

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESIDENT SIGNS INTO LAW LEGISLATION COMMEMORATING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF WWII
The 75th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Act directs the Department of Defense to formally recognize the 75th anniversary of World War II.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) extends its sincere gratitude to U.S. Senator James Inhofe for his untiring efforts in the Senate to have legislation enacted into law directing the Department of Defense to formally recognize the 75th anniversary of World War II. We would also like to thank Congressman Sam Graves for his stalwart efforts in the U.S. House of Representatives to get this bill passed last month.

The bill, S. 3661, the *75th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Act*, was signed into law on January 10, 2019 and directs the Secretary of Defense to conduct a program to commemorate the 75th anniversary of World War II. The commemorative program will focus on honoring WWII veterans, educating the public about the history of WWII, paying tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the American people, and recognizing the contributions and sacrifices of our allies. The 75th anniversary of World War II is the last chance on a large scale to thank and honor WWII veterans for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.

“We owe it to the veterans of WWII to recognize their service to this great nation and I applaud the president for doing exactly that today by signing this bill into law,” Inhofe said. “With the signing of the *75th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Act*, we not only have the opportunity to pay homage to the selfless sacrifice the Greatest Generation made in WWII, but we allow for the needed education of current and future generations about the war’s heroes and history. I am honored to have worked with organizations like the Friends of the National World War II Memorial who helped make this bill become a reality.”

Josiah Bunting III, Chairman of the Friends of the National World War II Memorial, said, “We offer our heartfelt appreciation to our Congress and President for recognizing the importance in formally marking the 75th anniversary of World War II and paying tribute to our Greatest Generation. A special thanks to Senator Inhofe for his unwavering leadership in ensuring the success of this significant legislation and helping to honor and preserve the national memory of World War II.

Friends is the only organization hosting a four-year 75th anniversary commemoration, marking every battle in which American troops participated during WWII. Since the beginning of the 75th anniversary commemoration on Pearl Harbor Day 2016, Friends has hosted seventeen 75th anniversary ceremonies at the Memorial. Friends’ WWII 75th Anniversary Commemoration will continue through the 75th anniversary of V-J Day on September 2, 2020. Friends has also assembled a prestigious and supportive WWII 75th Anniversary Honorary Committee, chaired by Senator Bob Dole, who have all signed on because they believe in Friends’ mission to honor the Greatest Generation through 75th anniversary commemorations at the WWII Memorial.

The World War II Memorial in Washington, DC, with its nearly 5 million visitors each year, is a special destination, a gathering place, and, for our WWII generation, a last hurrah as their numbers dwindle. Of the 16 million who served during WWII, less than 500,000 are still living today. Friends is proud to be able to honor our treasured heroes at THEIR Memorial through its WWII 75th Anniversary Commemoration. The legislation authored by Senator Inhofe will greatly enhance and enrich these important efforts.

About Friends of the National World War II Memorial (www.wwiimemorialfriends.org):

Founded in 2007, the Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to honoring and preserving the national memory of World War II and to creating the next “Greatest Generation” of tomorrow. To meet this mission, Friends sponsors an annual public lecture series featuring prominent historians; hosts an annual teachers conference in Washington, DC; and collects and archives video interviews of World War II veterans and other members of the Greatest Generation. Additionally, Friends has the lead responsibility in planning, staging, and funding five or more major national commemorative events annually and is currently sponsoring a national four-year World War II 75th anniversary commemoration. Friends relies on private support to breathe new life into the Memorial and to ensure that it continues to serve as a living lesson for all Americans.

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