

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

George Takei is taking a stand on an important issue and we should support him. A handful of states have passed or are considering legislation that allow businesses to refuse service to customers if doing so would violate the religious beliefs of the owner. Although these laws are touted as a way to protect the First Amendment rights of business owners, it is really a thinly veiled attempt to openly discriminate against members of the LGBT community. If a business is open to the public, it should do so with fairness, not with intolerance.

Before World War II, the Japanese community faced its own challenges with discriminatory laws called alien land laws. Fifteen western states passed laws forbidding "aliens ineligible for citizenship" from purchasing or leasing property. The coded language targeting "aliens ineligible for citizenship" became a legal way that individual states could limit the rights of Asian immigrants without targeting a group racially in the language of the law.

Laws should be enacted as a shield to protect people, not as a sword to hurt a particular group. Let me know what you think at tom.ikeda@densho.org



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Archive Spotlight

Eiichi Edward Sakauye: Impact of the Alien Land Laws

Eiichi Edward Sakauye had extensive farmholdings in San Jose, California, before World War II. In this clip, he talks about how the 1913 Alien Land Law affected California Japanese American immigrants like his father. Eiichi Edward Sakauye's full interview is available in the Densho Digital Archive.

- >> [View the interview excerpt](#)
- >> [Register for the free Densho Digital Archive](#)



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Densho News

Educational Supplement in Seattle Times

Check out the upcoming Sunday, April 12th edition of the Seattle Times. Densho is partnering with Newspapers in Education to produce an 8-page educational supplement about the World War II odyssey of King County's Japanese Americans.

The education supplement was funded, in part, by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program.



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Community News and Events

Support the Broadway Production of *Allegiance*

George Takei needs our help. The musical *Allegiance* is opening this fall on Broadway on November 8th. Last year the musical played to sold-out audiences in San Diego with a moving story of a family incarcerated during World War II. The Broadway production still needs to raise \$4 million to do a full season. You can help with a donation of \$1, \$3, or any other amount in an Indiegogo campaign.

>> For more information



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