

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 608

Commemorating Veterans Day on November 11, 2011, in Virginia with a moment of silence.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 21, 2011
Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2011

WHEREAS, Veterans Day, originally called Armistice Day, is a federal holiday observed on November 11 annually in the United States to honor all military personnel, living and dead, who served the country during times of peace and war, and commemorates the end of World War I; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Day was first observed on November 11, 1919, the anniversary of the end of the war in response to a proclamation issued by President Woodrow Wilson that expressed pride in the heroism of those who died during the war; and

WHEREAS, World War I, the "Great War," "the war to end all wars," began in August 1914, was centered in Europe and involved all of the world's great powers which had assembled in two opposing alliances, the Allies and the Central Powers; and

WHEREAS, although alliances, imperialism, militarism, and nationalism were long-term causal factors of the war, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, and his wife, on June 28, 1914, triggered the beginning of the war; and

WHEREAS, World War I was considered to be the first "modern" war, displaying effects never seen before in previous wars, and more than 70 million military personnel, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilized in one of the largest wars in history resulting in more than nine million combatants being killed, primarily because of great technological advances in firepower without corresponding advances in mobility; and

WHEREAS, the United States became involved in the war in April 1917, and the World War I Memorial and Centennial Act of 2009 states that "more than 4,000,000 American men and women served in uniform in the defense of liberty, among them two future presidents, Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower; two million Americans served overseas during the war, including 200,000 naval personnel; the United States suffered 375,000 casualties; and the events of 1914 through 1918 shaped the world, the United States, and the lives of millions of people in countless ways"; and

WHEREAS, the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, at 11:00 a.m., "the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month," halting the fighting and hostilities between the Allied Nations and Germany, and the war ended officially with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919; and

WHEREAS, during the 1920s and 1930s, many states made Veterans Day a state holiday, and in 1938, Congress declared Armistice Day a federal holiday; and

WHEREAS, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day in 1954 to honor American veterans of World War II and the Korean War, and today veterans of all wars are honored on the holiday; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the signing of the Armistice, signaling the end of World War I, "the Great War," be commemorated on Veterans Day, November 11, 2011, at 11:00 a.m., throughout the Commonwealth with a moment of silence to memorialize this historic event; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That Veterans Day on November 11, 2011, in Virginia be commemorated with a moment of silence; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Governor be requested to call upon the citizens of the Commonwealth to observe November 11, 2011, at 11:00 a.m. with a moment of silence in respect for and to honor and remember the great sacrifices and contributions of the heroic men and women of the United States Armed Forces who valiantly served this nation and mankind during World War I and subsequent wars; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Honorable Robert F. McDonnell, Governor of Virginia, requesting that he lead and encourage the people of the Commonwealth to pause for a moment of silence on November 11, 2011, at 11:00 a.m., and to the Director of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Executive Director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

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