

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Statement on the Death of Former Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta and Signing the William T. Coleman, Jr. and Norman Y. Mineta Department of Transportation Headquarters Act

May 6, 2022

This week, our Nation lost an American hero and I lost a dear friend in Norman Mineta. Earlier today I signed a bill to name the United States Department of Transportation headquarters in his name, along with the late William T. Coleman, Jr.

As a boy during World War II, Norm and his family were cruelly confined in the Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming during America's shameful period of Japanese incarceration. Undaunted—and eternally hopeful—Norm was motivated by this early injustice to pursue a life of service. He was determined to ensure that the Nation he loved lived up to its defining promise of liberty, equality, and justice for all, and he worked with grace and dignity to bring us closer to those ideals.

Norm will always be remembered for the many barriers he broke. He was the first Asian American to serve as mayor of a major city—his beloved hometown of San Jose—as well as the first Asian American to serve in the Cabinet. Over 2 decades in the House of Representatives, Norm was a force of purpose and progress. He was the first chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and led passage of the landmark Civil Liberties Act of 1988, legislation that, at long last, acknowledged and remunerated families like his own who had been incarcerated in camps during World War II.

But beyond his remarkable lifetime of accomplishments, I will remember Norm for his steadfast commitment to a belief he held dear: that America can accomplish anything when we come together. It is no accident that Norm was entrusted to lead Cabinet departments under both Democratic and Republican Presidents, nor that some of his closest friendships in Congress were with Members across the political spectrum. Norm treated everybody he met with equal dignity and earned the respect of all who knew him.

Our thoughts are with Norm's wife Deni, his four children, his 11 grandchildren, and generations of constituents and staff who were inspired by the power of his example and who followed his lead in serving this nation.

May God bless Norman Mineta.

NOTE: The statement referred to Danealia "Deni" Mineta, wife, and David and Stuart Mineta and Robert and Mark Brantner, sons, of former Secretary Mineta. S. 400, approved May 6, was assigned Public Law No. 117–117.

Categories: Bill Signings and Vetoes : William T. Coleman, Jr. and Norman Y. Mineta Department of Transportation Headquarters Act, signing statement; Statements by the President : Deaths :: Mineta, former Secretary of Transportation Norman Y.

Names: Brantner, Mark; Brantner, Robert; Mineta, Danealia "Deni"; Mineta, David; Mineta, Norman Y.; Mineta, Stuart.

Subjects: Civil rights : Minorities :: Minority rights and ethnic tolerance; Civil rights : Racial equality; Congress : Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus; Deaths : Mineta, former Secretary of Transportation Norman Y.; Legislation, enacted : William T. Coleman, Jr., Department of Transportation Headquarters Act.

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