

From: March, Joseph H.
To: Public Relations Division
Sent: 9/11/2009 1:15:45 PM
Subject: Release: Senate proclaims Sept. 16 'The American Legion Day'

Attachments:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Senate proclaims Sept. 16 'The American Legion Day'

WASHINGTON (Sept. 11, 2009) - The U.S. Senate has passed a resolution designating September 16, 2009 as "The American Legion Day." The measure, Senate Resolution 260, was shepherded through last evening by Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, after submitting the resolution earlier in the day.

As she presented the resolution to fellow senators, Snowe praised the 90-year old veterans service organization, the largest in the nation, for its continuing work to aid wounded warriors and military families, for Legionnaires' legacy of community volunteerism and for the organization's significant role in establishing important national legislation.

"As all of us in this chamber know, The American Legion remains today an active and vigorous advocate for service members, veterans and their families here on Capitol Hill," said Snowe. "Among its greatest legislative achievements was the enactment of the ... GI Bill of Rights. The initial draft of the GI Bill was written by Legionnaires at the Mayflower Hotel here in Washington, DC. Many consider the GI Bill as one of the greatest pieces of legislation ever enacted.

"Congress presented The American Legion its Federal charter on September 16, 1919; therefore, I think it only fitting that we proclaim September 16, 2009, 'The American Legion Day,'" Snowe added. "I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting this well-earned measure, demonstrating our mutual esteem and reverence for this outstanding organization." The measure passed without opposition.

A similar resolution was introduced in the House by Rep. Debbie Halvorson, D-Ill., in late July. House Resolution 679 is expected to be adopted early next week.

Clarence E. Hill, the National Commander of The American Legion, expressed great pleasure upon hearing of the resolution's progress. "We, as an organization, are honored and humbled that Congress is recognizing the dedication that members of The American Legion have demonstrated on behalf of their fellow veterans for nearly a century now. I am very grateful to Sen. Snowe and her colleagues for their work last night. I also offer my sincere thanks to Rep. Halvorson, who I had the great pleasure of addressing yesterday during my congressional testimony, for her fine efforts to establish September 16th as 'The American Legion Day.'"

With a current membership of 2.5-million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through more than 14,000 posts across the nation.

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