

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2138

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to national Korean war veterans armistice day.

Brief Description: Establishing national Korean war veterans armistice day.

Sponsors: Representatives Ormsby and Bailey.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/9/12 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 1/23/12, 95-0.

Passed Senate: 2/27/12, 48-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Recognizes July 27 as National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day and requires that the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag be flown by public entities on that date.
- Specifies the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Condotta, Hurst, McCoy and Miloscia.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

Specially Recognized Days and Dates.

Although not legal holidays, the following days are specially recognized in statute:

- Korean-American Day (January 13);

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- Columbus Day (October 12);
- Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day (April 9);
- Washington Army and Air National Guard Day (January 26);
- Purple Heart Recipient Recognition Day (August 7);
- Washington State Children's Day (second Sunday in October);
- Mother Joseph Day (April 16);
- Marcus Whitman Day (September 4);
- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (December 7);
- Civil Liberties Day of Remembrance (February 19); and
- Juneteenth, a Day of Remembrance for the Day the Slaves Learned of their Freedom (June 19).

POW/MIA Flag.

Public entities are required to display the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag on the following days:

- Armed Forces Day (third Saturday in May);
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May);
- Flag Day (June 14);
- Independence Day (July 4);
- National POW/MIA Recognition Day (no date or day is specified); and
- Veterans' Day (November 11).

Korean War Armistice.

An "armistice" is defined as an agreement between opposing armies to suspend hostilities in order to discuss peace terms.

On July 27, 1953, the Korean War Armistice Agreement was signed between the Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command, on the one hand, and the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, on the other hand, concerning a military armistice in Korea. Under the agreement, a demarcation line was fixed and a demilitarized zone was established. The agreement was to remain in effect until expressly superseded either by mutually acceptable amendments and additions or by provision in an appropriate agreement for a peaceful settlement at a political level between both sides. To date, a peace treaty has not been signed.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature declares that July 27 be specifically recognized as National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day. This date is not to be considered a legal holiday for any purpose. The POW/MIA flag, together with the United States and Washington flags, must be displayed by public entities on this date.

The day on which the POW/MIA flag is to be displayed with the United States and Washington flags in honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day is specified as the third Friday in September.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) A number of Inland Empire associations, including the local chapter of the Non-Commissioned Officers' Association, have endorsed this effort to recognize Korean War veterans as well as all prisoners of war and those missing in action. This should be done for the same reason that we show respect on days when the POW/MIA flag is flown. There is no fiscal impact to this bill. Korean War veterans will like this bill.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Ormsby, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.