



April 9, 2021

Dear Member of Congress,

I am writing on behalf of the Sand Creek Massacre Foundation to express our **support for the Amache National Historic Site Act (H.R. 2497/S.1284)**.

The decision to intern nearly 120,000 Japanese American residents, the vast majority of whom were American citizens, as threats to national security during World War II constituted another deplorable chapter in the country's history of discrimination and oppression of non-Anglo-American citizens and residents. It can rightly be categorized with the systematic oppression of African-Americans under slavery and Jim Crow, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the discriminatory 1924 Immigration Act, the long-standing oppression of Hispanics in the American Southwest, and the relentless conquest of Native Americans as horrifically illustrated by the Sand Creek Massacre not far from the Amache site. Treatment that would have been regarded as unthinkable for white citizens was meted out routinely to these marginalized groups. The collective effect of these actions has brought the country nothing but misery.

Ironically, the rank injustice of internment is underscored by the service of the tens of thousands of Japanese-Americans who volunteered for service during World War II in the face of the internment policy. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team, made up nearly exclusively of Japanese-American troops, distinguished itself as one of the most decorated combat units of its size in the United States Army while the families of these soldiers were held as prisoners for the purported crime of being Japanese by birth or ancestry.

The history of Colorado mirrors the larger context of the United States to a remarkable degree, and the Amache site is a critical resource that offers an unsparing insight into the gulf that divides the nation's ideals from the implementation of public policies that shredded the promises guaranteed in the Constitution. Along with the nearby Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, the site of Amache reminds us that the American experience has been and remains a work in progress.

Passage of the Amache National Historic Site Act (H.R. 2497/S.1284) will be a compelling statement that the nation remains committed to coming to terms with its often-contradictory history.

Sincerely,

Tom Thomas, Ph.D.

On behalf of the Sand Creek Massacre Foundation Board of Directors