



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

### **H.3119 – An Act designating January 30 of each year as Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution in Massachusetts**

Sponsor: Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven

[Full Bill Text](#)

#### **Summary:**

This bill makes January 30th of each year Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution, through a proclamation from the governor issued annually. January 30th is Fred Korematsu's birthday, and is celebrated as a holiday in a number of states, including California, Hawai'i, and Florida.

#### **What this bill does:**

- Requires the governor to issue a proclamation every year to declare January 30th as Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution.
- The proclamation must recommend that the day be an opportunity for civic participation.

#### **Why this bill matters:**

Fred Korematsu, a second-generation Japanese American, fought for civil rights and against Japanese internment during World War II. He challenged the order requiring internment, even becoming a fugitive, but was eventually caught. He sued, arguing that internment of Japanese Americans was unconstitutional, and his case, *Korematsu vs The United States*, went all the way to the Supreme Court in 1944. The Supreme Court decided against him, arguing that internment was constitutional, though the case was reopened in 1983 because proof came out that the government falsified information, leading to his charges being dropped. It is important for people to recognize Korematsu, who put his life and body on the line to fight for civil rights. Not only is it critical to highlight the historical struggles AAPI communities have faced surrounding discrimination, surveillance, and anti-AAPI sentiment, it is also important to recognize the continued issues facing the AAPI community, including anti-China and anti-Asian sentiment, surveillance, and other issues.