



# 129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

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Legislative Document

No. 0

H.P. 355

House of Representatives, January 29, 2019

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### JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FRED T. KOREMATSU

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Reference to the Joint Select Committee on Joint Rules suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rt B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative BAILEY of Saco.  
Cosponsored by Representative: DENK of Kennebunk.

**STATE OF MAINE**

—  
**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND NINETEEN**  
—

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FRED T. KOREMATSU**

**WHEREAS**, in 1942, Fred T. Korematsu, a 23-year-old Japanese American, refused to go to the Federal Government's incarceration camps and was arrested and convicted of defying the government's order; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Korematsu appealed his case all the way to the United States Supreme Court, which ruled against him in 1944, arguing that the incarceration was justified due to military necessity; and

**WHEREAS**, it was discovered in 1983 that government intelligence agencies had hidden key documents from the Supreme Court in 1944, documents that consistently showed that Japanese Americans had committed no acts of treason to justify mass incarceration; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Korematsu's 40-year-old case was reopened on the basis of government misconduct and overturned on November 10, 1983, a pivotal moment in civil rights history; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Korematsu was a patriotic American who tried to enlist in the United States National Guard and the United States Coast Guard after the nation entered World War II but was turned away on account of his Japanese ancestry and was fired from his job as a shipyard welder for the same reason; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Korematsu was an activist throughout his life and lobbied for an official apology from the government and token compensation for each of the surviving Japanese Americans who were incarcerated, and President Ronald W. Reagan signed redress and reparations legislation into law on August 10, 1988; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Korematsu, who received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, from President William J. Clinton in 1998, filed an amicus brief with the Supreme Court for 2 cases on behalf of Muslim inmates being held at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, in which he warned that the government's extreme national security measures were reminiscent of the past, and a 2nd amicus brief on behalf of an American Muslim man being held in solitary confinement in a United States military prison without trial that warned against the United States government repeating the mistakes of the past; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Korematsu died on March 30, 2005 and in 2010 the State of California made January 30th annually Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution, the first day in the United States named after an Asian American; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Korematsu's growing legacy continues to inspire people of all backgrounds and demonstrates the importance of speaking up to fight injustice; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize the story, achievements and legacy of Fred T. Korematsu, a great

American, and urge the citizens of the State to recognize the importance of preserving civil liberties.