

Support for H 7781

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Special Legislation:

I am writing in enthusiastic support of the proposed replacement of "Victory Day," the name of the Rhode Island holiday observed on the second Monday of August, with the title "Peace and Remembrance Day."

I support the change because, to me, the holiday has always felt like a celebration of the use of atomic weapons and the horrors that they caused. It is an insult to the lives lost and to the sacrifice of our veterans to memorialize the violence of victory over the peace and friendship that now exists between Japan and the United States.

I want to see the name change because I wish to prioritize the peace over the violence, and I wish to encourage peace over the violence that is continued to be felt - not just by Japanese-Americans - but by all persons of Asian descent in this country.

We don't celebrate "Victory over Germany" in spite of the many atrocities committed by the Nazis. A "Victory over Italy" day in this state would be preposterous. Yet the fact that we still celebrate the US victory over Japan belies the inherent racism imbued in the holiday. Previous attempts to rename this holiday have done little to erase the association of a celebration *against* Japan, and those associations continue to be felt by the Asian-Americans of this state, as well as all residents in the state of Rhode Island.

The holiday is inherently problematic. If we wish to truly honor our veterans and their sacrifice - which I believe is demanded of us - then we need to do so in a way that is not built on a foundation of racism and hate.

Sincerely,

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