

9/30/2003 House Passes Moran Bill to Recognize Emporia as the Founding City of Veterans Day

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced that the House of Representatives has passed legislation to officially recognize the city of Emporia as the founding city of Veterans Day. Both the founder of Veterans Day, Alvin J. King, and the Congressman who introduced the original legislation, the Honorable Ed Rees, were from Emporia. In 1954, another Kansan, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, signed the bill into law that proclaimed November 11 of each year as Veterans Day.

"This is a fitting time to recognize the city of Emporia for their contribution to American history," Moran said. "This year, Emporia celebrates its 50th anniversary of Veterans Day and, for the 50th year, makes a special effort to honor all service men and women, from all wars, for their sacrifice and their service."

In 1938, Armistice Day became a national holiday, held to commemorate the eleventh hour of the eleventh day in the eleventh month in the year World War I came to an end. In 1953, Mr. King organized the city of Emporia's first "All Veterans Day" celebration to show gratitude to all local veterans. Congressman Rees supported Mr. King's idea and introduced legislation to establish Veterans Day as a national holiday. Congress quickly passed the bill, and President Eisenhower signed it into law.

"Ever since Emporian Alvin King proposed that Armistice Day be changed to Veterans Day in 1953, the citizens of Emporia have celebrated this day to honor all veterans," Ron Whitney, Emporia resident and Vietnam veteran, said. "This year, 2003, marks the 50th Anniversary of this celebration during the week-long 'All-Veterans Tribute.' Today another honor was bestowed upon Emporia. This could not have happened without the tireless efforts of Congressman Moran and the staff from the Emporia Convention and Visitors Bureau."

"It is with great pride in my state that I support House passage of a bill to acknowledge Kansans' contribution to officially recognizing the brave men and women who have served in the Armed Forces," Moran concluded.

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