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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
DEFENSE

HOMELAND SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL  
RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
WATER, OCEANS AND WILDLIFE

INDIAN AND INSULAR AFFAIRS

OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

Aloha, Friend.

I am reaching out to you in recognition of Memorial Day, in honor and remembrance of those who gave their all while defending our great country's freedom and spreading the message of liberty across the globe. It is both a thankful and solemn day, as we reflect anew that our freedom has come at the greatest cost.

One of my greatest responsibilities and privileges is to represent some 112,000 Hawai'i veterans and their families. This is a responsibility I take very seriously, especially as our veterans 'ohana is one of the largest percentages of any state in our nation both overall and in key areas like women and minorities.

But all of this must be accompanied by actions to honor our fallen and care for their 'ohana and for our veterans and theirs. With your guidance, since my first term in the 107th Congress in 2002 I have cosponsored over 160 pieces of legislation that directly impact key areas to improve the overall quality of care veterans, their families and caregivers receive and to ensure all eligible veterans are able to receive their entitled benefits. The legislation ranges from very Hawai'i specific needs to nationwide change that also has a direct impact on Hawai'i veterans like the Honoring our PACT Act that addresses health care and compensation for toxic substance exposure.

Some of the legislation I have cosponsored and supported this 118th Congress (2023-2025) includes:

- H.R. 1282, the Major Richard Star Act. This bill would provide total offset relief to veterans who suffered combat injuries or illnesses who were medically retired with less than 20 years of service.
- H.R. 3698, the Feed Hungry Veterans Act. This bill would expand eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for eligible disabled veterans to ensure more access to healthy and nutritious foods.
- H.R. 808, the Veterans Patient Advocacy Act. This bill would ensure a minimum number of available patient advocates to assist veterans with their concerns about health care services received through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).
- H.R. 645, the Healthy Foundations for Homeless Veterans Act. This legislation would make permanent the temporary flexibilities granted to the VA to address veterans' homelessness by providing shelter, transportation and communication devices to veterans in need.
- H.R. 3600, the VA Work-Study Improvement Act. This bill would expand qualified VA work-study opportunities to include nonprofit and state agencies, increase wages by permitting payment at the federal employee minimum wage and require the VA to publish its work-study data annually for more transparency and accountability.

Most recently, I joined a number of my colleagues in honoring our fallen service members by cosponsoring the National Poppy Day Resolution. Although widely recognized by our Allies, especially in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Great Britain, Poppy Day hasn't achieved a similar level of recognition here in the U.S. The red poppy flower became forever linked to soldiers who paid the ultimate price on the battlefields of World War I, one of the deadliest global conflicts in history. Its roots come from a poem, "[In Flanders Fields](#)," written by a Canadian soldier on the frontlines of World War I to honor all his fellow soldiers killed in combat.

In the U.S., we are familiar with the red poppy pin, however, Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day and is a day to honor and mourn those who have died in service to our country. It was first widely observed on May 30, 1868 to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers. During that first national commemoration, former Union General and sitting Ohio Congressman James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants helped to decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Civil War soldiers who were buried there.

After World War I, it became an occasion for honoring those who died in all of America's wars and was then more widely established as a national holiday throughout our country. In 1971, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act and established that Memorial Day was to be commemorated on the last Monday of May. Traditionally, Memorial Day is commemorated by placing small American flags on each veteran's grave and the President or Vice President laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. In Hawai'i, we honor our fallen heroes at National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, state veterans cemeteries throughout our islands and countless private grave sites.

Memorial Day is also a time in which we recommit ourselves to the promises made to our nation's veterans and families. In that spirit, I recognize that my efforts in Congress on behalf of you and your fellow veterans and 'ohana are only as good as my ongoing close connection with you and your organizations, and I need and ask for your help in keeping that connection strong. It is a deep honor to represent and serve you and yours in Congress, and I humbly thank you again for your service.

Thank you again, and please continue to let me know of your views. Please also sign up for regular updates from me and my office through my e-newsletter and social media outreach at <https://case.house.gov/contact>.

With aloha,

**Ed Case**

Congressman Ed Case  
(Hawai'i-First District)

