

**2024 -- H 8064**

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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024**

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**H O U S E   R E S O L U T I O N**

**JOYOUSLY CELEBRATING THE 105TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION  
ON MARCH 15, 2024**

Introduced By: Representatives Vella-Wilkinson, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Perez,  
Batista, Azzinaro, Kennedy, Ajello, Shallcross Smith, and Corvese

Date Introduced: March 14, 2024

Referred To: House read and passed

1           WHEREAS, The American Legion is a nonprofit organization representing the interests  
2 and needs of America's war veterans. Formed on March 15, 1919, in Paris, France, and chartered  
3 by an Act of Congress on September 16, 1919, today the American Legion is comprised of nearly  
4 two million members, with more than 12,000 posts across the United States, France, Mexico,  
5 Puerto Rico and the Philippines; and

6           WHEREAS, In the aftermath of World War I, with more than two million Americans  
7 serving in the military, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., son of President Theodore Roosevelt, felt it was  
8 time to create a national organization to represent America's many war veterans; and

9           WHEREAS, Through the years, the American Legion successfully lobbied to attain the  
10 passage of many initiatives that made the lives of countless war veterans better and has made the  
11 nation stronger militarily, economically and socially. In 1921, the American Legion led the  
12 campaign to create the U.S. Veterans Bureau, which later became the Veterans Administration.  
13 The first Flag Code was drafted during an American Legion conference and was later adopted by  
14 the United States Congress in 1942; and

15           WHEREAS, Perhaps the most famous piece of legislation enacted, thanks to the efforts  
16 of the American Legion, was the famous GI Bill, also known as the "Servicemen's Readjustment  
17 Act", which was signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Six months prior to being  
18 enacted, the American Legion wrote the first draft of what would become the "GI Bill of Rights".  
19 This landmark legislation was a monumental achievement which benefited our nation

1 immeasurably as it allowed eight million veterans to attend an institution of higher learning,  
2 thereby allowing our veterans to attain better jobs, quality housing and raise families; and

3 WHEREAS, Additional examples of the American Legion's civic support of war  
4 veteran's issues included their donation of \$1 million to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial fund, the  
5 largest single contributor to the project, which helped enable the construction of the wall in  
6 Washington, and their sponsorship of an independent study to examine the effects of exposure to  
7 Agent Orange on Vietnam War Veterans; and

8 WHEREAS, Thanks to the American Legion, every veteran receives assistance when  
9 they file and pursue benefit claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs. Since 1919, the  
10 American Legion has sponsored more than 2,500 Scouting Units across the nation, and annually  
11 honors an Eagle Scout of the year with a \$10,000 scholarship. One of the more popular endeavors  
12 the American Legion provides to our nation is its famous American Legion baseball program,  
13 which was created in 1925, and today registers more than 5,400 teams in all 50 States, Canada  
14 and Puerto Rico; and

15 WHEREAS, Countless great Americans have been members of the American Legion  
16 including, Presidents Woodrow Wilson, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy,  
17 Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, George Herbert Walker Bush, and  
18 George W. Bush, as well as Generals Douglas MacArthur, George Patton, Theodore Roosevelt,  
19 Jr., Medal of Honor winner Sergeant Alvin York, famous aviator and war veteran, Captain Eddie  
20 Rickenbacker, and actors, Jimmy Stewart, Humphrey Bogart, and Clark Gable, all military  
21 veterans; now, therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
23 joyously celebrates the 105th Anniversary of the American Legion on March 15, 2024, and  
24 thanks them for all the great work they do daily on behalf of America's veterans and in  
25 maintaining the freedoms and national security of our great nation; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
27 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Daniel J. Seehafer, National Commander of the  
28 American Legion.

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