and should be very brief. For your information, I enclose a copy of the letter written by a JAACL colleague to one of our Senators. Enclosed also is a listing of the Senators and Representatives from the New England states with their Washington addresses. (Note: If you live in the Congressional Districts of Representatives Drinan, Shannon, or Mavroules, do thank them for their support as this is important.) 2) Please ask your friends, too, to support the redress campaign by writing their legislators. 3) If you will send me copies of any responses you receive from your Senators or Representatives, I will in turn forward these to the JAACL office in Washington so they can monitor the list of our supporters in the Senate and the House.

Your help in insuring legislation of H.R. 5499 and S. 1647 is greatly appreciated. I hope you will free to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,

Kei E. Kaneda

Kei E. Kaneda, Campaign Volunteer
(Smith College School for Social Work '57)

Daria: I took Gary's letter and adapted it for press at Smith (135) and with the Smith Hope you can do the same. Kes.