

Rep. Franz offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 378.

A resolution to urge all Michigan citizens to observe Memorial Day and to recognize and contemplate the true spirit of the holiday by remembering those brave and courageous souls who have laid down their lives in defense of our nation.

Whereas, Originally known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day traces its origins back to the 19th century, when groups throughout the nation gathered to honor those who had lost their lives in battle by decorating their gravesites with flowers; and

Whereas, After the conclusion of the Civil War, General John Logan issued General Order 11, which proclaimed that May 30, 1868, should be “designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet church-yard in the land”; and

Whereas, While General Logan proclaimed the observance should proceed annually for so long as a “survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades,” Memorial Day eventually became part of the national consciousness, growing from honoring only those who died during the Civil War to encompassing all soldiers who sacrificed their lives in service to our nation; and

Whereas, When Congress declared Memorial Day to be a national holiday in 1971, it also moved the date of observance from the traditional May 30th established under General Logan’s order to the last Monday in May, so that Americans could observe and enjoy a three-day holiday weekend; and

Whereas, We must now remember that Memorial Day is more than a holiday marked by picnics and parades, barbecues and baseball games. Instead, we must always remember that this is a day to remember those souls who gave, in the words of Lincoln, “the last full measure of devotion”; and

Whereas, Knowing full well that a single day is hardly enough to honor the memory of the men and women who have sacrificed their lives on foreign soil, and who took their final footsteps in faraway lands from Verdun and Normandy to Da Nang and Fallujah, we pause to celebrate their eternal legacy of valor and to reflect on the debt we owe to these patriots, who died so that freedom might always be an American birthright; and

Whereas, The blood that brave and valiant soldiers shed on distant beaches and bulkheads, and on foreign sands and shores has given us the liberty that is the very lifeblood of this Republic and the cornerstone of human history; and

Whereas, Each young life given in defense of our nation has helped other nations to cast off the shackles of oppression and tyranny, and to bring the sacred light of freedom and liberty to the furthest reaches of the globe; and

Whereas, Each soldier who sacrificed their life long before their time did not go to battle in order to seek fame or glory nor did they set out yearning to be a hero. Rather, they simply heeded a call that only the bravest amongst us have answered and paid the ultimate price for, a cause far greater than themselves, a cause that will forever be reflected in our vigilance in the face of tyranny and foreign aggression; and

Whereas, We must not only honor the sacrifice of the men and women who laid down their lives, but also the families who lost mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, and who suffered the grief and sadness of distance and death with quiet dignity and pride; and

Whereas, We need not lay garlands on the gravesites of our fallen heroes today, but as we spend time with family and friends this Memorial Day weekend, we must be mindful to never forsake the memory of those whose time with family and friends was cut too short in service to our nation; and

Whereas, As we commemorate those heroes who have died for our democratic ideals, we must also make this Memorial Day a time of prayer, a time to ask the Almighty for a permanent and prosperous peace, so that future generations of Americans, secure in and grateful for their freedom, might never know the horrific toll of war and the terrible tragedies of battle; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body urge all Michigan citizens to observe Memorial Day and to recognize and contemplate the true spirit of the holiday by remembering those brave and courageous souls who have laid down their lives in defense of our nation.