

Submitter: Mia Ballinger

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Measure: SB1509

My name is Mia Kazuko Ballinger. I'm 11 years old and I'm a Gosei, fifth-generation Japanese American. My relatives came over from Japan to Oregon in the late 1800's. During WWII, my great-grandfather, Harry Morioka, became a Nisei soldier when he joined the US Army from Tule Lake concentration camp. He served in the Military Intelligence Service as a translator in Japan.

The Oregon Nisei Veterans WWII Memorial Highway makes me feel proud to have a relative that was a Nisei soldier. The highway would honor all the Japanese American men and women who served in WWII. The Nisei soldiers fought for the freedom of the United States of America, even when they didn't have the freedom themselves. The highway would recognize their bravery and sacrifice and would continue to teach future generations like mine.