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Guide to the Norman Mineta Papers

Processed by Robert Donahue.
SJSU Library Special Collections & Archives
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
San José State University
One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0028
Phone: (408) 808-2062
Fax: (408) 808-2063
Email: special.collections@sjsu.edu
URL: http://www.sjlibrary.org/research/special/special_coll/
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Guide to the Norman Mineta Papers

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Processed by:
Robert Donahue
Date Completed:
2009
Encoded by:
Mary Ellen Petrich

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Norman Mineta Papers

Dates: 1961-2001

Bulk Dates: 1975-1995

Collection number: MSS-1996-02-17

Creator: Mineta, Norman Yoshio 1931-

Collection Size: 349 boxes(435.250 linear feet)

Repository: San José State University. Library.

San José, California 95192-0028

Abstract: The Norman Mineta Papers, 1961-2001 (bulk 1975-1995) document the long-term political career of Norman Mineta. Mineta began his career in local politics as a member of the San José City Council in 1967 and served as mayor from 1971-1975. Mineta was the first American of Asian Pacific ancestry to serve as mayor of a large urban city. In 1974, Mineta was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from 1975-1995. Mineta co-founded the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) and played a leadership role in the establishment of the 1978 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). Mineta also secured passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, recognizing the wartime treatment of Japanese Americans. He provided additional leadership as the Chairman of the U.S. House Committee on Public Works and Transportation (1992-1995). Mineta returned briefly to the private sector as the Vice President of Lockheed Martin Corporation. From 2000-2001, Mineta served under President Clinton as the Secretary of Commerce, and from 2001-2006, he served under President Bush as the United States Secretary of Transportation. Note that his district office files have been placed with the Japanese American Museum in Los Angeles. This collection consists of Norman Mineta's Legislative Office files and is arranged into six series: Series I. Administrative Files, 1967-1995 (bulk 1975-1995); Series II. Awards &

Memorabilia, 1971-1996 (bulk 1980-1996); Series III. Commerce Files, 1967-1994 (bulk 1977-1994); Series IV. Public Relations & Press Files, 1974-2001 (bulk 1980-1994); Series V. Subject Files, 1961-1996 (bulk 1977-1995); and Series VI. Transportation Files, 1974-1995 (bulk 1982-1995).

Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

The collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

Norman Mineta Papers, MSS-1996-02-17, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Robert Donahue. Finding aid EAD encoded by Mary Ellen Petrich. Reviewed by Danelle Moon and Erin Louthen.

Project Information

This finding aid was created as part of the Survey and Cataloging Project, a two-year San José State University Library grant project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project began in 2008. The Project Director is Danelle Moon. The Project Archivist is Erin Louthen.

Biographical History

Norman Y. Mineta was born in San José, California on November 12, 1931. His father immigrated to the U.S. from Japan as a boy, and went on to build a successful insurance company in San José, where the family was prominent in the community. Their lives were severely disrupted during World War II, with the issuance of Executive Order 9066, which mandated relocation of all Japanese Americans living on the Pacific Coast to internment camps. From 1943 to 1944, the Mineta family was interned at Heart Mountain internment camp in Wyoming. Local attorney James B. Peckham protected their home by taking title of the deed; he rented the home to Dr. Lucy Lawson, a professor at San José State University. The mortgage on their home was held by Parton Savings and Loan. During the war, Norman Mineta's father, Mr. Mineta, served as a volunteer, instructing American army officers in Japanese in Chicago; his insurance company shut down during the family's internment, and reopened in 1946 following their return to San José. Norman Mineta graduated from high school in San José in 1949, serving as student body president in his senior year. Following high school, he attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he received a degree in business in 1953. In the same year, he joined the Reserve Officer Training Program (ROTC) and served as an intelligence officer with the U.S. Army in Korea and Japan from 1953-1956. Following his military service, he returned to San José to work with his father in the insurance business.

A natural leader, Mineta worked closely with the Japanese Methodist Church, serving on the Santa Clara County Council of Churches. His appointment by San José Mayor Ron James to the Human Relations Council was an important stepping stone in his political career. Mineta served on the San José City Council from 1967-1971, when he became the first American of Asian Pacific ancestry to serve as mayor of a large urban city (1971-1974). In 1974, Mineta was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from 1975-1995.

