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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 248 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY PHILLIPS-HILL, MASTRIANO, DUSH, J. WARD,  
BARTOLOTTA, TARTAGLIONE, YAW, K. WARD, MARTIN, SCHWANK,  
ROBINSON, SCAVELLO, PITTMAN AND AUMENT, FEBRUARY 18, 2021

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REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,  
FEBRUARY 18, 2021

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania  
2 Consolidated Statutes, providing for holidays and  
3 observances.

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

6 Section 1. Title 38 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
7 Statutes is amended by adding parts to read:

8 PART I

9 GENERAL PROVISIONS

10 (Reserved)

11 PART II

12 SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

13 Chapter

14 11. Preliminary Provisions (Reserved)

15 13. Veteran Recognition

16 CHAPTER 11

17 PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

1 (Reserved)

2 CHAPTER 13

3 VETERAN RECOGNITION

4 Sec.

5 1301. Scope of chapter.

6 1302. Persian Gulf War Veterans Day.

7 1303. Global War on Terrorism Veterans Day.

8 § 1301. Scope of chapter.

9 This chapter recognizes the contributions of veterans of the  
10 United States Armed Forces from this Commonwealth in major  
11 conflicts since the Vietnam War.

12 § 1302. Persian Gulf War Veterans Day.

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

15 (1) On August 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein ordered Iraqi  
16 troops to invade and occupy the sovereign nation of Kuwait.

17 (2) The United States led an international coalition  
18 demanding Saddam Hussein to withdraw Iraqi forces from Kuwait  
19 by January 15, 1991.

20 (3) After Iraq failed to meet the deadline, passed by  
21 the United Nations Security Council, President George H. W.  
22 Bush on January 16, 1991 ordered United States Armed Forces  
23 to begin "Operation Desert Storm."

24 (4) On January 17, 750,000 coalition forces from 36  
25 nations, including 540,000 United States Armed Forces, began  
26 the battle to liberate Kuwait from occupation.

27 (5) After an intensive air campaign, coalition forces  
28 liberated Kuwait City on February 28, 1991.

29 (6) On March 6, after negotiating a cease-fire,  
30 President Bush announced the end of combat operations.

1           (7) By the end of the conflict, 200 United States Armed  
2 Forces members were killed, including 29 from this  
3 Commonwealth.

4           (8) The bravery of United States Armed Forces and their  
5 allies should be recognized for the liberation of Kuwait and  
6 restoration of Kuwait's sovereignty as an independent nation.

7           (b) Designation.--March 6 of each year is designated as  
8 "Persian Gulf War Veterans Day."

9           (c) Proclamation.--The Governor shall issue annually a  
10 proclamation encouraging all public schools and educational  
11 institutions to observe "Persian Gulf War Veterans Day" and to  
12 conduct exercises recognizing the contributions of all those  
13 involved in the Persian Gulf War and remembering the sacrifices  
14 they made for their country. The proclamation may not mandate a  
15 public school or educational institution to participate in the  
16 observance.

17 § 1303. Global War on Terrorism Veterans Day.

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

20           (1) The campaign in Afghanistan, which is America's  
21 longest conflict, began in 2001 and continues to this day.

22           (2) Following the terrorist attacks on September 11,  
23 2001, the United States demanded that the Taliban regime stop  
24 harboring Al Qaeda, the terrorist organization responsible  
25 for the 9/11 attacks, and hand over the Al Qaeda leader Osama  
26 bin Laden.

27           (3) President George W. Bush ordered United States Armed  
28 Forces to begin "Operation Enduring Freedom" (OEF) to combat  
29 terrorism in Afghanistan and confront Al Qaeda.

30           (4) United States Armed Forces first entered Afghanistan

1 and began combat operations on October 7, 2001.

2 (5) On May 2, 2011, Osama bin Laden was killed during  
3 the fighting after President Barack Obama ordered Navy SEALs  
4 to raid Osama bin Laden's compound.

5 (6) On December 31, 2014, the United States and the  
6 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) combat operations  
7 in Afghanistan officially ended.

8 (7) Since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom,  
9 over 830,000 Americans, including 18,000 from this  
10 Commonwealth, have served in Afghanistan.

11 (8) More than 2,000 members of the United States Armed  
12 Forces, including 98 from this Commonwealth, were killed in  
13 action in Afghanistan since combat began.

14 (9) More than 19,000 members of the United States Armed  
15 Forces were wounded in service to their country during  
16 Operation Enduring Freedom.

17 (10) When Operation Enduring Freedom ended, the United  
18 States began a new phase of the campaign, named Operation  
19 Freedom's Sentinel (OFS).

20 (11) United States Armed Forces remain in the country to  
21 participate in a coalition mission to train, advise and  
22 assist Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and to  
23 conduct counterterrorism operations against the remnants of  
24 Al Qaeda.

25 (12) During Operation Freedom's Sentinel more than 70  
26 Americans have lost their lives and another 453 have been  
27 wounded in action.

28 (13) On March 19, 2003, President George W. Bush  
29 announced the beginning of combat operations in Iraq after  
30 Saddam Hussein failed to meet the demands of the United

1 States.

2 (14) "Operation Iraqi Freedom" lasted for more than  
3 seven years, reducing the influence of insurgents, stopping  
4 sectarian violence, assisting in training the Iraq Security  
5 Forces and promoting the development of Iraq's constitution  
6 and elections.

7 (15) Major United States combat operations ended on  
8 September 1, 2010. American troops remained in the country to  
9 advise Iraqi Security Forces as part of "Operation New Dawn"  
10 until the withdrawal on December 15, 2011.

11 (16) More than 4,000 members of the United States Armed  
12 Forces lost their lives during "Operation Iraqi Freedom" and  
13 "Operation New Dawn," including 197 from this Commonwealth,  
14 and more than 32,000 were wounded.

15 (17) With the rise of the terrorist group known as the  
16 Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the United States  
17 created a new combined joint task force in 2014, dubbed  
18 "Operation Inherent Resolve."

19 (18) March 23, 2019, marked the end of ISIS controlling  
20 any physical territory.

21 (19) United States Armed Forces under "Operation  
22 Inherent Resolve" continue to work by, with and through local  
23 partners to defeat the final ISIS force and stabilize the  
24 region.

25 (20) The fight against ISIS under "Operation Inherent  
26 Resolve" has claimed more than 80 American lives, with  
27 another 80 wounded in action.

28 (21) United States military personnel have served  
29 domestically securing key infrastructure and support overseas  
30 operation.

1           (22) Since September 11, 2001, members of the United  
2           States military have served on nearly every continent  
3           fighting international terrorism.

4           (b) Designation.--October 7 of each year is designated as  
5           "Global War on Terrorism Veterans Day."

6           (c) Proclamation.--The Governor shall issue annually a  
7           proclamation encouraging all public schools and educational  
8           institutions to observe "Global War on Terrorism Veterans Day"  
9           and to conduct exercises recognizing the contributions of all  
10           those involved in the Global War on Terrorism and remembering  
11           the sacrifices they made for their country. The proclamation may  
12           not mandate a public school or educational institution to  
13           participate in the observance.

14           Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.