REGULAR CALENDAR

March 12, 2025

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Majority of the Committee on Legislative Administration to which was referred HB 142,

AN ACT relative to the Honor and Remember Flag. Having considered the same, report the same with the following resolution: RESOLVED, that it is INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE.

Rep. Stephen Boyd

FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

MAJORITY
COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee:	**Legislative Administration**
Bill Number:	**HB 142**
Title:	**relative to the Honor and Remember Flag.**
Date:	**March 12, 2025**
Consent Calendar:	**REGULAR**
Recommendation:	**INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE**

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This bill would designate the Honor and Remember Flag as the state symbol of remembrance for those who died in the line of duty or as the result of service and require the flag to fly over the State House for no more than five designated days of the year including Gold Star Mother's Day. The organization behind the flag, while a commercial enterprise, has yet to garner widespread support from traditional national service organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) or the American Legion. During the hearing, a NH representative of the State Veterans Advisory Committee testified in opposition to the bill stating the American flag is what is draped over fallen soldiers' coffins and no other flag is wanted or necessary. The Honor and Remember Flag does currently fly at the New Hampshire Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen, New Hampshire, at their discretion. The flag can be purchased directly from the company, and it can be personalized for individual service members. Overwhelmingly, the correspondence received by the committee indicated that it has been, and should remain, the US flag that our service members fought and died for and the flag that drapes their coffins and is presented to their spouse, parent or child, that being the flag that honors them. The majority of the committee voted to recommend this bill Inexpedient to Legislate, not as a rebuke of the Honor and Remember Flag, but as a recognition of the US flag as our official symbol of remembrance. It is noted that RSA 4:13-h proclaims Gold Star Mother's Day. "The governor shall annually issue a proclamation calling for the proper observance of the first Sunday after Easter which shall be known as Gold Star Mother's Day recognizing and honoring all mothers who have lost sons or daughters while on duty in the United States armed forces. The governor shall urge the citizens of the state to observe this day with appropriate events." The Governor might well want to order the Honor and Remember Flag to be flown on this day.

Vote 9-3.

Rep. Stephen Boyd
FOR THE MAJORITY

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

REGULAR CALENDAR

Legislative Administration

HB 142, relative to the Honor and Remember Flag. **MAJORITY: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE. MINORITY: OUGHT TO PASS.**

Rep. Stephen Boyd for the **Majority** of Legislative Administration. This bill would designate the Honor and Remember Flag as the state symbol of remembrance for those who died in the line of duty or as the result of service and require the flag to fly over the State House for no more than five designated days of the year including Gold Star Mother's Day. The organization behind the flag, while a commercial enterprise, has yet to garner widespread support from traditional national service organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) or the American Legion. During the hearing, a NH representative of the State Veterans Advisory Committee testified in opposition to the bill stating the American flag is what is draped over fallen soldiers' coffins and no other flag is wanted or necessary. The Honor and Remember Flag does currently fly at the New Hampshire Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen, New Hampshire, at their discretion. The flag can be purchased directly from the company, and it can be personalized for individual service members. Overwhelmingly, the correspondence received by the committee indicated that it has been, and should remain, the US flag that our service members fought and died for and the flag that drapes their coffins and is presented to their spouse, parent or child, that being the flag that honors them. The majority of the committee voted to recommend this bill Inexpedient to Legislate, not as a rebuke of the Honor and Remember Flag, but as a recognition of the US flag as our official symbol of remembrance. It is noted that RSA 4:13-h proclaims Gold Star Mother's Day. "The governor shall annually issue a proclamation calling for the proper observance of the first Sunday after Easter which shall be known as Gold Star Mother's Day recognizing and honoring all mothers who have lost sons or daughters while on duty in the United States armed forces. The governor shall urge the citizens of the state to observe this day with appropriate events." The Governor might well want to order the Honor and Remember Flag to be flown on this day. **Vote 9-3.**

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

REGULAR CALENDAR

March 12, 2025

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Minority of the Committee on Legislative Administration to which was referred HB 142,

AN ACT relative to the Honor and Remember Flag. Having considered the same, and being unable to agree with the Majority, report with the recommendation that the bill OUGHT TO PASS.

