

BILL ANALYSIS

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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The exemplary acts of bravery and distinguished service rendered by the members of the United States military are honored in a variety of ways, but it is the Purple Heart that speaks most eloquently to the essential sacrifices that are often required of those who fight for our nation. The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the president of the United States to any member of the armed forces who is wounded or killed by the enemy in combat operations.

This medal dates to the early years of our nation, having originally been authorized by General George Washington, on August 7, 1782, to recognize members of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Known as the Badge of Military Merit, the award created by General Washington entitled recipients to wear a heart-shaped figure of purple cloth as a symbol of their exemplary actions.

When reestablished in 1932, the Purple Heart was initially a commendation for members of the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Air Corps and was retroactively awarded to soldiers in previous conflicts. In 1942, its scope was broadened to include the members of all branches of the military who had been killed or wounded in action, and the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor estimates that 1.7 million Americans have received the medal through the years.

In momentous conflicts that range from the Civil War through the present engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan, valiant men and women have stepped into harm's way to defend our country, and those who paid with their lives or who were wounded in combat are deservedly honored by being designated recipients of the Purple Heart. These courageous individuals are owed a debt of remembrance by all who have benefited from their service, and it is indeed appropriate that their heroism be annually honored by the citizens of Texas on August 7, the anniversary of the date on which General Washington established the Badge of Military Merit.

RESOLVED

That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate August 7 as Purple Heart Day and urge all Texans to reflect on the extraordinary contributions made by the past and present members of the United States armed forces.

That in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.004(d), Government Code, the designation expires on the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is passed by the legislature.