

Government Administration and Elections Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5409

Title: AN ACT DESIGNATING VARIOUS DAYS AND WEEKS.

Vote Date: 3/22/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/8/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The legislation, as amended, aims to bring recognition and awareness to various causes and events that are relevant to the State of Connecticut and its history or residents by designating various days and weeks for their purpose, or revising existing designations. Such designations include Free Enterprise Day, Constitution Day, Parkinson's Awareness Day, Tuskegee Airmen Day, Red Dress Day, Face Equity Day and Week, Barber Recognition Day, Dystonia Awareness Day, and Epilepsy Awareness Month.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Stephanie Thomas, Secretary of the State:

This legislation recognizes and celebrates many contributions residents make to the state and nation, as well as bringing awareness to important causes. Of particular significance, Free Enterprise Day, Constitution Day, Parkinson's Awareness Day, Tuskegee Airmen Day, and Barber Recognition Day.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Stephanie Abrams, New England Air Museum President & CEO:

New England Air Museum supports the proposal, particularly for the designation of April 26th as Tuskegee Airmen Day, as it allows Connecticut residents to recognize the stories of these brave American heroes, many of whom are local heroes.

John Barry:

Resides in Massachusetts but supports any effort that celebrates entrepreneurial roles. Particularly Free Enterprise Day as amended, which can be a platform to highlight innovation in CT.

Wyatt Bosworth, CBIA Associate Counsel:

Support, particularly for the proposed change to Free Enterprise Day.

Jose Crespo, Top Tier Barber Group:

Supports Barber's Day recognition as a lot of barber shops struggled during the shutdown period to stay in business.

Jonariel Cruz:

Supports, barbers deserve a day of recognition as appreciated workers.

Jody Cummings, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe General Counsel, Supports:

Commends recognition of Red Dress Day and bringing attention to the crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons, and recommends the legislation refer to "missing or murdered indigenous persons" rather than "missing and murdered indigenous women and children".

Tammy Exum, State Representative, Supports:

Supports, especially Section 2 designating April 26th as Tuskegee Airmen Day, which recognizes the accomplishments of the first black military airmen group in American History. Connecticut has a strong and proud history when it comes to the Tuskegee Airmen, relating to the CT Freedom Trail and the New England Air Museum.

Matthew Hallisey:

Supports the amendments for Free Enterprise Day as it would clarify and reflect the character and contributions of entrepreneurs, and Constitution Day as it would recognize CT's constitution and its role in fundamental governing principles.

Matthew Lesser, State Senator:

Requests that the bill be amended to designate November as Epilepsy Awareness Month. It is estimated that 36,000 residents have been diagnosed with epilepsy in Connecticut alone. Greater awareness and public education and advocacy for research is a vital step in efforts toward a more inclusive CT.

Jessica Loffredo, Epilepsy Foundation of CT Board of Directors:

Requests the inclusion of a new designation for November to be Epilepsy Awareness Month. The Epilepsy Foundation of America has celebrated November as National Epilepsy Awareness Month since 1969, which Congress has recognized since 2003.

Kathleen McCarty, State Representative:

It is essential to build more awareness about Dystonia. Notes that HB 5409 (line 35) would recognize May 10th as Dystonia Awareness Day, but requests the date be changed to September 15th in concert with National Dystonia Awareness Month.

Cathy Osten, State Senator:

Supports, especially subdivision 120 section 2, establishing Red Dress Day.

Julia Pitcher, Michael J. Fox Foundation:
Supports, particularly advocating for Parkinson's Disease awareness and research.

Cherie Poirier, Epilepsy Foundation of CT Executive Director:
Requests that November be designated as Epilepsy Awareness Month, as those living with epilepsy face many stigmas, including the challenge of living with seizures. This designation will increase awareness and knowledge of the condition and the residents affected by it.

Daidrien Ramos:
Supports, barbers should be recognized.

Tami Zawistowski, State Representative:
Urges supports, particularly for section 2 subsection 119, which recognizes April 26th as Tuskegee Airmen Day, as these airmen play an important role in our nation's history. They deserve the gratitude, respect, and remembrance that this designation will accomplish.

Offered support for the designation of June 1st as Barber Recognition Day:

Devon Bonds
Jordan Bowen
Reggie Fields
Natalia Lugo
Fred Mojica
Xavier Montanez
Mario Petrolito
Kristopher Quinn
Jordan Rico
Jose Rios
Angel Rosario
Albert Salazar
Jaime Wallace

Also offered general statements of support:

Marc Blue
Anothony Delacruz
Juan Goritz
Stephanie Patrick
Anonymous
Anonymous

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Lindsay de Brito

Date: 4/8/24