Rep. Joseph Barton

FOR THE MINORITY OF THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

MINORITY
COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee:	**Legislative Administration**
Bill Number:	**HB 142**
Title:	**relative to the Honor and Remember Flag.**
Date:	**March 12, 2025**
Consent Calendar:	**REGULAR**
Recommendation:	**OUGHT TO PASS**

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This bipartisan measure has been in the mix before and this version includes new language and compromises that reflect earlier testimony and feedback. The flag design is from a national organization, Honor and Remember, Inc. An earlier issue concerned the flag being manufactured by a private vendor. That is a non-argument, a red herring. The company makes the flags available at cost, or a bit more than cost. It's not about profit. It's about having a flag that can be personalized with the name of a deceased veteran. That can't be done with an American flag. And, of course, flag manufacturers sell countless American flags, often at far more than cost. The minority position is one of support for the proposed flag and for the Gold Star families who seek to have it recognized by having it officially flown at our capitol once or twice a year. During a time when military recruiting has been struggling, this type of recognition sends an important message that military service is valued and that those who make the ultimate sacrifice will be remembered. Much has been made of the fact that some Veterans organizations don't endorse this flag. The State Veterans Advisory Council (SVAC) did not support this bill. Unfortunately, no supporter of the flag was invited to make the case for the flag to SVAC. One SVAC response has been "We have the American Flag. That's all we need." Except for those pesky exceptions. For example, the Marine Corps flag flies over this State House every November 10th, the Marine Corps birthday. That flag honors but one service. The Honor and Remember Flag commemorates deceased veterans and gold star families from every service. The American flag is enhanced, not detracted, when it is complemented and supported by other flags, to include the POW Flag, the American Legion Flag, the VFW flag and so on. A majority of states, most other states, have already recognized the Honor and Remember Flag. Why does a veteran-friendly state like New Hampshire refuse to do so? These families who have been fighting for this flag have been doing so for many years. It's time to finally reward their efforts by giving the sanction and imprimatur of our great state to validate their hard work, their memories, their lost loved ones, and their flag, by passing this bill this year.

Rep. Joseph Barton
FOR THE MINORITY

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

REGULAR CALENDAR

Legislative Administration

HB 142, relative to the Honor and Remember Flag. **OUGHT TO PASS.**

Rep. Joseph Barton for the **Minority** of Legislative Administration. This bipartisan measure has been in the mix before and this version includes new language and compromises that reflect earlier testimony and feedback. The flag design is from a national organization, Honor and Remember, Inc. An earlier issue concerned the flag being manufactured by a private vendor. That is a non-argument, a red herring. The company makes the flags available at cost, or a bit more than cost. It's not about profit. It's about having a flag that can be personalized with the name of a deceased veteran. That can't be done with an American flag. And, of course, flag manufacturers sell countless American flags, often at far more than cost. The minority position is one of support for the proposed flag and for the Gold Star families who seek to have it recognized by having it officially flown at our capitol once or twice a year. During a time when military recruiting has been struggling, this type of recognition sends an important message that military service is valued and that those who make the ultimate sacrifice will be remembered. Much has been made of the fact that some Veterans organizations don't endorse this flag. The State Veterans Advisory Council (SVAC) did not support this bill. Unfortunately, no supporter of the flag was invited to make the case for the flag to SVAC. One SVAC response has been "We have the American Flag. That's all we need." Except for those pesky exceptions. For example, the Marine Corps flag flies over this State House every November 10th, the Marine Corps birthday. That flag honors but one service. The Honor and Remember Flag commemorates deceased veterans and gold star families from every service. The American flag is enhanced, not detracted, when it is complemented and supported by other flags, to include the POW Flag, the American Legion Flag, the VFW flag and so on. A majority of states, most other states, have already recognized the Honor and Remember Flag. Why does a veteran-friendly state like New Hampshire refuse to do so? These families who have been fighting for this flag have been doing so for many years. It's time to finally reward their efforts by giving the sanction and imprimatur of our great state to validate their hard work, their memories, their lost loved ones, and their flag, by passing this bill this year.

