

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	8 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Boone, Esquivel, Freeman, Komp, Matthews, Riley, Weidner, Cowan
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	David Molina, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/17

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Declares March 2009 American Legion Month.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Widespread support among veterans organizations
- The declaration in March would also mark the 90th birthday of the American Legion
- The caliber and diversity of the Legion's programs impact both young men and women to be active citizens

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: House Joint Resolution 10 declares March 2009 American Legion Month. The American Legion was founded in March 1919 by veterans returning from Europe after World War I. In September 1919 it was chartered by Congress as a patriotic, mutual-help, war-time veterans' organization. The American Legion is a not-for-profit community-service organization with three million members, both men and women, in nearly 15,000 American Legion Posts worldwide, including France, Mexico and the Philippines.

The American Legion was instrumental in the creation of the United States Veterans' Bureau, now known as the Department of Veterans Affairs. Additionally, throughout the 1940s, the American Legion was very active in providing support for veterans and soldiers who fought in World War II. The American Legion campaigned for the original GI Bill, which was signed into law in June 1944 that enabled millions of veterans to obtain education and home loans.

The American Legion's national programs include: the Heroes to Hometowns program, a partnership between the American Legion and the Department of Defense to provide returning veterans at VA medical facilities the help they need to re-establish their lives when they come home; the Family Support Network, which supports families of deployed service members; youth programs such as American Legion Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports, Boys State and Boys Nation; and children and youth programs to address concerns for young people who face social, economic, emotional or physical hurdles. The American Legion also works with the Children's Miracle Network, on childhood immunization efforts, substance abuse prevention, crime prevention (missing children), family emphasis, and child safety.

Since 1925, through the establishment of the American Legion Endowment Fund, the American Legion has raised and distributed over \$30 million to disabled veterans and children of those who served in uniform. Additionally, earned interest from fund investments are also passed on to Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) Commission to benefit and fund the Department Service Officer (DSO) Schools, which teaches DSOs the latest changes in Department of Veteran Affairs and the United States Court of Appeals for Veteran Claims regulations, procedures and laws to ensure they provide the best service to the veterans they assist; and, the Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program of the National Commission on Children & Youth. TFA exists to help children of veterans across the country maintain basic needs including shelter, utilities, clothing, food and medical care.

House Joint Resolution 10 honors the service to this country of the American Legion and its nearly three million members worldwide and 35,000 Legion family members across Oregon by declaring March 2009 American Legion Month.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.