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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**WASURENAI Yō NI – Remembering Hawaii's World War II Internees**

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DO NOT FORGET.

Hawaii's Japanese proved their allegiance to America during World War II by producing the most decorated, courageous fighting unit in the United States military. The story of the 442d Unit was memorialized in the film "Go For Broke," which remains a classic tribute to these soldiers' bravery and dedication.

What is much less known is the tragic story of how our own government treated the Japanese during World War II. The internment of the Japanese remains a largely untold story of misplaced suspicion and great injustice suffered by these loyal Americans.

Senator Will Espero (D-Ewa Beach/Waipahu) recognizes the importance of remembering this period in our history and the harsh, undeserved treatment suffered by Japanese Americans because of the prejudices of the day. He introduced S.B. 1228 to establish and construct the Honouliuli Internment Camp Memorial in honor of Hawaii's interned Japanese.

There are five known internment camps in Hawaii: Honouliuli and Sand Island on Oahu; Kilauea on the Big Island; Haiku on Maui; and Kalaheo on Kauai. Many former internment camps throughout the country have already or will soon disappear. Accounts of life in these internment camps, told by former internees, has given historians an increased awareness of how Hawaii's internees fared.

Senator Espero believes that this information is critical to preserve Hawaii's cultural and military history, and that there is much left to do before any memorial can be established. He encourages cultural and historical organizations to work together and decide the most appropriate means of memorializing this troubling time in our national and state history.

S.B. 1228, "Relating to Historical Preservation," passed the Committee on Economic Development and Taxation (EDT), chaired by Senator Carol Fukunaga, and of which Senator Espero is Vice Chair. The bill passed EDT and will go to the Ways and Means Committee chaired by Senator Roslyn Baker.

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