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

EXECUTIVE SESSION on HB 142

BILL TITLE: relative to the Honor and Remember Flag.

DATE: March 12, 2025

LOB ROOM: 203

MOTIONS: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE

Moved by Rep. S. Boyd Seconded by Rep. Sheehan Vote: 9-3

☐ **WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION**

CONSENT CALENDAR: NO

Statement of Intent: Refer to Committee Report

Respectfully submitted,

Rep Shane Sirois, Clerk

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION

EXECUTIVE SESSION on HB 142

BILL TITLE: relative to the Honor and Remember Flag.

DATE: **March 12, 2025**

LOB ROOM: 203

MOTION: (Please check one box)

☐ OTP ☑ ITL ☐ Retain (1st year) ☐ Adoption of Amendment # _____ *(if offered)*

☐ Interim Study (2nd year)

Moved by Rep. BOYD Seconded by Rep. SHEEHAN Vote: 9Y-3N

MOTION: (Please check one box)

☐ OTP ☐ OTP/A ☐ ITL ☐ Retain (1st year) ☐ Adoption of Amendment # _____ *(if offered)*

☐ Interim Study (2nd year)

Moved by Rep. _____ Seconded by Rep. _____ Vote: _____

MOTION: (Please check one box)

☐ OTP ☐ OTP/A ☐ ITL ☐ Retain (1st year) ☐ Adoption of Amendment # _____ *(if offered)*

☐ Interim Study (2nd year)

Moved by Rep. _____ Seconded by Rep. _____ Vote: _____

MOTION: (Please check one box)

☐ OTP ☐ OTP/A ☐ ITL ☐ Retain (1st year) ☐ Adoption of Amendment # _____ *(if offered)*

☐ Interim Study (2nd year)

Moved by Rep. _____ Seconded by Rep. _____ Vote: _____

☐ **WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION**

CONSENT CALENDAR: _____ YES _____ NO

Minority Report? ✓ Yes _____ No If yes, author, Rep: BARTON Motion_____

Respectfully submitted: _____

Rep Shane Sirois, Clerk

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE HOUSE CLERK

2025 SESSION

2/20/2025 3:18:19 PM
Roll Call Committee Registers Report

Legislative Administration

Bill #: HB142 Motion: ITL AM #: _____ Exec Session Date: 03-12-2025

Members	YEAS	Nays	NV
Hill, Gregory G. Chairman	✓		
Sheehan, Vanessa L Vice Chairman	✓		
Turcotte, Len P	✓		
Verville, Kevin G.	✓		
Boyd, Stephen E.	✓		
Sirois, Shane A Clerk	✓		
Barton, Joseph J		✓	
Wall, Janet G	✓		
Richards, Beth S.	✓		
Payeur, Stephanie R		✓	
~~Sorensen, Carrie~~ fox	✓		
Wade, Alice		✓	
TOTAL VOTE:	9	3	

12

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION
PUBLIC HEARING ON HB 142

BILL TITLE: **relative to the Honor and Remember flag.**
DATE: **February 19, 2025**
LOB ROOM: **203**

Time Public Hearing Called to Order: **9:00 a.m.**
Time Adjourned: **10:00 a.m.**

Committee Members: Reps. Hill, Sheehan, Sirois, Turcotte, Wall, Richards, Payeur, Sorensen, Wade and S. Boyd

Bill Sponsors:

Rep. Moffett	**Rep. Balboni**	**Rep. Creighton**
Rep. Edwards	**Rep. Grote**	**Rep. Rollins**
Rep. Terry	**Sen. Avard**	**Sen. Pearl**

TESTIMONY

* Use asterisk if written testimony and/or amendments are submitted.

