

HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES (38 PA.C.S.) - WOMEN VETERANS DAY

Act of Nov. 3, 2022, P.L. 1944, No. 129

Cl. 38

Session of 2022

No. 2022-129

HB 2361

AN ACT

Amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veteran recognition, providing for Women Veterans Day.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Title 38 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

§ 1304. Women Veterans Day.

(a) **Legislative findings and declarations.--The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:**

(1) While women have served in the American military since before we became a nation, they were not officially recognized as military members or veterans until 1948.

(2) Women were originally relegated to serving in the civilian fields of nursing, laundering, mending clothing and cooking.

(3) Despite this segregation, many women served in war zones alongside their male compatriots, including some women who dressed as men during the Civil War to fight on the front lines.

(4) The first woman to enlist in the United States Armed Forces was Loretta Walsh, who enlisted in the Navy in 1917.

(5) During World War I, approximately 35,000 women in the United States officially served as nurses and support staff.

(6) During World War II, approximately 400,000 women in the United States served in support positions, including 140,000 women who served in the Women's Army Corps performing critical jobs, such as military intelligence, cryptography and parachute rigging.

(7) Nearly 500 women were killed by enemy fire during World War II.

(8) The first Women Veterans Day was held on June 12, 2018, marking the 70th anniversary of the groundbreaking Women's Armed Services Integration Act (Public Law 80-625, 62 Stat. 356), signed into law by President Harry S. Truman on June 12, 1948.

(9) That Federal law enabled women to serve as permanent, regular members of the United States Army, Marine Corps, Navy and the recently formed Air Force.

(10) Throughout the years, the role of women continues to grow in all branches and phases of operations of the United States Armed Forces.

(11) Currently, women serve freely alongside men in any branch or role they desire and comprise a substantial portion of new recruits, active duty members and reserve components of the United States Armed Forces.

(12) Women Veterans Day is not considered a separate day for only women veterans, but a tribute to a groundbreaking day when women were acknowledged as essential

to the war effort and could serve as permanent, regular members of the United States Armed Forces.

(b) Designation.--June 12 of each year is designated as Women Veterans Day in this Commonwealth.

(c) Proclamation.--The Governor shall issue annually a proclamation encouraging residents of this Commonwealth to observe Women Veterans Day and recognize the contributions of all women veterans and the sacrifices they made.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED--The 3rd day of November, A.D. 2022.

TOM WOLF