

1 **TOPAZ MUSEUM AND CIVIL LIBERTIES**
2 **LEARNING CENTER JOINT RESOLUTION**

3 2009 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Dennis E. Stowell**

6 House Sponsor: Bradley A. Winn

8 **LONG TITLE**

9 **General Description:**

10 This joint resolution of the Legislature expresses support for the construction of a
11 museum and civil liberties learning center in Delta, Utah, for the purpose of preserving
12 and educating about the Topaz Internment Camp site.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14 This resolution:

15 ▸ expresses support for the Topaz Museum Board's effort to preserve and protect the
16 site of the Topaz Internment Camp, to build a museum and civil liberties learning
17 center in Delta, Utah, and to educate all citizens about Japanese American
18 internment history, especially Topaz, through artifacts, exhibits, and oral histories.

19 **Special Clauses:**

20 None

22 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

23 WHEREAS, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on
24 February 19, 1942, authorizing the evacuation of 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry from
25 their homes in portions of Hawaii, California, Oregon, Washington, and Arizona to ten remote
26 internment camps in Arkansas, Colorado, Arizona, California, Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah;

27 WHEREAS, one of those camps, Topaz, located near Delta, Utah, housed over 11,000
28 men, women, and children from September 11, 1942, until October 31, 1945, and was Utah's
29 fifth largest city;

30 WHEREAS, over 25,000 Japanese Americans, many from Topaz, served in the United
31 States military during World War II and suffered tremendous casualties while their families
32 were confined in the internment camps;

33 WHEREAS, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Civil Liberties Act of 1988,
34 and President George H.W. Bush issued a letter of apology and redress payments to the
35 survivors of these internment camps;

36 WHEREAS, the Topaz camp site must be preserved and protected as part of the
37 nation's commitment to equal justice for all;

38 WHEREAS, the Topaz Museum Board, a non-profit agency, has raised money to
39 purchase 626 of the 640 acres of the site, has sponsored pilgrimages and teachers' workshops,
40 has conducted Topaz Day for fourth graders in Millard County, has restored a recreation hall
41 from the camp, and collected artifacts and oral histories, in an effort to preserve the site and
42 educate people about the internment of American citizens;

43 WHEREAS, the Topaz site was declared a "Save America's Treasures" project in 1999;

44 WHEREAS, the 2006 United States House of Representatives passed HB 1492, which
45 authorized the Secretary of the Interior to create a program within the National Park Service to
46 further protect and provide funding for the ten internment camp sites and other significant
47 related areas;

48 WHEREAS, Congressman Chris Cannon and Congressman Jim Matheson joined 114
49 others to co-sponsor HB 1492;

50 WHEREAS, Senator Daniel Inouye introduced S1719 as a companion bill to HB 1492,
51 along with five co-sponsors, including Senator Bob Bennett and Senator Orrin Hatch; and

52 WHEREAS, in 2007 the National Park Service declared the Topaz site to be Utah's
53 thirteenth National Historic Landmark:

54 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
55 expresses support for the Topaz Museum Board's effort to preserve and protect the site of the
56 Topaz Internment Camp, to build a museum and civil liberties learning center in Delta, Utah,
57 and to educate all citizens about Japanese American internment history, especially Topaz,

58 through artifacts, exhibits, and oral histories.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Topaz

60 Museum Board, former Congressman Chris Cannon, Senator Daniel Inouye, and the members

61 of Utah's Congressional Delegation.