- ***Rep. Michael Moffett -- Prime Sponsor**
  - Shared testimony about the idea and intent for the bill. This flag design is from a national organization, Honor and Remember, Inc.

- **Rep. Jeanine Notter -- Opposes**
  - Believes that the American Flag is what should be representing our fallen.

- **Kevin Grady, State Veterans Advisory Committee -- Opposes**

- **Patricia and Richard Bilodeau, Global Star Families -- Supports**
  - Gave testimony and explanation of Gold Star families and what this flag means to them.

- **Rep. Jaci Grote -- Sponsor**
  - Gave testimony of why she is supporting this bill.
  - Says that the United States flag represents all of us and the Honor and Remember Flag represents the fallen and their families.

- **Nancy Marston, Gold Star Families -- Supports**
  - Gave testimony of the significance of the importance of the flag to the families who suffered loss of a service member.
  - Stated that the Honor and Remember flag is not intended to replace the United States flag. Says that this bill is only asking for three days to fly this flag.

- **Jean Durgin, Gold Star Families -- Supports**
  - Gave testimony on the loss of her son who died while service and what the Honor and Remember Flag means to her and other Gold Star families.

- **Timothy Chrysonton -- Opposes**
  - Gave testimony and history on similar bills being voted down.
  - Believes that the state of New Hampshire should not be recognizing a private flag and that the suggestion that it should is "inappropriate."

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Shane Sirois
Clerk

SIGN UP SHEET

To Register Opinion If Not Speaking

Committee: House Legislative Administration Committee

Bill #: HB 142-FN **Date:** _February 19, 2025______________

****Please Print All Information****

Name	Address	Phone	Representing	Pro	Con

House Remote Testify

Legislative Administration Committee Testify List for Bill HB142 on 2025-02-19

Support: 21 Oppose: 6 Neutral: 0 Total to Testify: 0

Export to Excel

Name	City, State Email Address	Title	Representing	Position	Testifying	Non-Germane	Signed Up
Pauer, Eric	Brookline, NH secretary@BrooklineGOP.org	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/4/2025 9:15 PM
Grone, Steve	Gorham, NH stevegrone@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/11/2025 10:39 AM
Miller, Brian	Granby, MA newengland@honorandremember.org	A Member of the Public	New England Honor and Remember	Support	No	No	2/12/2025 11:00 AM
Ouellette, Stephanie	Manchester, NH souellet78@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/12/2025 4:32 PM
Pearl, Senator Howard	Loudon, NH Howard.pearl@gc.nh.gov	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	No	2/13/2025 4:29 PM
Berrio, Simon	Dalton, NH simon03598@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/15/2025 3:07 PM
Palmer, Dylan	Wolfeboro, NH dpalmer1301@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	2/16/2025 8:54 AM
Russell, Roy	Plymouth, NH rouydallasmd@gmail.com	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	No	2/17/2025 3:38 PM
Petrusewicz, Carol	Rochester, NH clmcc2befree@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/17/2025 4:25 PM
Richardson, Daniel	Nashua, NH daniel6_22@comcast	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/18/2025 8:26 AM
Sweetbrown, Rachel	Bradford, NH sweet.rachel23@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	2/18/2025 4:41 PM
Hess-Mahan, Vivian	Merrimack, NH zoltron92@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	2/18/2025 10:10 PM
Shepard, Christina	Concord, NH christinashepard2012@hotmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	2/19/2025 6:49 AM

