

**House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee**  
**69<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session**  
**Representative Schauer-Chair**

Chairman Schauer and House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 1403.

**Intent of this bill:**

Establish the third Friday in September of each year as Prisoner of War Missing in Action (POW/MIA) day.

**Background and need for bill:**

- The official motto of the POW/MIA flag is “You Are Not Forgotten.” While this remains true all year long, each year, we mark the occasion with a designated day of remembrance.
- More than 130,000 American troops have been POWs since World War II, with tens of thousands of military members still MIA. ND: 362 according to DPAA (326WW2,9V,27K)
- National POW MIA Recognition Day is a day of reflection and giving back to the military community. Every September, we take a bit of extra consideration for Veterans who endured life as a prisoner of war along with those who never were found.
- Commemorating National POW MIA Recognition Day is a way to show families that have a loved one captured as a prisoner of war or that has never been found after combat, that they are not alone.
- 1972 the National League of Families designed a POW / MIA flag.
- August 10, 1990, Congress passed H.J. Resolution 467 designating September 21, 1990 as National POW MIA Recognition Day and recognizing the National League of Families POW/MIA flag.
  - POW/MIA day has taken place on the third Friday in September each year through an annual presidential proclamation.
  - There are many ways we can all honor POWs and those who went MIA during service:
    - Fly the POW/MIA flag to show support.
    - Reach out to those in your community affected by war and missing a loved one.
    - Give back to military charities by donating money, time, or both.
    - Learn more about the histories of POWs and those missing by visiting local military museums, reading a book, or watching a documentary.
- In ND a request must be made to the ND Governor to issue a proclamation.
  - Years missed: 2024, 2023, 2022.



**Outcome of bill:**

A request for a proclamation to the ND Governor would no longer be required. ND Governor would be directed by NDCC 01-03 to issue the proclamation each year.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Lonnie Wangen Commissioner-NDDVA

STATE OF  
NORTH DAKOTA

## PROCLAMATION

POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2021

WHEREAS, throughout American history, generations of patriots have bravely served in our military and sacrificed much to protect our country and preserve democracy around the world; and

WHEREAS, some of those brave men and women who answered the call to service were captured in conflict and imprisoned by our enemies, and some never returned from the battlefield; and

WHEREAS, our nation remains steadfast in its commitment to leave no servicemember behind; our men and women in uniform uphold this pledge every day, and our country further upholds it as we honor all those who serve, particularly those taken as prisoners of war or missing in action; and

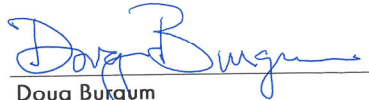
WHEREAS, today and every day, we pay tribute to the American men and women who have not returned to the country they so valiantly defended, and we express profound gratitude to those who returned after facing unimaginable hardships; we will never forget the sacrifices they made to keep this nation free; and

WHEREAS, on this day, we honor those Americans who were prisoners of war and recognize them for the courage and determination they showed while enduring unspeakable conditions, and we honor those who remain unaccounted for, especially remembering the sacrifices of their families who face each day without knowing the fate of their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, all North Dakotans are encouraged to honor our servicemen and servicewomen for their courageous and selfless sacrifice, and especially those who have paid so high a price in service to this great nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim  
September 17, 2021, POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY in the State of North Dakota.



  
Doug Burgum  
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:   
Alvin A. Jaeger  
SECRETARY OF STATE