

VFW Reminds Americans that Freedom Isn't Free

Maintaining the strength of the American idea requires courage, constant vigilance and sacrifice

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WASHINGTON — For the members the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), as well as the millions of Americans who have worn the cloth of our military, all veterans share a common bond, having raised their right hand and solemnly sworn an oath to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

No matter if they served for a few years or a few decades, all veterans have sacrificed something to serve their country, and if called upon, to lay down their lives in defense of it. And on Monday, the VFW honors their contributions and sacrifices while calling on all of our nation's citizens to remember that the freedoms we all enjoy are not free.

Maintaining the strength of the American idea requires courage, constant vigilance and sacrifice, and it's important to remember why we have Veterans Day in the first place. Originally called Armistice Day to commemorate the end of World War I, Veterans Day was officially adopted in 1926 through a congressional resolution. It became a national holiday 12 years later by similar congressional action. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming Nov. 11 as Veterans Day, and since then, Veterans Day has come to acknowledge veterans of all wars, and then all who once served in the U.S. military.

For the VFW, Veterans Day is an opportunity to publicly commemorate the contributions of our veterans and to show appreciation toward them. But beyond the free meals, discounts, tributes and platitudes given to veterans on this day, there is also an opportunity to truly show them our appreciation. We are free because of those selfless few who have taken an oath to protect and defend their nation.

So this Nov. 11, the VFW encourages every American to reflect on the true cost of freedom, and take the opportunity to keep alive the memories, sacrifices and accomplishments of our nation's veterans. Happy Veterans Day.

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