

THE HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY



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★ HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

ORIGINS

1918

11th Hour - 11th Day - 11th Month

On November 11, 1918, fighting ceases during World War I when an armistice goes into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. This day is celebrated worldwide and comes to be known as the end of "the war to end all wars."

Armistice Day

1919

President Woodrow Wilson proclaims November 11, 1919 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day.

"...the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory..."

- President Woodrow Wilson, 1919

1938

Armistice Day: A Federal Holiday

On May 13, 1938, Congress passes legislation making Armistice Day, November 11, a legal Federal holiday.

1954

Armistice Day Becomes Veterans Day

Veterans of World War II and the Korean War, in addition to veterans of World War I, are now being honored on Armistice Day. So, on June 1, 1954 President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs legislation changing the name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day.

1968

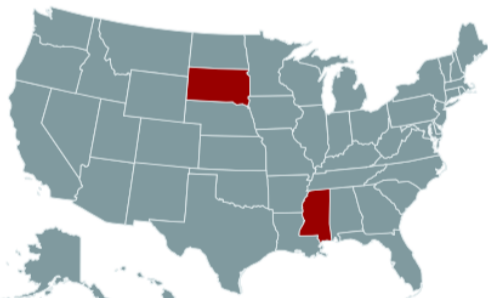
The Uniform Holiday Bill

On June 28, 1968, the Uniform Holiday Bill is signed, moving the observance of Veterans Day from November 11 to the fourth Monday in October, effective in 1971. However, many states did not agree with this transition and continued to celebrate Veterans Day on November 11 because of its historic significance to Armistice Day.

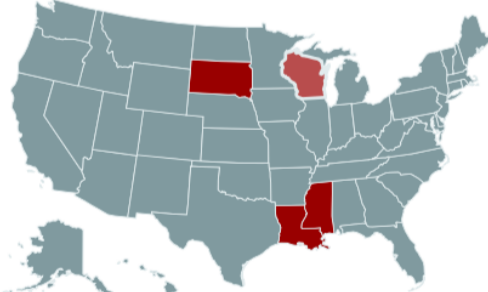
■ Celebrates Veterans Day Fourth Monday in October

