



# JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE / JACL

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## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release  
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### JACL MOURNS PASSING OF NAO TAKASUGI

**San Francisco, CA** -- The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil and human rights organization, mourns the passing of Nao Takasugi, JACL member and political leader, and offers condolences to his family.

Takasugi, who passed away on Thursday, November 19, 2009, of complications from a stroke, was 87 years old. He was a Republican who served six years in the California State Assembly before he was termed out of office in 1998. Prior to serving in the Legislature, he was elected to the Oxnard City Council in 1976 and was mayor from 1982 to 1992 before winning the Assembly seat.

During World War II, while Takasugi was a student at UCLA, his family was forced to leave their home in Oxnard and spend time in a concentration camp. Through the help of the Quaker organization, he was offered the chance to leave the camp to complete his business administration degree at Temple University in Philadelphia. He graduated from Temple in 1945 and then earned a master's degree in business administration from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania in 1946.

Takasugi had a good attitude about the camp experience and tried to remember the good instead of the bad. He was quoted in the 1998 book by Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*, "I find that I am compelled to remember the best--not the worst--of that time. To focus not on the grave deprivation of rights which beset us all, but rather on the countless shining moments of virtue that emerged from the shadows of that dark hour."

In the *Ventura County Star* in 2002, he said: "I don't feel angry any more. In spite of all the shortcomings of this country, it's still a great country. Where else can you come from a concentration camp and become the mayor?"

Floyd Mori, National Executive Director of the JACL and a former California State Assemblyman and Mayor, stated: "Nao Takasugi was a dedicated public servant who gave much to the service of his country and to the Japanese American community. He went into the Assembly ten years after Paul Bannai and I left that body, and he filled a void of Asian American legislators in California at that time. He was the beginning of the present resurgence of Asian American and Pacific Islander legislators among California state elected officials. It was a privilege to have known him. He will be greatly missed. We appreciate all he has done and offer our condolences to his family."

### End ###