In Congress, Mineta demonstrated his leadership in civil rights legislation, public works and transportation. He co-founded the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) and played a leadership role in the establishment of the 1978 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). In 1988, Mineta secured passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, recognizing the wartime treatment of Japanese Americans. From 1981-1988, he chaired the Aviation Subcommittee, and co-authored the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). This act increased control by state and local governments over highway and mass transit decisions that included fuel-efficient mass transit programs and the creation of bike lanes. Mineta's interest in aviation and surface transportation can be seen in his work as the Chairman of the U.S. House Committee on Public Works and Transportation (1992-1995).

Mineta retired from Congress in 1995, retuning briefly to San José to assume the position of Vice President at the Lockheed Martin Corporation. Mineta became the first Asian Pacific American to serve under two Presidents. From 2000-2001, he served under President Clinton as the Secretary of Commerce, and from 2001-2006, he served under President Bush as the United States Secretary of Transportation. Mineta's rich experiences in politics, particularly his expertise in transportation legislation, enabled him to succeed during the tumultuous period after 9/11, when he helped restore the confidence of the nation in the transportation system and played a key role in the establishment of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Norman Mineta has received numerous honors throughout his 40-year political career, including two local namesakes: the Mineta Transportation Institute, a research institute devoted to transportation policy located at San José State University (SJSU), and the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport.

Mineta lives in San José with his wife Danealia. He has two sons, David and Stuart Mineta, and two step-sons, Robert and Mark Brantner.

Bibliography

Academy of Achievement, Norman Mineta Biography, http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/min0bio-1

Who's Who of Asian Americans, Biography of Norman Y. Mineta, http://www.asianamerican.net/bios/Mineta-Norman.html

Related Material

Rod Diridon Papers, MSS-1995-03-02, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.
http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt929029xg/

Don Edwards Congressional Papers, MSS-1995-01, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.
http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt096nc5sv/

Janet Gray Hayes Papers, MSS-2002-01, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.
http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt4v19r0fx/

Guide to the Norman Y. Mineta Papers, 1975-1996, Japanese American Museum, Los Angeles.
http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf938nb3m0/

Scope and Content of Collection

The Norman Mineta Papers, 1961-2001 (bulk 1975-1995) document the long-term political career of Norman Mineta. Mineta began his career in local politics as a member of the San José City Council in 1967 and served as mayor from 1971-1975. Mineta was the first American of Asian Pacific ancestry to serve as mayor of a large urban city. In 1974, Mineta was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from 1975-1995. Mineta co-founded the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) and played a leadership role in the establishment of the 1978 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). Mineta also secured passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, recognizing the wartime treatment of Japanese Americans. He provided additional leadership as the Chairman of the U.S. House Committee on Public Works and Transportation (1992-1995). Mineta returned briefly to the private sector as the Vice President of Lockheed Martin Corporation. From 2000-2001, Mineta served under President Clinton as the Secretary of Commerce, and from 2001-2006, he served under President Bush as the United States Secretary of Transportation. Note that his district office files have been placed with the Japanese American Museum in Los Angeles.

Arrangement

This collection consists of Norman Mineta's Legislative Office files and is arranged into six series: Series I. Administrative Files, 1967-1995 (bulk 1975-1995); Series II. Awards & Memorabilia, 1971-1996 (bulk 1980-1996); Series III. Commerce Files, 1967-1994 (bulk 1977-1994); Series IV. Public Relations & Press Files, 1974-2001 (bulk 1980-1994); Series V. Subject Files, 1961-1996 (bulk 1977-1995); and Series VI. Transportation Files, 1974-1995 (bulk 1982-1995).

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Mineta, Norman Yoshio, 1931-

United States. Dept. of Commerce. Office of the Secretary.

Democratic Party (U.S.)

United States -- Politics and government.

United States -- Commerce.

California -- Politics and government.

San José (Calif.) -- Politics and government.

Transportation -- United States.

Legislators -- United States.

Cabinet officers-- United States.

City council members -- California -- San José.

