



Proclamation

WHEREAS, during World War II, France was occupied by the German Army in June of 1940; and

WHEREAS, in the fall of 1944, U.S. military forces, along with the Allies, advanced toward the Vosges Mountains of northeastern France for a final push into Germany; and

WHEREAS, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT) 100th Infantry Battalion—consisting entirely of Japanese American GIs—arrived in France in October 1944; and

WHEREAS, two-thirds of the 442nd RCT 100th Infantry Battalion were Nisei (second-generation Japanese Americans) from Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, the 442nd RCT 100th Infantry Battalion was instrumental in helping to liberate several towns in France, including Bruyères (liberated on 18 October 1944) and Biffontaine (liberated on 23 October 1944); and

WHEREAS, in one of the most epic struggles in American military history, the 442nd RCT 100th Battalion continued forward and fought in the dense, hilly terrain of the Vosges Mountains under harsh wintery conditions to rescue the Lost Battalion, soldiers of the 141st Regiment, 36th Infantry Division who were trapped behind enemy lines; and

WHEREAS, the 442nd RCT 100th Infantry Battalion suffered over 800 casualties; and

WHEREAS, the Epinal American Cemetery and Memorial at the foothills of the Vosges Mountains is the final resting place for 5,255 Americans who were killed in France and Germany during World War II, including men of the 442nd RCT 100th Infantry Battalion; and

WHEREAS, 2019 marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Bruyères and Biffontaine, and the international friendship between Hawai'i and France will continue to be celebrated and nurtured;

THEREFORE I, DAVID Y. IGE, Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim October 19, 2019 as

“BIFFONTAINE LIBERATION DAY”

in Hawai'i and celebrate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Biffontaine, honoring the courage and sacrifice of American soldiers and French resistance fighters and recognizing the support and friendship of France.

Done at the State Capitol, in Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this tenth day of October 2019.

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor, State of Hawai'i