



PRESS RELEASE

Sen. Glazer To Make A Martin Luther King Day Appeal

Asking President Obama To Exonerate Port Chicago 50

JANUARY 15, 2017

Walnut Creek, CA – Sen. Steve Glazer, D-Orinda, on Martin Luther King Day, Monday, will call on President Barack Obama to exonerate the Port Chicago 50, African American sailors wrongly convicted of mutiny in Concord, CA, during World War II.

What: Senator Glazer to speak at Martin Luther King Celebration

Date: Monday, January 16, 2017

Time: Noon

Who: Social Justice Alliance of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County & Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center

Where: Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 1801 Lacassie Avenue, Walnut Creek

Here is a statement from Sen. Glazer:

“As we celebrate and honor Dr. Martin Luther King today, we are witnessing the end of President Barack Obama’s historic term in the White House as the first African-American president of the United States.

“In his final days, President Obama has taken important steps to ensure environmental protections, such as protecting the California coastline and environmental standards for fuels. President Obama also announced the designation of three civil rights sites as national monuments.

“While these are significant acts that will have great national impact, I am asking President Obama to take one final small but important step before he leaves the presidency: To take executive action to exonerate the 50 African American sailors – members of the group known as the “Port Chicago 50” – who were wrongfully convicted of mutiny following the tragic accident at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine in Concord, CA, in 1944.

“Exonerating these men would restore honor to these 50 sailors, acknowledge the racism that led to their unjust convictions and correct a wrong. It would reflect the just and equal society that President Obama has strived to achieve in the spirit of Dr. King, and would be one final act of grace for the families of these United States sailors.”

Senator Glazer will ask the congregation to tweet President Obama at @POTUS encouraging him to take action with #PortChicago50.

Background:

- After an explosion at Port Chicago in Concord, CA that killed 320 men – most of whom were African-Americans naval seamen – other African-American seamen were ordered back to work loading munitions at the same location.
- Two-hundred and fifty eight of these sailors refused the orders because working conditions remained unsafe and they had not been trained to handle munitions.
- After being threatened with the death penalty, 208 of these men reluctantly returned to work. However, the remaining 50 were court-martialed and sentenced to 17 years in prison.
- They were later discharged with honor, which shows that the U.S. Navy acknowledged the convictions were unjust.
- Their convictions, however, were never rescinded and the “Port Chicago 50” would carry the mutiny charges until they died.

OFFICE INFORMATION

CAPITOL OFFICE

1021 O Street, Suite 7520
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 651-4007
Fax: (916) 651-4907

ORINDA OFFICE

51 Moraga Way, Suite 2
Orinda, CA 94563
Phone: (925) 258-1176
Fax: (925) 258-9982

EAST CONTRA COSTA OFFICE

420 West Third Street
Antioch, CA 94509
Phone: (925) 754-1461

