

HJR

53

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
REPRESENTATIVE CARL GATTO, CHAIR


Committee Members

Rep. John Harris
Rep. Bob Lynn
Rep. Tammie Wilson
Rep. Jay Ramras
Rep. Bob Buch
Rep. Scott Kawasaki



State Capitol Building, Room 108
Juneau AK 99801-1182
907-465-3743
907-465-2381 Fax
Rep_Carl_Gatto@legis.state.ak.us

TO: Senator Linda Menard, Chair
Senate State Affairs Committee

FROM: Rep. Carl Gatto 

DATE: March 29, 2010

RE: Request for a hearing of HJR 53—Honor and Remember Flag

Enclosed is the committee packet for HJR 53 "*Urging the United States Congress to pass H.R. 1034, designating the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol to recognize and honor members of the armed forces of the United States who died in the line of duty.*"

I would appreciate a hearing before your Senate Committee at your earliest convenience. I appreciate your time and look forward to your reply.

Please contact my staff member, Karen Sawyer at 465-5025, with any questions or comments regarding this request.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Sponsor Statement

HJR 53
Honor and Remember Flag

In the more than 200 years of our nation's history, there has never been an officially-recognized symbol that reminds us daily of the sacrifices made by members of our military who lost their lives in service to our country.

The **Honor and Remember Flag**, created by Honor and Remember, Inc., recognizes all individuals who died while serving our nation, not only those killed in action, but all who have died in the line of duty. The flag serves as a symbol of national gratitude for the over 1,600,000 American men and women who bravely made the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the freedoms we enjoy. The flag also helps to give closure to the thousands of families that deserve recognition for the sacrifice of a lost loved one.

An objective of the organization, Honor and Remember, Inc., is to place an Honor and Remember Flag in the hands of the immediate families who have lost someone in military service to America.

H.R. 1034 is a bill in Congress to designate the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol to recognize and honor members of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty. **HJR 53** urges our Congress to enact a law officially recognizing the Honor and Remember Flag.

Contact: Karen Sawyer
465-5025
March 18, 2010
26-LS1579\R

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
 Bill Version: HJR 53
 (H) Publish Date: 3/24/2010

Identifier (file name): _____ Dept. Affected: _____
 Title Honor and Remember Flag RDU _____
 Component _____
 Sponsor House Rules Committee
 Requester House Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee Component Number _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2011	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Contractual								
Supplies								
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES								
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()								
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF								
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2010) cost: _____

POSITIONS

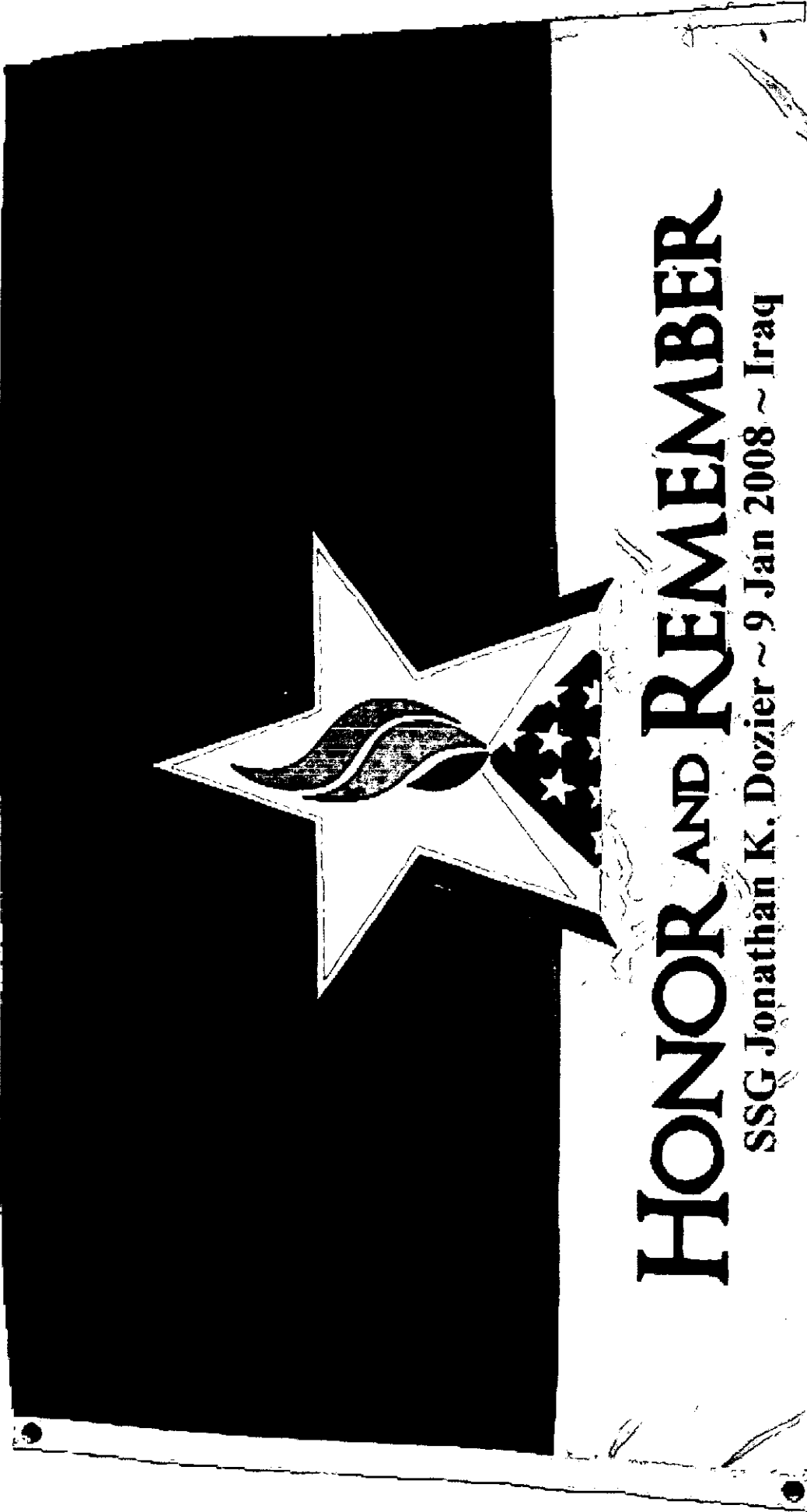
Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

