



City of Bellevue | Proclamation

Whereas: February 19 marks the anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing Executive Order 9066 in 1942, which authorized the United States government to create military exclusion areas, frequently referred to as “internment camps”, for Japanese Americans living on the West Coast; and

Whereas: More than 120,000 Japanese Americans — including American citizens and those born in the country — were forcibly removed from their homes and incarcerated in internment camps in remote inland parts of the continent; and

Whereas: The well-documented cost was heavy, both emotionally and financially, with many Japanese Americans losing their homes, businesses, property and savings; and

Whereas: Bellevue lost a generation of Japanese American residents, with only 11 of the 60 families returning to the area after 1945; and

Whereas: The United States government formally apologized for the internment policy in 1988 when President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act, offering survivors \$20,000 in compensation; and

Whereas: The community is invited to learn more about the Nikkei farmers of Bellevue and their experiences before, during, and after World War II through “Emerging Radiance”, an interactive and immersive art experience acquired by the City of Bellevue in 2023, which will be on permanent display in the Bellevue Library starting in spring 2024; and

Whereas: The City of Bellevue honors and recognizes the tremendous value and contributions of our Japanese American community and is committed to inclusion, access, equity and opportunity for all.

Now, therefore, I, Lynne Robinson, mayor of Bellevue, Washington, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim February 19, 2024, as:

Day of Action and Remembrance for Japanese American Incarceration During World War II

in Bellevue, and urge our community to reflect on this unfortunate time in our nation’s history. The city further reaffirms its commitment to protecting the civil rights of everyone in our community.

Lynne Robinson, Mayor
City of Bellevue