

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1118 (Delegate C. Wilson, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

General Provisions - Commemorative Days - Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day

This emergency bill designates March 30 as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day in recognition of the service and sacrifice of Vietnam veterans.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day does not affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Twelve official commemorative days and six months are recognized in State law as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The Governor also must issue a proclamation each year encouraging citizens and other individuals to observe a moment of silence at 3:00 p.m. on Memorial Day to unite in remembrance and commemorate the heroic acts and efforts of Marylanders who have served and died in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Background: As noted in the preamble, the Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975, and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in conflict with the U.S. Armed Forces, allies of the United States, and South Vietnam. In 1965, more than 129,000 members of the U.S. Armed Forces were serving in Vietnam, reaching a peak of approximately 543,000 by 1969. On January 27, 1973, an agreement was reached to end

the war and, on March 30, 1973, the U.S. Armed Forces completed its withdrawal of combat troops.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹	January/February
Black History Month	February
Irish-American Heritage Month	March
Women's History Month	March
Crime Victim and Advocate Day	April 3
John Hanson's Birthday ²	April 13
Maryland Centenarians Day ³	May
Negro Baseball League Day ⁴	May
Law Day	May 1
Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day ⁵	June
Juneteenth National Freedom Day	June 19
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Hispanic Heritage Month ⁶	September/October
German-American Heritage Month	October
Poetry Day	October 15
American Indian Heritage Month	November
Maryland Emancipation Day	November 1
Annapolis Charter Day	December 17

¹Day designated as new year on the Asian lunar calendar.

²John Hanson served as the first president of the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1782.

³Commemorated on the second Thursday in May.

⁴Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

⁵Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

⁶Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

More than 58,000 members of the U.S. Armed Forces, including 1,014 from Maryland, lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 members were wounded. Vietnam veterans were caught on their return home in the crossfire of an extremely divisive public debate about the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War, which deprived many of those veterans of public support and appreciation of their patriotic service.

The U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives have both passed resolutions expressing support to establish a “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” In 2009, California enacted legislation declaring March 30 as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.”

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 80 (Senator Astle, *et al.* - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs).

Information Source(s): Welcome Home Day Foundation, Paralyzed Veterans of America, *Examiner.com*, California Legislative Information, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Library of Congress, Department of Legislative Services

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md/hlb

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