No impact on State departments

Prepared by: Karen Sawyer, Staff
 Division: Representative Carl Gatto, Chair, Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee
 Approved by: _____

Phone 907-465-5025
 Date/Time 3/12/10 12:00 AM
 Date _____



HONOR AND REMEMBER

SSG Jonathan K. Dozier ~ 9 Jan 2008 ~ Iraq

The **Honor and Remember Flag's design** is distinctive, yet simple. Each detail on the flag symbolizes an important part of the overall meaning of the flag's message.



The Red Field represents the blood spilled by brave men and women in America's military throughout our history, who willingly gave their lives so that we all would remain free.



The Blue Star represents active service in military conflict. This symbol originated with World War I, but on this flag it signifies service through all generations from the American Revolution to present day.



The White Border surrounding the gold star recognizes the purity of sacrifice. There is no greater price an American can pay than to give his or her life in service to our country.



The Gold Star signifies the ultimate sacrifice of a warrior in active service who will not return home. Gold reflects the value of the life that was given.



The Folded Flag signifies the final tribute to an individual life that a family sacrificed and gave to the nation.



The Flame is an eternal reminder of the spirit that has departed this life yet burns on in the memory of all who knew and loved the fallen hero.

Honor and Remember

We will always Honor their selfless sacrifice and Remember them individually by name.

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1034

To amend title 36, United States Code, to designate the Honor and Remember Flag created by Honor and Remember, Inc., as an official symbol to recognize and honor members of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Mr. FORBES introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend title 36, United States Code, to designate the Honor and Remember Flag created by Honor and Remember, Inc., as an official symbol to recognize and honor members of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF HONOR AND REMEMBER**
4 **FLAG FOR FALLEN MEMBERS OF THE ARMED**
5 **FORCES.**

6 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

1 “(2) The required Honor and Remember Flag display
2 days are the following:

3 “(A) Armed Forces Day, the third Saturday in
4 May.

5 “(B) Memorial Day, the last Monday in May.

6 “(C) Flag Day, June 14.

7 “(D) Independence Day, July 4.

8 “(E) National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

9 “(F) Veterans Day, November 11.

10 “(3) In addition to the days specified in paragraph
11 (2), Honor and Remember Flag display days include—

12 “(A) in the case of display at the World War
13 II Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, and
14 Vietnam Veterans Memorial (required by subsection
15 (c)(3)), any day on which the United States flag is
16 displayed;

17 “(B) in the case of display at medical centers
18 of the Department of Veterans Affairs (required by
19 subsection (c)(7)), any day on which the flag of the
20 United States is displayed; and

21 “(C) in the case of display at United States
22 Postal Service post offices (required by subsection
23 (c)(8)), the last business day before a day specified
24 in paragraph (2) that in any year is not itself a
25 business day.