Asian American legislators.

Mayors -- California -- San José.

Series I: **Legislative Office Administrative Files 1971-2000s**

Physical Description: 25 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series documents the political career of Norman Mineta, from his early service as Mayor of San José through his long tenure as a member of the House of Representatives. The contents include Mineta's biographical profile, copies of his administrative policies and procedures, correspondence, meeting minutes, memoranda, political and campaign documents, publicity and financial records, and voting records. Note that the bulk of this series relates to his Congressional career, and the collection does not include any materials from his cabinet appointments under President Clinton and President Bush. Also included in this collection are the research materials for the Norman Mineta Collection, which include biographical information on Mineta and research on the collection contents.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by date range.

Boxes 1-25 **Legislative Office Administrative Files 1971-2000s**

Series II: **Awards & Memorabilia 1971-1996 (bulk 1980-1996)**

Physical Description: 22 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

Norman Mineta received numerous awards throughout his long political career. This series consists of commendations and memorabilia, the bulk of which include awards, plaques, and framed pictures.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by date range.

Boxes 26 - 44, 347-349 **Awards & Memorabilia 1971-1996**

Series III: **Commerce Files 1967-1994 (bulk 1977-1994)**

Physical Description: 24 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series documents Norman Mineta's service as a member of the House of Representatives and specifically his contribution to national commerce issues. The series consists of studies, policies, recommendations for and implementations of the development and improvement of national commerce. Mineta's interest in policies related to transportation and international trade is well represented with documents on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), as well as high-technology trade with an emphasis on semiconductors and international competition. The formats represented include correspondence, newspaper clippings, and legal and legislative files concerning commerce and trade issues.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by date range.

Boxes 45-68 **Commerce Files 1967-1994**

Series IV: **Public Relations & Press Files 1967-2001 (bulk 1980-1994)**

Physical Description: 52 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

The series consists of press releases, press materials, and public relations materials documenting Norman Mineta's 40-year political career. This series reveals his interest in international aviation, Asian American issues, commerce, the Smithsonian Museum, and transportation.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by date range.

Boxes 69-120 **Public Relations & Press Files 1967-2001**

Series V: **Subject Files 1961-1996 (bulk 1977-1995)**

Physical Description: 163 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series documents Mineta's congressional role in implementing national policies on a variety of political topics. Mineta's interest in transportation (land, sea, and air) as well as trade and commerce is well represented. In addition, Mineta played a leadership role in the establishment of the 1978 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). Mineta also secured passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, recognizing the wartime treatment of Japanese Americans. Mineta had a profound interest in preserving the constitutional rights of Asian Pacific Americans, and he used his leverage in Congress to influence public figures to act responsibly and respectfully toward all races. Following the negative portrayal of Judge Ito during the O.J. Simpson trial in the 1990s by Senator D'Amato, Mineta co-founded the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) in 1994 in an effort to promote and secure equal rights for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Mineta was also very involved with the Smithsonian Museum and headed an advisory group for the Asian Pacific American Program, which was developed in the late 1990s to better reflect the Asian Pacific American experience in Smithsonian exhibitions, programs, and research. Other subjects covered in this series include health issues, women's issues, civil rights, hate/racism, taxes, various Bay Area issues, and NASA. This series also contains administration plans, amendments, budgets, contracts, correspondence, grants, legislative files, meetings and agendas, and reports.

It should be noted that the Japanese Internment legislation is not represented here and can be found at the Japanese American Museum in Los Angeles, California. None of the policy files involve the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by date range.

Boxes 121-282, 344-345 **Subject Files 1961-1996**

Series VI: **Transportation Files 1974-1995 (bulk 1982-1995)**

Physical Description: 61 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series consists of Norman Mineta's transportation files. Included are congressional studies, policies, and recommendations for and implementations of the development and improvement of transportation, especially aviation. This series consists of correspondence, newspaper clippings, and legal and legislative files relating to transportation issues over the course of 20 years, and also includes files documenting Mineta's service as a member of the U.S. House Committee on Public Works and Transportation (1992-1994).

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by date range.

Boxes 283-343 **Transportation Files 1974-1995**