

2023-J2472

Senate Resolution No. 2472

BY: Senator MAYER

HONORING Takeshi and Carolyn Furumoto in recognition of their accomplishments and their critical work to achieve recognition of Fred Korematsu's life and work to protect civil liberties, and their work to preserve and promote knowledge of Japanese-American history

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize the profound impact of those exemplary organizations and individuals within the great State of New York which proactively work for the empowerment of cultural communities, and the importance of such work which benefits all citizens of this State, and indeed, all citizens of the Nation, should be rightfully commended; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Takeshi and Carolyn Furumoto in recognition of their accomplishments and their critical work to achieve recognition of Fred Korematsu's life and work to protect civil liberties, and their work to preserve and promote knowledge of Japanese-American history; and

WHEREAS, Carolyn Namie Furumoto's parents were interned at Tule Lake Segregation Camp; after their release, they moved to Los Angeles, where their children were born and raised; Carolyn attended University High School and graduated from California State University at Northridge; and

WHEREAS, Takeshi "Tak" Furumoto was born in Tule Lake Segregation Camp in 1944; after being released from the camp his family relocated to Japan to help families devastated by the war, before returning to the United States in 1956; in 1968, Tak volunteered for the United States Army, serving in Vietnam; he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal in 1971, but suffered from PTSD and exposure to Agent Orange; and

WHEREAS, Takeshi and Carolyn met when he was in Officer Candidate School in 1968; Takeshi Furumoto was sent to Vietnam in February 1970; by the time he saw Carolyn again, he had spent six months in heavy combat in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return home to the States in 1972, Takeshi and Carolyn Furumoto were united in marriage and together they raised one son; the couple relocated to the East Coast, where they started their own company, Furumoto Realty, in 1974; and

WHEREAS, Takeshi and Carolyn Furumoto were awarded the Fort Lee Chamber of Commerce, Man and Woman of the Year in 2000, and in 2015, received the Key to the Borough of Fort Lee; and

WHEREAS, Takeshi and Carolyn Furumoto campaigned tirelessly for the passage of Fred Korematsu Day in New Jersey, which was signed into law on January 30, 2023; this vital day of recognition honors Korematsu, an American who was not allowed to serve in the U.S. military due to his Japanese ancestry; when Executive Order 9066 was issued in February 1942, Korematsu refused to move to an incarceration facility because he believed his civil rights were being violated; Korematsu pursued his constitutional claim all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, Among his other civic and humanitarian achievements,

Takeshi Furumoto is a founder and currently an Honorary Chairman of New York Hiroshima-Kai, an association that cultivates mutual friendship among people in Hiroshima and the Northeastern United States; in addition, on August 5th each year, Hiroshima-Kai hosts a peace memorial event in New York City to commemorate the atomic bomb victims in Japan; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, he is a Life Member of the Japanese American Veterans' Association, helping to organize events in the New York City area, and is also a founding member of Digital Museum of the History of Japanese in New York; this museum collects and shares the stories of thousands of Japanese and Japanese Americans who have lived in New York since the first Japanese official delegation arrived in 1860; and

WHEREAS, Our society is greatly benefited by the purposeful efforts of individuals who unite for the cause of improving the quality of life for others, and who proactively work toward the goal of dignity for all; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Takeshi and Carolyn Furumoto in recognition of their accomplishments and their critical work to achieve recognition of Fred Korematsu's life and work to protect civil liberties, and their work to preserve and promote knowledge of Japanese-American history; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Takeshi and Carolyn Furumoto.