

Statement for the Record

**Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-06)
Member of Congress**

**House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation**

H.R. 4751, a bill to make technical corrections to Public Law 110-229 to reflect the renaming of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Memorial to Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, and for other purposes.

July 9, 2014

Thank you, Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva for providing me with the opportunity to testify today in support of H.R. 4751. I thank the other members of the subcommittee for being here today.

H.R. 4751 is legislation that will make technical corrections to legislation passed into law in 2008 by the 110th Congress. The 2008 law included the site now known as the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, which is located in the district that I represent, as a unit of the Minidoka National Historic Site.

The memorial was established to recognize that, in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Bainbridge Island was the first place in the country where Japanese Americans were forcibly removed from their homes. At that time, given concerns about the security of U.S. Navy facilities in the Puget Sound, more than 270 Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes, their neighbors, and their friends to travel great distances in order to stay in internment camps. These individuals committed no crime, yet were deprived of their rights simply because of who they were. While this is a dark chapter in our nation's history, we have an obligation to ensure that future generations remember what took place here so that those mistakes are not repeated.

While the Park Service manages three sites related to Japanese American incarceration, this is the only memorial administered by the Park Service that commemorates the forcible removal of Japanese Americans.

In April of this year, the Bainbridge Island City Council and the Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Park and Recreational District, which jointly own the memorial, officially renamed it the "Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial." In order to eliminate any confusion and ensure that the official name of the site is formally recognized, H.R. 4751, would update the law to reflect the renaming of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention that Bainbridge Island's Japanese American community recently lost one of their great leaders, Dr. Frank Kitamoto, who dedicated much of his life to educating others about the experience of Japanese Americans during World War II. Dr. Kitamoto played an instrumental role in advocating for the installation of the memorial.

Thank you, Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva for inviting me to speak on behalf of H.R. 4751.