



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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PRESS RELEASE

HABEAS CORPUS RESTORATION MEASURE FAILS DESPITE SUPPORT

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, the Senate failed to end debate on the Leahy-Specter Amendment of the Defense Authorization Bill by four votes. This motion to cloture yielded 56 supporters while 43 voted against the motion. A motion to reconsider the amendment and hold another vote was submitted, but it is yet to be determined when this will happen.

The Leahy-Specter Amendment is based on The Habeas Corpus Restoration Act of 2007 which restores habeas corpus rights to enemy combatants held under U.S. authority.

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), America's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization remains undeterred. JACL pledged to work to restore this right and raise awareness of the injustice done when one is held indefinitely without access to the courts. By restoring this right we restore rights to everyone in this nation as outlined in the Constitution.

Larry Oda, JACL's National President expressed disappointment with the Senate's failing. "We're sliding back into 1942 (referring to the internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans during WWII). In 2006, the Military Commissions Act sidestepped Supreme Court ruling stating that the federal government did not have authority to set up these particular military commissions which strip away habeas corpus for those detained. Our rights are being eroded."

National Executive Director, Floyd Mori, stated with some hope, "While we are saddened by the vote that took the habeas corpus restoration measure away from the Defense Authorization bill, the JACL was happy to note the majority of the Senate voted for cloture. This indicates there is bi-partisan support to restore the Great Writ of habeas corpus and with it, restoration of a basic tenet in the Constitution. We applaud the 56 Senators who voted favorably for the amendment."