

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1124

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**As Passed House:**

February 24, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to veterans' history awareness month.

**Brief Description:** Designating veterans' history awareness month.

**Sponsors:** By Representatives Conway, Haigh, Bush, Mielke, Simpson, Kessler, Benson, Sump, Wallace, O'Brien, McDonald, Kenney, Wood, McCoy, Campbell and Upthegrove.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government: 2/11/03, 2/14/03 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/24/03, 96-0.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- November of each year is known as Veterans' History Awareness Month.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Shabro, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hunt, McDermott, Nixon, Tom and Wallace.

**Staff:** Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

**Background:**

At 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918, (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month), World War I came to an end. On the first anniversary of the truce, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation eulogizing fallen Allied soldiers and referring to November 11 as Armistice Day.

In 1921 an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Similar ceremonies occurred in England and France giving international

recognition to the celebrated ending of World War I. Armistice Day officially received its name in 1926 through a Congressional resolution, and became a national holiday in 1938. It was the hope that World War I was "the War to end all Wars." But not long after the holiday was proclaimed, World War II broke out in Europe.

In 1954 President Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11 as Veterans Day, recognizing the sacrifices of veterans of World War II and Korea in preserving world peace. Veterans Day became a day to pay tribute to those who had served America in all wars.

According to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs there are 25 million living veterans, 48 million Americans who have served in the armed forces since 1776, and nearly one million Americans who have died in combat or combat-related events. The 2000 census indicates that there are 670,628 veterans living in Washington State.

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**Summary of Bill:**

November of each year is known as Veterans' History Awareness Month. The week in which Veterans' Day occurs is designated as a time for people to celebrate the contributions of veterans to the State of Washington. Educational institutions, public entities, and private organizations are encouraged to designate time for activities in commemoration of the contributions of America's veterans.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The Joint Committee for Veterans' and Military Affairs has endorsed this bill. It is one way to highlight in schools the history of World War II through the video project entitled "When We Were Kids, We Went to War." Many schools already do activities related to veterans history around Veterans' Day, and it makes sense to dedicate the entire month as Veterans' History Month.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Pearson, prime sponsor.