

SB 304



State of Wisconsin / DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

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OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

TELEPHONE 608 242-3000  
DSN 724-3000

January 14, 2002

Honorable Rodney Moen  
122 South, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Dear Senator Moen:

I will not be unable to testify on the bill establishing a Purple Heart Day for Wisconsin due to a scheduling conflict. Major General Blaney, The Adjutant General, wants to go on record as strongly supporting this bill. We have many members of the Wisconsin National Guard who are recipients of the Purple Heart.

As a recipient of the Purple Heart, I wholeheartedly support this initiative. Veterans are a special group among our citizens. They have demonstrated their patriotism with their actions and commitment. Embedded within this veterans group is a very special few, those who have served and been wounded in the discharge of their duties. It is very fitting that they receive recognition not only for their service, but for their suffering, and for many, the disabilities they have had to live with.

Wisconsin has always been blessed with citizens willing to answer the call to duty when needed. It is only fitting that we pay tribute to those who have answered the call. These recipients of the Purple Heart deserve the recognition from our state.

Thank you for your continued support for our service members and our veterans.

Sincerely,

/////signed/////

Kerry G. Denson  
Brigadier General  
Wisconsin Army National Guard  
Deputy Adjutant General for Army



Scott McCallum, Governor  
Raymond G. Boland, Secretary

*STATE OF WISCONSIN, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS*

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Date: January 16, 2002

To: Honorable Senator Rodney Moen, Chairman and Members Senate  
Committee on Health, Utilities, Veterans and Military Affairs

From: Raymond G. Boland  
Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

Re: 2002 Senate Bill 364, Proclaiming: Purple Heart Day in Wisconsin

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide my support of Senate Bill 364 in proclaiming August 7<sup>th</sup> of each year as Purple Heart Day in Wisconsin.

As background information the Purple Heart was established by General George Washington at Newburgh, New York on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1782 during the Revolutionary War. Lost for almost 150 years among the War Departments Records at Washington, D.C. this important paper came to light during the search for Washington's Paper prior to the celebration of his Bi-Centennial in 1932. The U.S. War Department revived the Purple Heart decoration on February 22, 1932

The Order of the Purple Heart is awarded to members of the armed forces of the U.S. who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action. While clearly an individual decoration, the Purple Heart differs from all other decorations in that an individual is not recommended; rather he or she is entitled to it upon meeting specific criteria.

An organization now known as the "Military Order of the Purple Heart" was formed in 1932 for the protection and mutual interest of all who have received the decoration. Composed exclusively of Purple Heart recipients it is the only strictly "combat" organization in existence. I have the highest regard for the Wisconsin Military Order of the Purple Heart and join them in supporting this bill.

The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States. There have been changes/additions over the years the most recent that after March 28, 1973 wounds as result of an international terrorist attack against the United States or a foreign nation friendly to the United States and also a result of military operations while serving outside the territory of the United States as part of a peacekeeping force.

In Wisconsin we are indeed proud of our Veterans and want to insure each and every veteran receives the benefits they so richly deserve. Designating August 7<sup>th</sup> each year as Purple Heart Day in Wisconsin shows our support of the National Purple Heart Day and pays tribute to those who have received the Purple Heart, their families and all Veterans and citizenry here in Wisconsin. In addition it will urge Wisconsin people and organizations to display the American flag on that day as a public expression of the recognition of those individuals who have been wounded or killed in action preserving the freedoms that U.S. citizens cherish.

Your continuous support of our veterans is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your consideration in Proclaiming August 7<sup>th</sup> as Purple Heart Day in Wisconsin.



## *John O'Brien*

Legislative Officer  
Wisconsin Military Order of the Purple Heart  
26570 Fiddlers Green Road  
Richland Center, Wisconsin 53581

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2002

To:  
Honorable Senator Rodney Moen, Chairman  
And Members  
Senate Committee on Health, Utilities, Veterans  
& Military Affairs

Re: 2002 Senate Bill 364, Proclaiming "Purple Heart Day"

Mr. Chairman and members. As the Legislative Officer of the Wisconsin Department of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, I would like to express the support for Senate Bill 364 by all of the Members of our organization who reside in Wisconsin.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Senator Moen for agreeing without hesitation to introduce this legislation which would proclaim August 7<sup>th</sup> of each year as Purple Heart Day, a day that would honor all those Veterans who have been wounded or died preserving the freedoms we cherish.

The reason we ask that August 7<sup>th</sup> be declared as the date to honor these veterans, is that it was on this date in 1782 General George Washington asked the Congress to create the award to honor veterans of the Revolutionary War. This date is also the day proclaimed as "National Purple Heart Day", and the date that many other states and cities have set aside to honor these veterans.

The ORDER of the PURPLE HEART for MILITARY MERIT, commonly called "The Purple Heart". It is an American decoration – the oldest military decoration in the world in present use and the first award made available to a common soldier. The heritage of the Purple Heart is significant to this country as it signifies our national recognition of the sacrifice of shedding blood as a result of wounds or death by an armed enemy, on a member of our military.

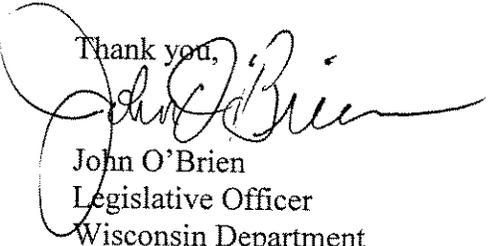
Records show that over 1, 534, 600 members of our armed forces have received the Purple Heart, and the medal continues to be awarded. To date at least 10 members of our armed forces serving in Afghanistan or their family member have received awarded the medal. Yesterday it was announced that 15 more awards would be given to combatants who have been wounded in the line of duty fighting terrorism.

Wisconsin and this committee has an outstanding tradition of honoring and caring for it's Veterans. This bill continues that tradition. By designating Purple Heart Day, we can set aside a day for the people of Wisconsin to reflect on the lives lost and the sacrifices of those who gave the ultimate.

Our freedoms were not free, they were paid for with the blood of those who died or were wounded preserving them. Purple Heart day would be a small token of appreciation to those veterans or their families.

Thank you for considering this legislation. And I want to personally thank each member of this committee for their ongoing work on behalf of our veterans and those serving our country. I would be happy to answer any question you might have on this proposal the award or our organization.

Thank you,



John O'Brien  
Legislative Officer  
Wisconsin Department  
Military Order of the Purple Heart

# Vote Record

## Senate - Committee on Health, Utilities, Veterans and Military Affairs

Date: 1/16/02

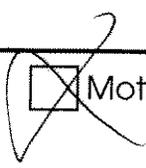
Bill Number: SB 304

Moved by: Breske

Seconded by: Cowles

Motion: passage

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Sen. Rodney Moen, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Roger Breske	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Judith Robson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Jon Erpenbach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Mark Meyer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Peggy Rosenzweig	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Robert Cowles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Scott Fitzgerald	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Mary Lazich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals:	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>



Motion Carried

Motion Failed