

John A. Kitzhaber, MD
Governor



Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
1819 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201
O 503.302.9725/F 503.473.8519
Email: oco.mail@oregon.gov

January 16, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As the Chairs of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions (OACs), we are proud and honored to support the nomination of Minoru Yasui for a 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom in recognition of his demonstrated action throughout his lifetime to defend civil and human rights. The OACs are dedicated to helping those who are most vulnerable in our community and believe that Mr. Yasui is an ideal candidate to receive this highest honor.

Although Minoru Yasui's commitment was perhaps most dramatically demonstrated when he intentionally violated the military curfew imposed upon American citizens of Japanese descent during World War II, Yasui's life is replete with courageous acts. He was never silenced by fear or bitterness, and he never stopped fighting for equality.

Minoru Yasui fought for the rights of Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, youth, people with disabilities, seniors, international human rights agencies and many others. A visionary well ahead of his time, Yasui recognized the common struggle of all marginalized people and dedicated his life to advocate and achieve results on their behalf.

His lifelong work spans over five decades, from 1931 – when at the age of 15 he helped found a chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League – until his death in 1986. Yasui's work ranged from the Urban League to helping found what is now the Colorado Latin Leadership, Advocacy and Research Organization and also the now Denver Indian Center. In addition to those groups, Yasui chaired the Denver Anti-Crime Council, the board of Employ-Ex (a program for ex-offenders), Denver Opportunity, a War on Poverty program, and the Colorado State Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Minoru Yasui was decades ahead of his time and a true pioneer in the cross-racial and cultural fight for civil and human rights. His life is a model of meritorious contributions to the national

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interests of the United States, to world peace and to significant public endeavors. He stands for taking action to effect positive change at all levels – from the local to the national to the international, and from the grass roots to the grass tops. For all that he achieved through his life's work that continues to inspire us today, Minoru Yasui is a most worthy recipient of a 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Sincerely,



Stephen Ying, Chair, OCAPIA



Alberto Moreno, Chair, OCHA



James I. Manning, Jr., Chair, OCBA



Stephanie Vardavas, Chair, OCFW