

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

## Celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Cosponsor Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of  
Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act (H.R. 662)

May 18, 2007

Dear Colleague:

We request that you join us in cosponsoring the **Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act (H.R. 662)**. The commission would investigate the relocation, internment, and deportation of Japanese Latin Americans and recommend appropriate actions.

As we celebrate "Asian Pacific American Heritage Month" in the month of May, it is important to honor the immeasurable contributions in business, government, arts and sports that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have given to our great nation. However, this month also warrants reflection about how we can further honor the lives of Asian Pacific Americans.

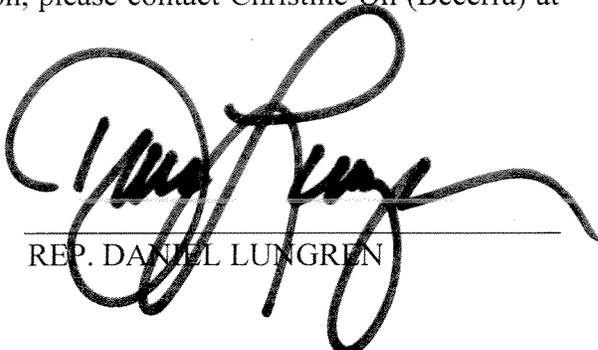
During World War II, official files reveal that the U.S. government was involved in the abduction and internment of an estimated 2,300 people of Japanese descent who lived in 13 Latin American countries. Uprooted and forcibly transported to the United States, these civilians were robbed of their freedom as they were removed from nations not directly involved in the war.

The 1981 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians acknowledged the federal actions in detaining and interning Latin Americans of Japanese ancestry. Eventually, this commission led to the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that gave redress to Japanese Americans. However, Japanese Latin Americans were not included in the redress. Ten years later, after a class-action lawsuit, the U.S. government offered \$5,000 for each internee (instead of the \$20,000 compensated to interned Japanese Americans) and a letter of regret. About 800 accepted the settlement, but the remaining internees never learned of it or refused to accept this form of redress.

Again, we urge you to join us in cosponsoring the **Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act (H.R. 662)**. For more information and/or to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Christine Oh (Becerra) at 6-6235 or Karin Moore (Lungren) at 5-5716.

Sincerely,

  
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REP. XAVIER BECERRA

  
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REP. DANIEL LUNGREN