Mostue, Jared	Concord, NH jmostue@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 6:53 AM
Edwards, Jamie	Newton, NH jamieeloraedwards@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	2/19/2025 7:13 AM
Balboni, Peggy	Rye Beach, NH Peggy.Balboni@gc.nh.gov	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 7:50 AM
Agostino, Amy	Londonderry, NH amy@agostinos.org	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 12:19 PM
Services, Survivor Outreach	Concord, NH stephanie.m.ouellette.ctr@army.mil	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 2:50 PM
Kanerva, Leslie	Walpole, NH bitsyk69@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 4:15 PM
Barlow, Denise	Petery, NH americanlegionpost11@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 4:53 PM
Hudson Lounsbury, Karen	Chester, NH khlounsbury@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 4:56 PM
Thompson, Ann	Bedford, NH aethompson49@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 5:00 PM
Bilodeau, Patricia	Hooksett, NH Maxkenzie@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 6:32 PM
Mostue, Barbara	Murrells Inlet, SC barbara.mostue@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 6:34 PM
Konze, Margaret	Pembroke, NH maggiekonze@yahoo.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	2/19/2025 7:09 PM
Martinez, April	Concord, NH Believe2021spirit@mail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 7:12 PM
Bilodesu, Richard	Hooksett, NH RickBilodeau55@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	No	2/19/2025 8:24 PM

HB142 Testimony

(Feb. 19th, 2025, Legislative Administration Committee)

Thank you, Mr. Chair:

For the record, I'm Rep. Mike Moffett, representing Merrimack, District 4: the lovely towns of Canterbury and Loudon.

This bipartisan measure has been in the mix before and this version includes new language and some compromises that reflect earlier testimony and feedback.

The flag design is from a national organization, Honor and Remember, Inc. An earlier issue concerned the flag being manufactured by a private vendor. I think that is a non-argument, a red herring. I believe the company makes the flags available at cost, or a bit more than cost. It's not a particularly lucrative endeavor and it's not about making money. It's about having a flag that can be personalized with the name of a deceased veteran. You can't do that with an American flag. And BTW, flag manufacturers sell countless American flags, often at far more than cost.

I understand earlier concerns about this flag detracting from the display of existing flags. Hopefully the latest wording will address those concerns. My position is obviously one of support for the flag and for the Gold Star families who seek to have it recognized. Some of them will testify momentarily.

As some of you know, I'm a history guy, and this type of initiative helps keep memories and spirits alive of our fallen while also shining a light on history.

During a time when military recruiting has been struggling, this type of recognition sends an important message that military service is valued and that those who make the ultimate sacrifice will be remembered.

To add a personal note, I was pulled into this effort several terms ago, along with Senator Avard. I never considered myself as part of a Gold Star family. But I was walking on a trail in Canterbury not long ago, thinking about this testimony and it occurred to me that this flag also can honor those whom we lose after they've left active duty. Many veterans' life journeys are shortened due to serviced-related physical and psychic experiences. And I thought of my brother John, also a Marine, who is buried at the NH Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen, someone we lost way too early, in 2007, someone who left behind a one-year-old and a four-year-old, neither of whom have any recollection of their father. An Honor and Remember Flag with his name on it would be, will be, a wonderful gift to Kristian and Malia. And if that flag was officially sanctioned by this body in which I now serve, in which we now serve, and by the State of NH, then it would be so much more meaningful. I never thought of my brother in connection to this flag until just the other day.

Much has been made of the fact that som e Veterans Organizations don't endorse this flag. You'll soon hear that from Kevin Grady, of SVAC, State Veterans Advisory Council. The SVAC folks are great folks. I went to their January meeting to answer any questions about pending legislation affecting veterans. This measure came up and the vote was to not support it. One member said "We have the American Flag. That's all we need."

I wasn't asked to speak about HB142 at the SVAC meeting. But I wish, now, that I'd have just raised my hand to share a few thoughts that I'm sharing today. The truth of the matter is that there are a number of flags and symbols that contribute to our veterans culture. I lead the Loudon Memorial Day Parade every May, and the color detail behind me has an American Flag, to be sure, but also an American Legion flag. And a POW Flag. All these flags and symbols complement each other as well as the American Flag to creating a tapestry of remembrance.