■ Celebrates Veterans Day November 11

1971



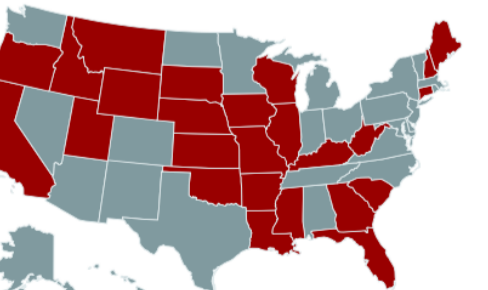
1972



1974



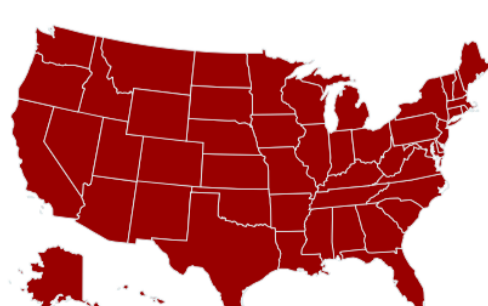
1975



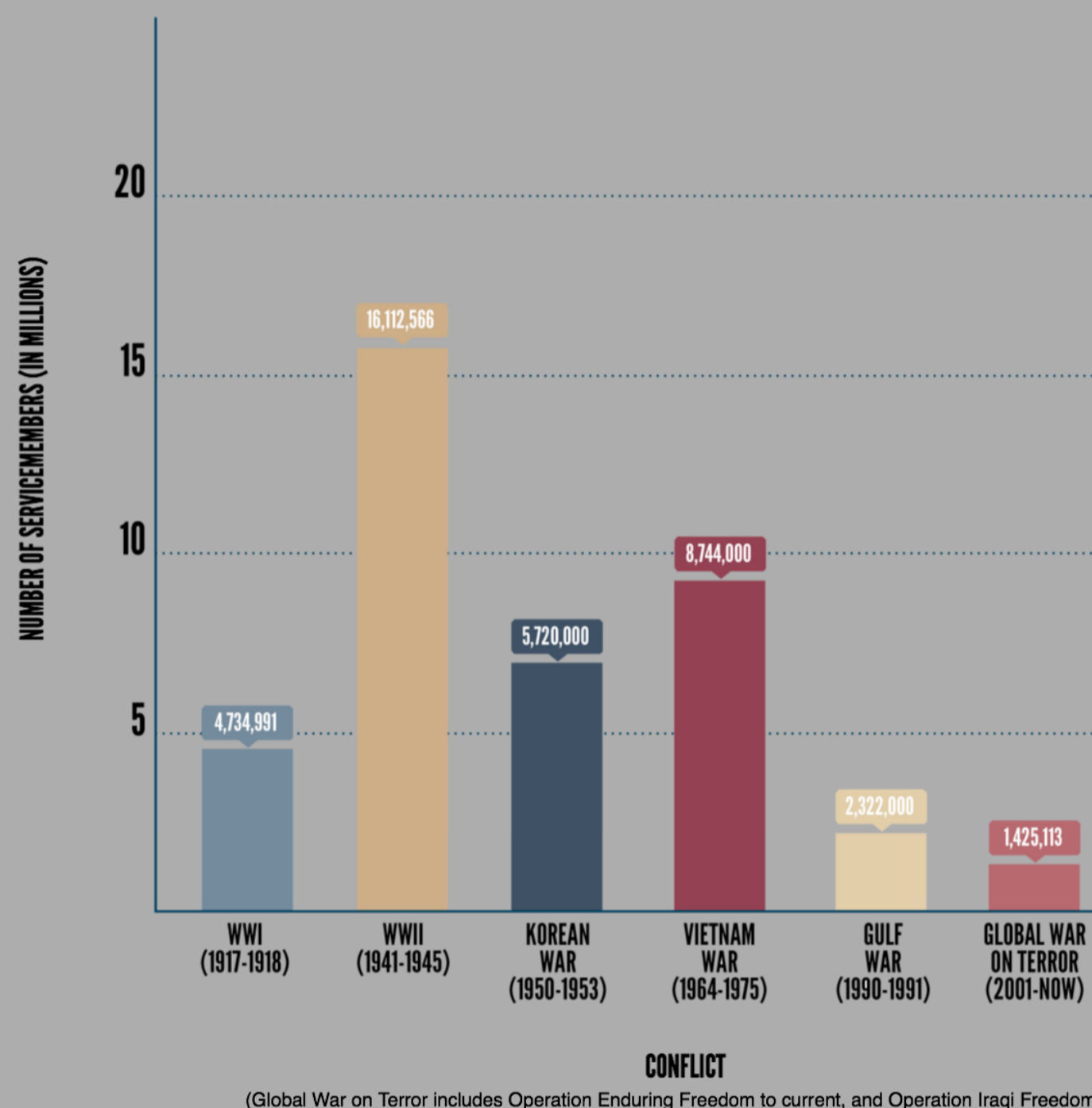
1978

The 'Return' of Veterans Day

In 1978, the annual observance of Veterans Day returns to November 11 after President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479) on September 20, 1975.



TOTAL U.S. SERVICE MEMBERS BY WAR (WORLDWIDE)*



RED POPPY

THE FLOWER OF REMEMBRANCE

The red poppy became a symbol of remembrance among the allied countries after Col. John McCrae, a surgeon with Canada's First Brigade Artillery, wrote a poem expressing his grief over the rows and rows of poppies among the graves of soldiers who had died on Flanders' battlefields during World War I. Today, veterans organizations around the U.S. distribute poppies as a tribute to those who gave their lives in service of our country.

VETERAN STATISTICS



22 MILLION+

Number of veterans who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.



2.1 MILLION

Approximate number of veterans in California, the most of any U.S. state.

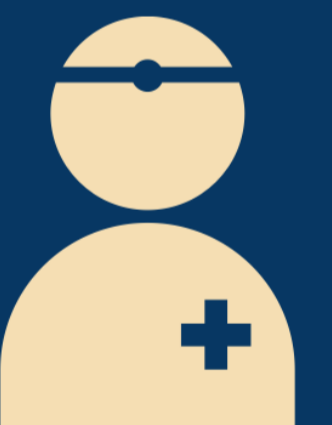


2.2 MILLION+

Number of World War II veterans who went to college on the G.I. Bill.

1 MILLION+

Number of veterans who are currently receiving education benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.



1,000+

Number of hospitals and medical centers the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs operates worldwide.



144

Number of veterans and military service organizations in the U.S.



1930

Year the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs was created.

* Total Servicemembers By War (Worldwide) graph figures as of May 2015. Sources: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Department of Defense; Defense Manpower Data Center; U.S. World War I Centennial Commission; U.S. Army Center of Military History. Photo Sources: Official U.S. Navy file photo, www.navy.mil. Infographic by Annalisa Underwood, Naval History and Heritage Command Communication and Outreach Division.