

Dear Members of Congress:

Our organizations **strongly endorse the bipartisan Amache National Historic Site Act (H.R. 2497/S.1284)**, introduced by U.S. Representatives Joe Neguse (D-CO) and Ken Buck (R-CO) and U.S. Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper.

This legislation honors the over 7,500 individuals who were unjustly forced from their homes to the Granada Relocation Center in southeast Colorado, known as Amache, by establishing Amache as a National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a unit of the National Park System.

The National Park Service is our nation's official protector of cultural and historic resources and is our nation's largest classroom, where we can learn about our past through the power of place. What NPS chooses to preserve and the stories it chooses to tell—including the complex and difficult—reflects our values as a nation. With H.R. 2497/S.1284, we have an opportunity to protect a story that has largely been forgotten: the unconstitutional imprisonment of Japanese Americans at Amache.

Two-thirds of the people at Amache were American citizens. Most were given just days to dispose of everything they owned, with no idea where they were going or what would happen. Only one thing was clear: They were not welcome in their own country because they had Japanese faces and names. Even amid this tragedy, the people imprisoned at Amache created an entire town, and interacted regularly with the nearby town of Granada. Many even volunteered to serve in the military during the war — the highest percentage of all the incarceration camps.

At Amache, people lived in trauma, with a constant presence of armed guards, barbed wire and shoddily built barracks. For many, a sense of family unity was destroyed. Several of the older generation who suffered at Amache died before the U.S. government issued reparations and never received an apology. This bill honors the heroic survivors and descendants within the Amache community as well as the legacy of those who are no longer with us. While the story of Amache is theirs, it is also the story of the Town of Granada, and links to our tribal history. It is part of the cultural heritage throughout canyons and plains of southeast Colorado. It is part of our collective history.

Especially during this time of national dialogue around anti-Asian American Pacific Islander hate crimes, we urge Congress to pass this legislation so that our nation can learn and heal.

Sincerely,

Amache Preservation Society

National Parks Conservation Association

Anti-Defamation League Mountain States Region

Colorado Municipal League

Colorado Council of Churches

Mayor's Office, City & County of Denver

Southeast Council of Governments

Governor's Office of Development and International Trade (Colorado)

National Veterans Network

Mile High Japanese American Citizens League

Fred T. Korematsu Institute

Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans

Coalition to Protect America's National Parks

Interfaith Alliance of Colorado

Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc.

The Nikkeijin Kai of Colorado
University of Denver Amache Project
Sand Creek Massacre Foundation
The Wilderness Society
Outdoor Asian Colorado Chapter
Japan-America Society of Southern Colorado
Defiende Nuestra Tierra
Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network
Change Matrix
Japanese Arts Network
Continental Divide Trail Coalition
High Country Conservation Advocates
Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium
Action 22
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Colorado
CORE: Community Organizing for Radical Empathy
Japanese American Resource Center of Colorado
Simpson United Methodist Church
Trustees for the Town of Granada Baca County
Commissioners
Crowley County Board of Commissioners
Otero County Board of Commissioners
Otero Junior College
Colorado Dragon Boat Festival
Otero County Historic Preservation Board
Southeast Colorado Business Retention Expansion and Attraction

History Colorado
Sakura Foundation
Colorado Preservation, Inc.
Colorado Community College System
Rocky Mountain Wild
Canyons & Plains of Southeast Colorado
No Ke Aloha
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council
Asian Avenue Magazine
Colorado School of Public Health
Nathan Yip Foundation
Friends of Minidoka
Asian Chamber of Commerce
Next 100 Colorado National Museum
Lamar Community College
Trinidad State Junior College
Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temple
Prowers County Board of Commissioners
Kiowa County Commissioners
City of La Junta
Amache Historical Society II
Bent County Historical Society
Densho
National Japanese American Historical Society