1 “(c) LOCATIONS FOR FLAG DISPLAY.—The locations
2 for the display of the Honor and Remember Flag under
3 subsection (b) are the following:

4 “(1) The Capitol.

5 “(2) The White House.

6 “(3) The World War II Memorial, the Korean
7 War Veterans Memorial, and the Vietnam Veterans
8 Memorial.

9 “(4) Each national cemetery.

10 “(5) The buildings containing the official office
11 of—

12 “(A) the Secretary of State;

13 “(B) the Secretary of Defense;

14 “(C) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

15 and

16 “(D) the Director of the Selective Service
17 System.

18 “(6) Each major military installation, as des-
19 ignated by the Secretary of Defense.

20 “(7) Each medical center of the Department of
21 Veterans Affairs.

22 “(8) Each United States Postal Service post of-
23 fice.

24 “(d) DISPLAY TO BE IN A MANNER VISIBLE TO THE
25 PUBLIC.—Display of the Honor and Remember Flag pur-

1 suant to this section shall be in a manner designed to en-
2 sure visibility to the public.

3 “(e) LIMITATION.—This section may not be con-
4 strued or applied so as to require any employee to report
5 to work solely for the purpose of providing for the display
6 of the Honor and Remember Flag or any other flag.”.

7 (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
8 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding
9 at the end the following new item:

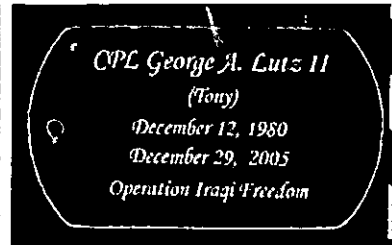
“904. Honor and Remember flag for fallen members of the Armed Forces.”.

10 (d) REGULATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—Not
11 later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of
12 this Act, the head of each department, agency, or other
13 establishment responsible for a location specified in sub-
14 section (c) of section 904 of title 36, United States Code,
15 as added by subsection (a), shall prescribe such regula-
16 tions as necessary to carry out such section.

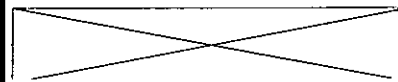
17 (e) PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF FLAGS.—
18 Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment
19 of this Act, the Administrator of General Services shall
20 commence the procurement of Honor and Remember
21 Flags and distribute them as necessary to permit compli-
22 ance with section 904 of title 36, United States Code, as
23 added by subsection (a).

○

Honor and Remember origins:



Cpl George A. Lutz II
December 12, 1980
December 29, 2005
Psychological Operations
9th Batt, Ft Bragg, NC



On December 29, 2005, George Anthony Lutz II (Tony) was killed by a sniper's bullet while he was on patrol in Fallujah, Iraq. His family and friends endured the shock, emotional agony and overwhelming loss that accompanied the news of Tony's death, just like the many families who have suffered the same tragedy.

In the months that followed Tony's funeral, his father, George, visited other families who had lost loved ones in the Iraq war. He began to sense that he had joined the ranks of a unique fellowship. These families were only the latest additions to a group that originated with the American Revolution, when the first soldiers to shed their blood for our freedom gave their lives.

George found another commonality among the families of fallen soldiers. After their grief had transitioned to numbness and finally to acceptance, many families wanted to know two things: their sacrifice was not in vain and the nation would never forget. These concerns led George on a quest to discover if there was a universally recognized symbol that specifically acknowledges the American service men and women who never made it home. To his surprise, he found nothing. Thus the Honor and Remember Flag was conceived.

BELOW IS AN OPEN LETTER SENT TO THE SOLDIERS AT TONY'S SIDE THAT DAY.

Dear Downrange Soldiers,

On December 29th 2005, a snipers bullet claimed the life of our son Tony. This was the most difficult day in our family's life, I cannot imagine a more tragic one. And as difficult a day it was for us, our heart breaks for those of you who were by his side. You see we know how Tony affected lives, how much of an impression he made on everyone he touched. That day we not only lost a son, but you lost a friend and a brother. We do not know all of the facts, but we do know that he died surrounded by those who loved him.

Tony was a man who tried to lighten every situation and I am sure there were many times you could remember when he made you smile or laugh out loud. He was dedicated to his family a good husband and father and spent every available minute communicating back home. And when he was home, loving on his wife and children. Some of you remember last summer when his daughter Ava was born and how he so appreciated being given the time to leave training to be by his wife's side.

