

Representatives Stewart, Kazarian, Cruz, Alzate, Morales, Kislak, Tanzi, Potter, Handy, Kennedy and Azzinaro

As an Army veteran of 23 years, a daughter, a niece and a friend of numerous WWII veterans, I am writing in opposition to the passage of House Bill H 7781.

Victory Day pays tribute to the more than 93,000 Rhode Islanders who served, sacrificed their lives in the Pacific and China-Burma-India Theaters of Operation during World War II. This day also pays tribute to our citizens that actively participated in the war effort back home in multiple locations across our state, Newport, Quonset Point, Narragansett Bay, Charlestown, Westerly, Jamestown, Goat Island, and Providence to name just a few. Rhode Island is the smallest state in the Union, but we came together during WWII in defense of our nation.

Over the years bills have been introduced to change the name of Victory Day to Peace and Remembrance Day. Part of the argument in support of Peace and Remembrance Day is that Victory Day is often confused with Victory over Japan. Our job is not to erase history but to educate our citizens on Victory Day with the impact of WWII on our state. It is our opportunity to educate the masses on the role that Rhode Island played during this war, it is our opportunity to share the stories of Rhode Island Tuskegee Airmen, the many Rosie the Riveter's, Ex-POWs Frank O.

Promnitz Marine and Louis Zamperini Army Air Force. Their stories have earned a place in history and deserve to be heard, not dismissed.

I feel that while well-intentioned, renaming Victory Day to Peace and Remembrance Day would not be appropriate and would be a disservice to our military and civilians that contributed to the war effort.

I ask you to vote against the passage of this bill.

Respectfully,
Dora Vasquez-Hellner
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