

Senate Bill 993

Sponsored by Senator BOQUIST; Senators BAERTSCHIGER JR, BEYER, JOHNSON, MANNING JR, MONNES ANDERSON, WINTERS, Representatives BARRETO, ESQUIVEL, EVANS, LIVELY, MEEK, OLSON, PARRISH, POST, SPRENGER, WHISNANT, WILSON, WITT (at the request of Senator Brian Boquist in memory of Sandy Raddue)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Designates August 7 of each year as Oregon Purple Heart Recognition Day.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to recognition of recipients of the Purple Heart award.

3 Whereas the Purple Heart is awarded to members of the Armed Forces who are killed or
4 wounded in action; and

5 Whereas created in 1932, the Purple Heart has a long-storied past that dates back to the
6 founding fathers of the United States of America and takes its design from the badge of Military
7 Merit, which was commissioned by General George Washington on August 7, 1782; and

8 Whereas the Purple Heart medal consists of a purple, heart-shaped piece of silk that has a
9 narrow edge of silver stitched with the word "Merit" across the face, is considered to be the first
10 official military combat badge of the Armed Forces and is the official successor decoration of the
11 badge of Military Merit; and

12 Whereas the award originally was open only to United States Army and Air Force
13 servicemembers and could not be awarded posthumously, which President Franklin D. Roosevelt
14 changed in 1942 with an executive order that opened the award to members of the United States
15 Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard; and

16 Whereas later that year, in a separate order, the Purple Heart was made available for
17 posthumous award to any member of the military; and

18 Whereas to date, approximately two million Purple Heart medals have been awarded; and

19 Whereas Purple Heart medals can be awarded retroactively to a soldier as far back as 1917,
20 allowing veterans from World War I to be eligible; and

21 Whereas the Purple Heart originally was awarded for meritorious service, and injury was a
22 consideration for merit, but, in 1942, the creation of the Legion of Merit award duplicated the merit
23 requirement, which then became unnecessary for the Purple Heart; and

24 Whereas from 1942 to 1997, civilians serving in, or affiliated with, the Armed Forces were eli-
25 gible to receive the Purple Heart, and some of the earliest civilians to receive this honor were
26 firefighters wounded or killed while fighting fires caused by the attack on Pearl Harbor; and

27 Whereas more than 6,000 Oregon veterans were killed in combat during five major wars from
28 World War I to the present, and more than 15,000 veterans were wounded during those wars, making
29 more than 21,000 Oregonians eligible for the Purple Heart award; and

30 Whereas numerous states across the United States have honored their combat wounded and

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 killed military veterans by proclaiming their states to be Purple Heart States, including Oregon,
2 which was designated as a Purple Heart State by the Seventy-eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly
3 in 2015; and

4 Whereas many Oregon cities were designated by their city councils as Purple Heart Cities in
5 2014 and 2015; and

6 Whereas the State of Oregon honors the service and sacrifice of our nation's men and women
7 in uniform who were wounded or killed by the enemy while serving to protect the freedom enjoyed
8 by all Americans; now, therefore,

9 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

10 SECTION 1. **August 7 of each year is designated as Oregon Purple Heart Recognition**
11 **Day.**

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