He was a good soldier, rarely complaining and excited at every phase of his training. Being a former runner he especially loved PT, accepted the challenges of AIT, language school and was particularly proud of his Army and German jump wings.

Tony strongly believed in what he was doing, believed in the mission of liberating the Iraqi people and in his relationship with you his military family. He knew why he was there and even though he fully expected to return, he was prepared for the sacrifice. We want you to know that we firmly believe that he died fighting for those beliefs, and in no way hold anyone responsible for his death. There was nothing anyone could have done to more fully protect him. War breeds casualties and many thousands of moms and dads have given their children for freedom's cause. I would like to think that Tony's death would bring an end, but we know it hasn't. Others have since given their lives and many more will most definitely follow.

We are proud that he was a soldier not only in the American army but also in the army of God. Tony had a strong faith in his savior Jesus Christ and always knew his future reward. In fact one of the last words he wrote to me was "Dad, don't worry, God is literally my shield". He knew where he would spend eternity and lived that knowledge everyday. God had a purpose for Tony's life and took him that day; nothing could have prevented it.

I know that any one of you would have willingly taken his place if possible, but conversely know this as truth, that Tony would have run to take that bullet for you. And that day he did.

His mother and I want to be sure you know that we pray for your safety everyday. Keep your eyes open, be vigilant at every moment, win that war and come back safely to your families. But especially, seek after God's purpose in your lives.

When your mission is completed please call or write, our home is open and we welcome a visit from you. We would love to hear how Tony's life or death was meaningful to you. God Bless each of you, we cannot thank you enough for your service.

Courage and Honor.

Very Respectfully

George L.

1. Why do we need this remembrance flag?

Men and women have been serving in the United States military and dying for their country for more than 200 years. They represent a unique and distinct category of individuals, along with the families that sent them, that deserve a symbol of recognition, a visual emblem of honor. Until the Honor and Remember Flag was conceived, there was no such nationally recognized symbol.

2. Why now?

There are many reasons why it is important to establish the Honor and Remember Flag as a national symbol in this generation. The most important one is that there exists today the largest contingent of living veterans of any time in our history. These veterans comprise one of the greatest groups of least honored soldiers in our history: the Vietnam War veterans. Even though there is a memorial to Vietnam vets in Washington, D.C., these men and women deserve the same level of honor and recognition as any other. For those who lost their lives and their families, the Honor and Remember Flag serves as a way for the rest of us to express, perhaps belatedly, our gratitude for their sacrifice.

3. Doesn't the American flag honor the fallen?

Many people do believe this to be true. However, the American flag stands for what we believe, the unity of our people and the diversity of our nation. It is symbol of what we fight for, rather than an emblem to honor those fallen. Here is how the symbolism of the American flag is generally understood:

The U. S. flag consists of thirteen horizontal stripes, seven red alternating with 6 white. The stripes represent the original 13 colonies; the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well: Red symbolizes hardiness and valor; White symbolizes purity and innocence; Blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice.

To put it simply, "The dead honor the flag, the flag does not honor the dead."

4. Who is being honored by this flag?

All those who have been killed from action, or killed in service, from the moment our nation began. If you have put on a military uniform in service to the United States, you have given authority to superiors to place you in harm's way. If in the course of doing one's duty an individual lost their life, regardless of where or how, this flag is meant to honor that individual.

5. What does 'killed in service' mean?

We often hear the terms "killed in action" or "died of wounds." They refer specifically to those who have died by definition in an official conflict. This flag has a broader scope, honoring all those who by draft or volunteer have put themselves in a position to defend the constitution, the flag and those freedoms which make our nation great. In other words, if someone was killed while guarding a border, standing on a ship's deck, protecting an embassy or marching headlong into enemy fire, this flag honors them.

6. What is the importance of the Honor and Remember flag?

This flag should be important to every citizen of the United States. Never before in the history of our country have we realized how vulnerable we can be to the actions of those who would destroy us. Now more than ever, our fighting men and women deserve our support and our gratitude for standing in the way of those who want to attack us. We owe them, and particularly those who died, honor and remembrance.

By flying the Honor and Remember Flag, we say to our fighting men and women and the families they came from that we as Americans will never forget their contribution to our freedom. And we are mindful that at any time, any day another could be added to those ranks.

