

- SUBJECT:** Relating to display of the Honor and Remember flag
- COMMITTEE:** Defense and Veterans' Affairs — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — Menéndez, R. Sheffield, Collier, Farias, Miller, Moody, Schaefer, Zedler
- 1 nay — Frank
- WITNESSES:** For — Melanie Battise, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas; Ramona Fowler; Carson George and George Lutz, Honor and Remember; Ben Hancock and Roy James, Texas Chapter of Honor and Remember; Thomas Logan; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Brent Connett, Texas Conservative Coalition; Cindy McNally Blankenship and Michelle Toungate, Wilco Blue Star Mothers; Tami Sims, Gold Star Mothers)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Honor and Remember, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that encourages congressional and state adoptions of its flag. Several states have adopted the flag as a way to honor U.S. service members killed in action.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3077 would amend Government Code, sec. 2165 and require the Honor and Remember Flag to be flown at state office buildings and veterans' state cemeteries during:
- the third Saturday in May (Armed Forces Day);
 - the last Monday in May (Memorial Day);
 - June 14 (Flag Day);
 - July 4 (Independence Day);
 - Nov. 11 (Veterans Day);
 - National POW/MIA Recognition Day;
 - the last Sunday in September (Gold Star Mother's Day); and
 - any date on which a state resident is killed while serving on active duty in the U.S. military.

If a state office building did not have staff available to display the Honor

and Remember flag on any day this bill required it to be flown, the building's staff would be required to display the flag on the last preceding day staff were available and leave it on display.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2013.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 3077 would help Texas properly honor the military service members who died defending the United States. By adopting the Honor and Remember Flag and flying it at state office buildings and state veterans' cemeteries, Texas would join more than a dozen states that display the flag on important dates to this nation's veterans and military and whenever a resident is killed while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces.

No other flag officially and specifically memorializes the men and women in the military who died while on active duty. The Honor and Remember Flag also serves to honor the sacrifice borne by each family of fallen service members. Displaying this flag at state office buildings and cemeteries would not be difficult, and the bill would provide clear guidelines for flying this symbol. A report by the Legislative Budget Board stipulated the bill would not result in a significant fiscal implication to the state.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

Honoring our service members who died while on active duty is important to Texas and requires our careful attention. CSHB 3077 would not make clear how the trademarked flags would be obtained so they could be flown at every state building and state veterans' cemetery, nor would it address any possible costs to meet new requirements.