

For immediate release
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Japanese Latin American Commission bill garners favorable, bipartisan vote in House subcommittee

CFJ urges the public to contact Judiciary Committee members to support Committee markup

LOS ANGELES, CA – July 27, 2009 – Last Friday, a bipartisan majority of members of the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law voted favorably, seven to two, to report H.R. 42, the JLA Commission bill, to the full House Judiciary Committee. The bill was introduced in the House by Representative Xavier Becerra (D-CA-31) in January of this year.

“This favorable, bipartisan vote demonstrates the positive change that the 111th Congress along with the new administration have brought to our nation’s Capital,” said Christine Oh, Legislative Director of Campaign For Justice. “I commend the subcommittee members for moving this important legislation forward, and I urge the full Judiciary Committee members to support its passage.”

The JLA Commission bill would establish a federal commission to investigate and determine the facts surrounding the wartime deportation, internment and relocation of Latin Americans of Japanese descent by the U.S. government and recommend any appropriate remedies.

While many Americans are aware of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, few know about our government’s activities in certain non-combatant countries against people of Japanese ancestry. Approximately 2,264 Japanese Latin Americans were uprooted from their homes and forcibly transported to the United States to be held in internment camps, and among whom hundreds were used by the U.S. government for hostage exchanges with Japan.

On March 19, 2009, the Subcommittee held a hearing focusing on the treatment of Latin Americans of Japanese and German descent, European Americans, and Jewish refugees during World War II, providing a platform for JLAs to lay a historical foundation for the need for a commission investigation into these wartime government violations. Witnesses who testified at the hearing included Libia Yamamoto (former Japanese Peruvian internee), Grace Shimizu (Director of Japanese Peruvian Oral History Project and daughter of a former Japanese Peruvian internee), and Daniel Masterson (Professor of History at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland).

CFJ asks supporters to immediately contact their members of Congress who sit on the Judiciary Committee to express their support for the bill.

Arizona

Trent Franks (R-AZ-2)

California

Elton Gallegly (R-CA-24)

Brad Sherman (D-CA-27)

Adam Schiff (D-CA-29)

Maxine Waters (D-CA-35)

Linda Sanchez (D-CA-39)

Florida

Tom Rooney (R-FL-16)

Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL-20)

Georgia

Hank Johnson (D-GA-4)

Illinois

Mike Quigley (D-IL-5)

Iowa

Steven King (R-IA-5)

Massachusetts

Bill Delahunt (D-MA-10)

Michigan

John Conyers Jr. (D-MI-14)

Mississippi

Gregg Harper (R-MS-3)

New York

Jerrold Nadler (D-NY-8)

Anthony Weiner (D-NY-9)

Dan Maffei (D-NY-25)

North Carolina

Tom Coble (R-NC-6)

Mel Watt (D-NC-12)

Ohio

Jim Jordan (R-OH-4)

Tennessee

Steve Cohen (D-TN-9)

Texas

Louie Gohmert (R-TX-1)

Ted Poe (R-TX-2)

Charlie Gonzalez (D-TX-20)

Lamar Smith (R-TX-21)

Utah

Jason Chaffetz (R-UT-3)

Virginia

Bobby Scott (D-VA-3)

Randy Forbes (R-VA-4)

Bob Goodlatte (R-VA-6)

Rick Boucher (D-VA-9)

Wisconsin

Tammy Baldwin (D-WI-2)

James Sensenbrenner (R-WI-5)

For more information, please contact Christine Oh, CFJ Legislative Director, at (213) 500-9346 or info@campaignforjusticejla.org. Visit the CFJ website at www.campaignforjusticejla.org.

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