7. How do I help get the flag flying?

There are four very important things you can do:

1. **SIGN** the Petition, if you haven't already. Our goal is 1.6 million signatures, one supporter for each life lost in our nations' history. Once that is achieved our hope is that the Department of Defense will support and Congress will enact a law officially recognizing the Honor and Remember Flag as a national symbol.
2. **TALK** about the flag. Tell everyone in your circle, including businesses about the website www.HonorandRemember.org and encourage them visit and sign the petition. Also please consider spreading the word through newsletters, emails, and blogs or by linking to our website. Additionally send the press release link to any media locally or nationally to let them know about the campaign. We would welcome the opportunity for national attention including syndicated talk shows. Another very important action is to send a letter to your congressperson telling them about the flag and the importance of national adoption.
3. **FLY** the Honor and Remember Flag. Make it a part of your office or family's traditions when you fly the American flag.
4. **CONTRIBUTE**. There are many expenses involved in conducting this national campaign. Any support you can give will help us to fulfill our mission. If every person who signs the petition gives just \$5 it will enable us to meet a very important goal of providing flags to families who have lost their children in military service.

8. Where do the donations go?

Honor and Remember, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Donations are applied to fulfilling the goals of the organization; congressional and state adoptions, national awareness and in particular, presenting families of the fallen with personalized flags. Expenses include the educational propagation of spreading the word nationally, through, email, direct mail, personal speaking as well as associated administrative responsibilities and flag donations. It is a primary goal to facilitate the placement of a personalized flag in the hands of families who have lost a loved one in service to the United States. We have tens of thousands to reach and are focusing not only on the current wars but as far back as WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

Sponsoring a Personalized Flag:

Our country was founded and maintained on individual separate lives, names not statistics. One life upon one life, precept upon precept, similar to the building blocks of a foundation, our country continues to remain strong and free.

A unique feature of the Flag design is the option to personalize it, to actually carry the name of a friend or loved one as part of its structure. Not only can the flag be flown in general but it can also be displayed in specific honor of one lost.

It is our desire and organizational goal that every family that lost a loved one in military service to our country should have a personalized flag. Regardless of the era, as far back as Korea, we are working on the task. A flag that proudly represents that special life lost and compliments the hundreds of thousands that will fly across this nation in grateful respect.

This mission includes partnering with individuals, organizations, corporations and government entities to seek out Gold Star families and help us by sponsoring and presenting Honor and Remember Flags.

Here are several examples of how partnerships are working:

Retired sailors from the FRA, Branch 5, Norfolk VA, collected funds to provide flags for all 17 families that lost loved ones on the USS Cole bombing. Personalized flags were presented at a special ceremony on October 12, 2008 the 8th anniversary of their October 12, 2000 sacrifice.

Cpl Matthew Drake, lone survivor of a suicide car bomber and mother Lisa Schuster donated and presented personalized flags October 15, 2008 to the three mothers who lost their soldier sons in Iraq on October 15th, 2004, the fourth anniversary of their loss. (See newsletter issue 4).

Honor and Remember Inc, presented flags to the president and executive board member of the National American Gold Star mothers on September 26th. Mrs Georgie Carter lost her son Bruce, in 1969, Vietnam, Mrs Molly Morel who lost Brent in 2004, Iraq.

We are currently working with our state government to present, in a general ceremony, Honor and Remember flags to Gold star families in the state. We hope to model this in state ceremonies around the country.

Local Veterans organizations are identifying Gold Star families in their areas and preparing flags for specific tribute presentations.

Gold Star mothers who have received flags are now presenting flags to others.

There are hundreds of ways to reach out and honor so many families who gave all. We believe that there are still over 20,000 families yet to individually recognize. We are currently fundraising and taking donations to accomplish our national goal.

If you would like to order a personalized flag for yourself or someone as a gift please visit our online store or donate below. However please contact us if you would like to participate in any other way to help accomplish our mission.

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 3/30/10

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: _____

State Affairs Committee considered HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 53

HJR 53 HONOR AND REMEMBER FLAG

Urging the United States Congress to pass H.R. 1034, designating the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol to recognize and honor members of the armed forces of the United States who died in the line of duty.

and recommends:

- be replaced with SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

SENATE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title
<hr/>	
HOUSE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

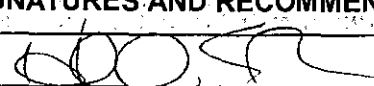


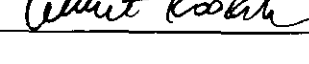

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN#
HMLV	03/12/10			X	1

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	French			✓	
	Meyer	✓			
	Prakash			X	
	Kookesh			X	
CHAIR: 	MENARD	✓			