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*Last Updated: 05/2023*



## Veterans Day, 1984

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

The eleventh hour is often used to mean "the last possible time." The First World War was ended on the eleventh hour—as well as the eleventh day in the eleventh month.

If the idealistic hope that World War I was "the war to end all wars" had been realized, November 11 might still be called Armistice Day. But World War II shattered that dream. And after the Korean War, Armistice Day became Veterans Day. Under that name, each November 11, our Nation shows its respect for those who have worn its uniform in defense of freedom.

Veterans Day has become a significant part of our national heritage as we recognize the important contributions of millions of our citizens whose military service has had a profound effect on history. More than 39 million in number, they fought and died from Bunker Hill to Bastogne, from the Marianas to the Mekong Valley in Vietnam. By preserving our freedom, they also made it possible for us to continue our search for a world at peace. That search remains the highest priority of my Administration. It is a debt we owe to the soldiers, sailors, and airmen who put their lives at risk so that their children and grandchildren would never need to know the horrors of war.

Veterans Day offers the Nation an opportunity to show our pride and say "thank you." Furthermore, it provides an important opportunity to rededicate ourselves to Lincoln's call to Congress and the American people "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan."

Eighty-five percent of the 28 million veterans alive today served during our country's wars. Just as they did not disappoint us in battle, they have not disappointed us in our present search for peace. Their service significantly influences America's role in world affairs, and they all deserve our gratitude.

I believe we should all seek ways to express our collective appreciation for their service and sacrifice. I invite all Americans to join me in observing Veterans Day—through appropriate ceremonies, activities and private thoughts on November 11.

In order that we may pay meaningful tribute to those men and women who proudly served in our Armed Forces, Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 shall be set aside each year as a legal public holiday to honor America's veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Sunday, November 11, 1984, as Veterans Day, and I invite all Americans to join with me in paying tribute to those patriots of all generations who have drawn upon their freedom for the will and the courage to fight for their country and the ideals for which it stands.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

*Ronald Reagan*