
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1160 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY MASTRIANO, ARGALL, BAKER, COSTA, CULVER, GEBHARD,
HUTCHINSON, KANE, MARTIN, PHILLIPS-HILL, ROTHMAN AND VOGEL,
APRIL 16, 2024

REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
APRIL 16, 2024

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in veteran recognition, providing for
3 Vietnam War Veterans Day.

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 a section to read:

8 § 1306. Vietnam War Veterans Day.

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

11 (1) The Vietnam Conflict was fought in Vietnam from 1961
12 to 1975 and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in
13 conflict with the United States and South Vietnam.

14 (2) The United States became involved in the Vietnam
15 Conflict because policymakers in the United States believed
16 that if South Vietnam fell to a communist government then
17 communism would spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia.

1 (3) Members of the United States Armed Forces began
2 serving in an advisory role to South Vietnam in 1961.

3 (4) As a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on
4 August 2 and 4, 1964, the Congress of the United States
5 overwhelmingly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Public
6 Law 88-408) on August 7, 1964, effectively handing over
7 warmaking powers to President Lyndon B. Johnson until the
8 time of the return of peace and security to Vietnam.

9 (5) In 1965, United States Armed Forces ground combat
10 units arrived in Vietnam.

11 (6) By the end of 1965 there were 80,000 United States
12 troops in Vietnam.

13 (7) By 1969, a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was
14 reached.

15 (8) On January 27, 1973, the Paris Peace Accords were
16 signed, requiring the release of all United States prisoners
17 of war held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United
18 States Armed Forces from South Vietnam.

19 (9) On March 29, 1973, the United States Armed Forces
20 completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam.

21 (10) On March 30, 1973, the last of the United States
22 Armed Forces landed at home.

23 (11) More than 58,000 members of the United States Armed
24 Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000
25 members were wounded.

26 (12) The Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue
27 among the people of the United States and a conflict that
28 caused a generation of veterans to wait too long for the
29 public of the United States to acknowledge and honor the
30 efforts and services of those veterans.

1 (13) The members of the United States Armed Forces who
2 served bravely and faithfully for the United States during
3 the Vietnam War were often wrongly criticized for the
4 decisions of policymakers that were beyond the control of
5 those members.

6 (14) In 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was
7 dedicated by President Ronald Reagan in the District of
8 Columbia to commemorate those members of the United States
9 Armed Forces who died or were declared missing in action in
10 Vietnam.

11 (15) In 2012, President Barack Obama signed a
12 presidential proclamation designating March 29 as the annual
13 observance of Vietnam War Veterans Day.

14 (16) In 2017, President Donald J. Trump signed into law
15 the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 which
16 designates March 29 each year as National Vietnam War
17 Veterans Day and amended the United States Flag Code to
18 include National Vietnam War Veterans Day as a day on which
19 the flag should be flown.

20 (b) Designation.--March 29 of each year is designated as
21 Vietnam War Veterans Day in this Commonwealth.

22 (c) Proclamation.--The Governor shall issue annually a
23 proclamation encouraging all public schools and educational
24 institutions to observe Vietnam War Veterans Day and conduct
25 exercises recognizing the contributions of all those involved in
26 the Vietnam War and remembering the sacrifices they made for
27 their country. The proclamation may not mandate a public school
28 or educational institution to participate in the observance.

29 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.