

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1319

As Reported by House Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections

Title: An act relating to recognizing a welcome home Vietnam veterans day.

Brief Description: Recognizing a welcome home Vietnam veterans day.

Sponsors: Representatives Johnson, McCoy, Ross, Hunt, Rodne, Orwall, Green, Jinkins, Upthegrove, Chandler, Orcutt, Pedersen, Vick, Roberts, Alexander, Klippert, Holy, Short, Morrell, Smith, Buys, Kochmar, Lias, Moeller, Appleton, Angel, Zeiger, O'Ban, Wilcox, Hurst, Van De Wege, Shea, Fagan, Bergquist, Moscoso, Tarleton, Freeman and Fey.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations & Elections: 2/6/13 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Recognizes March 30 as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day and requires that the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag be flown by public entities on that date.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Buys, Ranking Minority Member; Taylor, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Carlyle, Fitzgibbon, Kristiansen, Manweller and Orwall.

Staff: Jasmine Vasavada (786-7301).

Background:

A variety of dates are specially recognized in Washington, without being considered legal holidays. For example, August 7 is recognized as Purple Heart Recipient Recognition Day and December 7 is Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

On August 10, 1990, the 101st Congress passed U.S. Public Law 101-355, which recognized the National League of Families' (League) POW/MIA flag and designated it "as the symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation."

Public entities are required to display the League's 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 Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (July 27);
- National POW/MIA Recognition Day (third Friday in September); and
- Veterans' Day (November 11).

Summary of Bill:

March 30 is recognized as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. Public entities must fly the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag on that date, but it is not recognized as a legal holiday for any other purpose.

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) This bill would give Vietnam veterans the recognition and honor that they deserve. Many Vietnam veterans were not treated as heroes upon returning home. This bill helps bring closure, finally welcoming them home. Such closure will help alleviate guilt, shame, and grief experienced by many veterans. It has broad bipartisan support.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Johnson, prime sponsor; Dan Miller, Veteran Legislation Coalition; and Gil Colac.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.