

Dear Chairperson Rep. Alzatre and Members of the House Committee on Special Legislation,

Please vote in favor of H7781, the bill to rename "Victory Day" Peace & Remembrance Day, and move this important legislation forward for a floor vote.

As you know, our state is the only state which celebrates "Victory Day" on the anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which caused the estimated deaths of 246,000 people, primarily civilians, and the irradiation and suffering many more.

We already observe Veterans Day, honoring those who have served in the U.S. military, and Memorial Day, honoring those who gave their lives in military service to the U.S. By adopting Peace & Remembrance Day, Rhode Island would further the cause of peace, and create a space for us to reflect on the costs of war and militarism for soldiers and civilians alike. We need this space more than ever now as war persists in the Middle East, Ukraine, and many other places around the globe.

"Victory Day" is an example of how an over-simplified myth about the past can be used to mobilize support for war, in this case the myth of military victory. As we watch our government bomb the people of Iran, we see the suffering caused by false promises of military victory.

Last June, when our government bombed Iran, Pope Leo XIV stated, "No armed victory can compensate for the pain of mothers, the fear of children, or their stolen futures." (<https://catholicvote.org/pope-leo-humanity-cries-out-and-calls-for-peace-in-the-middle-east/>).

Rather than being the last state to cling to an outdated holiday celebrating war, Rhode Island could be the first state to adopt a new holiday honoring peace.

Thank you for your consideration.

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