

Legislative Analysis



POLICE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

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House Bill 6020 as passed by the House
Sponsor: Rep. Sal Rocca
Committee: Government Operations
First Analysis (9-1-04)

BRIEF SUMMARY: The bill would designate May 15 of each year as Police Officers Memorial Day.

FISCAL IMPACT: The bill would have no fiscal impact on the state or local government.

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Each day, thousands of police officers throughout the state selflessly risk their lives to protect communities across this state from violence and civil disorder. Unfortunately, many officers face a high risk of danger while on duty. To date, more than 500 police officers in the state - including over 220 from the Detroit Police Department and 49 from the Michigan State Police - have been killed in the line of duty. It has been suggested that May 15 of each be designated as Police Officers Memorial Day to honor those brave men and women who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would create a new act to designate May 15 of each year as Police Officers Memorial Day, “[i]n recognition of the men and women who have lost their lives in the line of duty while serving as law enforcement officers in the state of Michigan.”

The bill specifies:

On this day, all flags at public buildings shall be lowered to half staff in honor and appreciation of fallen law enforcement officers. Each community throughout the state is encouraged to conduct a memorial ceremony, and the state’s citizens are encouraged to pause and reflect on the dedicated professionals who bravely chose to accept personal risk and made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting and defending the public.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Under current federal law (36 USC 136) the president is requested to issue a proclamation each year designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day to honor federal, state, and local officers killed or disabled in the line of duty. The law also directs the U.S. flag to be flown at half staff on all government buildings on that day, and invites state and local governments to observe the day of remembrance with “appropriate ceremonies and activities, including the display of the flag at half staff.”

Peace Officers Memorial Day was established when President Kennedy signed House Joint Resolution 730 (Public Law 87-726) into law in 1962. In 1994, President Clinton signed the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (an omnibus crime bill) requiring that the U.S. flag be flown at half staff on that day.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill honors the police officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty by encouraging individuals and communities in the state to take a moment and remember the sacrifices these men and women, and their families, have made for the greater society.

Response:

Federal law already establishes May 15 as a day of remembrance for fallen peace officers.

POSITIONS:

There are no positions at present.

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