

January 11, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-317, Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell,

We are survivors of the Amache Japanese American incarceration site, and we are writing to express our strong support for the bipartisan Amache National Historic Site Act (HR 2497).

HR 2497, which would designate Amache as an official unit of the National Park System, recently passed both the full House and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee with overwhelming bipartisan support. It is now in your hands.

We are living history. We were among the over 7,500 individuals, mostly fellow U.S. citizens, who experienced the unconstitutional injustice and inhumane treatment at Amache, where during WWII we were forced to live as prisoners in our own country. Along with our parents, we were forced from our homes, tagged like animals, and sent to the desolate prairie of southeast Colorado, where we lived in trauma, with a constant presence of armed guards, barbed wire, and suffering too large to describe in one correspondence.

Our families suffered loss of jobs, homes, property and businesses, and many of us lost family members and a sense of family unity. Many of our parents died before the Civil Liberties Act was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1988, and went to their graves without even an apology from their country.

Our nation still has a long way to go to learn from this mistake, and our community—both old and young—continues to suffer from anti-Asian hate crimes.

Our national parks and the stories they honor reflect our values as a nation. Adding Amache to the National Park System would allow us to protect a physical, and sacred, reminder that incarceration affected a diaspora of Japanese American communities across the country. Amache has many stories: a military service story; a farming and agriculture story; a rural America story. It is also the story of continuing social injustices in a landscape where hundreds of Cheyenne and Arapaho were killed in 1864 at the nearby Sand Creek Massacre site. And it is a story of community displacement, resettlement, and rebuilding.

It is our greatest hope that you will set bipartisan HR 2497 for full Senate passage by February 19, 2022, the 80th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 that started our incarceration.

With each year that passes, there are fewer of us.

We are counting on you to see this through.

Respectfully,

James Konishi, age 94, Amache Block 6E, Barrack 12D

Roy Riichi Hatamiya, age 92, Amache Block 6G, Barrack 5A & 5B

Kenneth Kitajima, age 91, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 11B

Robert Y. Fuchigami, age 91, Amache Block 7G, Barrack 9C

Robert Moriguchi, age 90, Amache Block 8E, Barrack 4D

Carlene Tanigoshi Tinker, age 82, Amache Block 11G, Barrack 4C

Gary Tsutomu Ono, age 81, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 6B & 6D

Dennis Otsuji, age 78, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 6A

Phillip Shigekuni (Miyamoto), age 87, Amache Block 7K

Cheryl Naoko Ono, age 76, Amache Block 12F, Barrack 12A

Carole Nobuko Narita, age 80, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 1E & 1F

Tyrone Furuta, age 76, Amache Block 11K, Barrack 4E

Alice Akiko Dairiki Murphy, age 80, Amache Block 12G, Barrack 5C

Sumiko Higashi, age 80, Amache Block 11k, Barrack 8B

Janice Ono, age 77, Amache Block 12F, Barrack 12A

Anita Hideko Miyamoto, age 81, Amache Block 7G, Barrack 2D

Mary Hiroko Kameoka, age 78, Amache Block 8F, Barrack 5D

Eiko Yamamoto, age 94, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 12E & 12F

Kunio Homma, age 81, Amache Block 12K, Barrack 12E

Terihiko Higashi, age 76, Amache Block 11K, Barrack 8B

Kumiko Homma, age 86, Amache Block 12K, Barrack 12E

Adrienne Reiko Akahoshi, age 83, Amache Block 7H, Barrack 7E

Bryon H. Fujikawa, age 82, Amache Block 9K, Barrack 9D

Esther Tani, age 96, Amache Block 9L, Barrack 2C

Peter Sei Furuta, age 80, Amache Block 12G, Barrack 5D

Sandra Ono, age 79, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 6B & 6D

Kimiko Higashi, age 78, Amache Block 11K, Barrack 8D

Ned Dairiki, age 85, Amache Block 12G, Barrack 5C

Tomiko Yokouchi Madden, age 89, Amache Block 9L, Barrack 5B

Yoshiko Yokouchi Shinoda, age 86, Amache Block 9L, Barrack 5B

Dennis Ken Fujita, age 78, Amache Block 10H, Barrack 12C

Kei Wada, age 87, Amache Block 6F, Barrack 1C, D

Nancy Fujita, age 81, Amache Block 10H, Barrack 12C

Shigeru Kanai, age 96, Amache Block 11H, Barrack 6C

Jeanne Utako Kawamoto, age 76, Amache Block 12F, Barrack 9D

Kanezo Anyo Domoto, age 78, Amache Block 6H, Barrack 5C

David Kuroda, age 78, Amache Block 7K, Barrack 3A

Jean Maeda, age 77, Amache Block 7F, Barrack 9E

Thomas Tanaka, age 97, Amache Block 9H, Barrack 9B

Shigeko Mae Sakamoto, age 94, Amache Block 8F, Barrack 3D

Theodora Emiko Morita Yoshikami, age 78, Amache Block 9K, Barrack 6A & 6B

Leslee Kimiko Inaba, age 77, Amache Block 7E, Barrack 6A

Martha Takahashi, age 86, Amache Block 12G. Barrack 9B

Margarette Masuoka Murakami, age 91, Amache Block 6H, Barrack 8B

Noboru Hashimoto, age 95, Amache Block 7G, Barrack 3C & 3D

Fumi Frances Itow Palmer, age 81, Amache Block 8K, Barrack 12F & 10C

Mike Honda, age 80, Amache Block 7F, Barrack 11F

Mas Takano, age 89, Amache Block 9E, Barrack 7B

Ikuko Takeshita, age 92, Amache Block 9E, Barrack 7B

Victor Katsumi Ono, age 77, Amache Block 12F, Barrack 12C

Kenneth Hiroichi Okamura, age 82, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 6B

Phyllis Yaeko Okamura, age 81, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 6B

Carol Hiroko Okamura, age 78, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 6B

Paul K. Doi, age 85, Amache Block 9L, Barrack 12D

Mitsuko Yamamoto, age 93, Amache Block 10E, Barrack 12E &12F

Judie Kinuyo Tanaka, age 84, Amache Block 9K, Barrack 7E

Paul Morita, age 88, Amache Block 9K, Barrack 6A&B

Hiromi Kato, age 83, Amache Block 6H, Barrack 1B

Shigemi Kato, age 89, Amache Block 6H, Barrack 1B

Carolyn Nakamura, age 78, Amache Block 9L, Barrack 11F

Toshiko Kumagai, age 84, Amache Block 9L, Barrack 5B

Yaeko Tani, age 84, Amache Block 9L, Barrack 7E

Naomi Takahashi, age 84, Amache Block 12G, Barrack 9B

