

---

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8002

---

State of Washington                      60th Legislature                      2007 Regular Session

By Senators Oemig, Roach, Fairley, Weinstein, Hobbs, Marr, Brown, Pridemore and Fraser

Read first time 01/18/2007.      Referred to Committee on Government Operations & Elections.

1            TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
2            AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
3            REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4            UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5            We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
6            the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
7            represent and petition as follows:

8            WHEREAS, The opportunity to participate in the electoral process,  
9            and the act of voting that embodies that opportunity, represent the  
10            cornerstone of our democracy, and voters should have ample opportunity  
11            to cast meaningful votes; and

12            WHEREAS, Fostering a high voter turnout is crucial in order to  
13            ascertain with greatest certainty the political will of the voting  
14            public; and

15            WHEREAS, Voter turnout in Washington's general elections has varied  
16            from as high as 82% in presidential elections to as low as 52% in other  
17            elections; and

18            WHEREAS, Increasing voter turnout can be directly linked to the  
19            ease with which voters can cast their ballots; and

1       WHEREAS, Although employers are required to allow employees to take  
2 time off of work in order to vote, a temporary absence from work may  
3 pose hardships for employers, and employees may be reluctant to request  
4 time off; and

5       WHEREAS, Employers already bear the costs of a national holiday  
6 every year during the second week of November for Veterans Day; and

7       WHEREAS, The freedoms provided in this country, including the  
8 freedom to vote, have been repeatedly protected by the very same  
9 veterans that the country honors on Veterans Day; and

10       WHEREAS, In 2001 the National Commission on Federal Election  
11 Reform, cochaired by former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford,  
12 recommended combining election day with Veterans Day; and

13       WHEREAS, Combining the national holiday with election day would  
14 help working people vote without imposing additional costs on private  
15 employers or election administrators; and

16       WHEREAS, More public buildings, especially schools, would be  
17 available for use as polling places; and more, better trained poll  
18 workers, including patriotic high school and college students, might be  
19 available to staff polling places on election day;

20       NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the  
21 President and Congress of the United States specify that in even-  
22 numbered years the Veterans Day national holiday be held on the Tuesday  
23 next after the first Monday in November and serve also as our Election  
24 Day.

25       BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
26 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United  
27 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the  
28 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of  
29 Washington.

--- END ---