

Veterans Day Speech Resources: Fact Sheet

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Introduction

Veterans Day is a federal holiday honoring people who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is recognized annually on November 11.¹

This fact sheet is designed to assist congressional offices with work related to celebrating Veterans Day. It contains a brief history, selected CRS reports, sample speeches and recognitions, presidential proclamations, and statistical data. It also contains links to additional web resources from authoritative sources.

History

Veterans Day has its roots in Armistice Day. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11, 1919, the first Armistice Day, in recognition of the anniversary of the armistice that marked the end of the most destructive fighting during World War I.

For additional history, refer to the Department of Veterans Affairs' "History of Veterans Day" page.

Legislation

On June 1, 1954, Congress passed Public Law 380, which designates November 11 as Veterans Day, a day to honor all American veterans.

CRS Reports

The Congressional Research Service has prepared numerous reports that relate to American veterans. Some of these include the following:

CRS Report R42324, *Who Is a "Veteran"?*—*Basic Eligibility for Veterans' Benefits*, by Heather M. Salazar.

CRS In Focus IF10490, *Veterans' Employment*, coordinated by Benjamin Collins.

CRS Report R42755, *The Post-9/11 GI Bill: A Primer*, by Cassandra Dortch.

CRS In Focus IF10555, *Introduction to Veterans Health Care*, by Sidath Viranga Panangala and Jared S. Sussman.

CRS In Focus IF10167, *Veterans and Homelessness*, by Libby Perl.

CRS Report R46459, *Department of Veterans Affairs FY2021 Appropriations*, by Sidath Viranga Panangala, Jared S. Sussman, and Heather M. Salazar.

CRS Report R46412, *Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs): Frequently Asked Questions*, by Tamar B. Breslauer and Carol D. Davis.

CRS Report R46428, *Veterans Accredited Representatives: Frequently Asked Questions*, by Heather M. Salazar and Tamar B. Breslauer.

¹ Veterans Day is always recognized on November 11. However, according to 5 U.S.C. 6103, when November 11 falls on a Saturday, Friday November 10 is observed as the holiday for most of the federal government. When November 11 falls on a Sunday, the federal government holiday is observed on Monday November 12.

Sample Speeches and Recognitions

Elected officials often deliver speeches, make floor statements, issue press releases, or enter Extensions of Remarks into the *Congressional Record* to recognize federal holidays and observances. The following are some recent examples:

Representative David G. Valadao, “Honoring Our Brave Veterans,” remarks in the House of Representatives, *Congressional Record*, vol. 167, no. 192 (November 2, 2021), p. H6083.

Representative Peter Meijer, “Celebrating Veterans,” Extensions of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, vol. 167, no. 192 (November 2, 2021), pp. E1185-E1186.

Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, “Tribute to Veterans of the Armed Services of the United States,” Extensions of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, vol. 166, no. 193 (November 12, 2020), p. E1017.

Senator Charles E. Schumer, “Veterans Day,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 166, no. 192 (November 10, 2020), p. S6629.

Senator Mitch McConnell, “Veterans Day,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 165, no. 178 (November 7, 2019), p. S6454.

Senator Benjamin L. Cardin, “Veterans Day,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 178, no. 178 (November 7, 2019), pp. S6470-S6471.

Presidential Proclamations and Remarks

One of the many uses of a presidential proclamation is to ceremoniously honor a group or call attention to certain issues or events. Some recent Veterans Day proclamations and remarks, from the *Compilation of Presidential Documents*, include

Presidential Proclamations—Donald H. Trump (2017-2020)

Presidential Proclamations—Barack Obama (2009-2016)

Presidential Proclamations—George W. Bush (2001-2008)

Presidential Proclamations—William J. Clinton (1993-2000)

Presidential proclamations and remarks from 1993 to the present are available through the govinfo service on the U.S. Government Publishing Office website. Earlier remarks (including some audio and video clips) are available through The American Presidency Project, established by the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Statistics

Several federal agencies maintain statistics on American veterans. Some useful sources of data and information on veterans include the following:

Department of Veterans Affairs, National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics.

U.S. Census Bureau, gateway resource page on Veterans.

U.S. Census Bureau, other Veterans resources for data and information:

U.S. Census Bureau, Facts for Features: Veterans Day 2020: Nov. 11;

U.S. Census Bureau, Infographic—World War II: 70 Years On;

U.S. Census Bureau, Report—Those Who Served: America’s Veterans From World War II to the War on Terror;

U.S. Census Bureau, Infographic—Where Do Veterans Get Health Insurance Coverage?;

U.S. Census Bureau, Infographic—How Do We Know? A Snapshot of Our Nation’s Veterans.

Historical Resources

Library of Congress, Veterans History Project

Library of Congress, “Veterans Day,” American Memory Project, Today in History feature

The National Archives, Veterans’ Service Records

Resources on Veterans Day Celebrations

Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Day-November 11

U.S. Army Center of Military History, Remembering Their Selfless Service to Our Country: Veterans Day

National Park Service, celebration of Veterans Day and an index to Parks Service memorials and sites that commemorate and honor the American military

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