A former veterans committee chair, the representative from Londonderry, was a big opponent of recognizing this flag, echoing the sentiments that doing so would somehow detract from the American flag. But guess what? Al's flag, the Marine Corps flag, flies over the State House every November 10th, the Marine Corps Birthday. So as a Marine myself, I would ask folks, like Al, why is it okay to recognize your flag, specific to one service, but not a remembrance flag, which honors veterans and families of all services?

I also have to opine that any bill's prospects are tied to the committee to which the bill is assigned. My feeling is that if HB142 went to the Veterans Committee, which I chair, and which Gold Star father Rep. Skip Rollins vice-chairs, that it would easily pass that committee, maybe unanimously, IMHO.

But it's this committee that now owns this measure and it obviously can further amend if desired. For example, Dan Colburn of Honor and Remember New England sent an email to Rep. Rollins last year pointing out that this measure specifically mentions National Gold Star Mothers Day. The Committee could change that to Gold Star Families Day, which is the same day. HB142 specifically requests this flag be recognized for official display on five different days. You could change that to one day or two days, if sucg a compromise might finally move this forward.

These families who have been fighting for this flag have been doing so for many years. Someday they'll be successful. But why must they wait for someday? Why can't we now give them the imprimatur of our great state to validate their hard work, their memories, their lost loved ones, and their flag, by passing HB142 this year.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I'd be happy to try to answer questions, if there are any.

02/11/2025

To: House Legislative Administration Committee

Hello, we are the Grone Family. Steve and Erica Grone of 133 Main St in Gorham and Emily (Tanner's Sister) and Mike Lemoine of Dover, NH.

We lost our son SSGT Tanner W Grone on 11/10/23 in an Army helicopter accident while training off the coast of Cyprus. Along with Tanner, four other soldiers from the 160th based out of Ft Campbell died in the crash, they are also known as the Nightstalkers.

During the past 15 months we have gone through a roller coaster of emotions. We have been contacted by many organizations that have helped us through our tough times. Last summer was busy for us as we hiked Gold Star Peak in Alaska where we hung Tanner's and 6 others soldier's dog tags on a monument at the top of the mountain, Emily and Mike ran the San Francisco Marathon with Wear Blue: Run to Remember, both as ways to honor Tanner and his fellow soldiers.

Before we suffered this horrible loss, our life was good for our perfect little family. We had a daughter and a son, both were happy, healthy and successful in their lives. Since then, we have a totally different outlook on life, everything is day to day. Some days are better than others. We have since become good friends with several of Tanner's friends and superiors, many that Tanner would not have wanted us to be in contact with. But these new friendships are just keeping his legacy going and is very healing for us as well as them, the town of Gorham renamed the soccer field where Tanner played in Middle and High School in his name. His name has been inscribed on several War on Terror Monuments in the state as well as across the country. Yet just another way to keep his legacy going.

The adoption of the Honor and Remember flag by the State of New Hampshire would be a perfect way for the state and its residents to keep Tanners and all other soldiers that lost their lives legacy going and a great way to show their respect and support for all these soldiers and families of the ones we lost and also the soldiers that served and are still with us.

Our family will forever be affected by this loss and we ask you to approve the request to adopt the Honor and Remember flag in a way to keep their legacies going.

Thank you

Steve & Erica Grone

133 Main St

Gorham NH 03581

603-723-3968

stevegrone@gmail.com

Testimony in support of HB142
February 19, 2025

Chairman Hill and Honorable Members of the Legislative Administration Committee

My name is Peggy Balboni, representing the towns of Greenland, North Hampton and Rye and I am a co-sponsor of HB 142, relative to the Honor and Remember Flag.

This bill was brought to my attention by my constituent Nancy Marston, whose son, Blake, a Navy Seal, was killed in a parachute training accident in 2018. I was not familiar with the Honor and Remember Flag that is presented to gold star families to recognize their fallen heroes. I met with Nancy and other gold star parents who shared their stories of their loved ones and how much the flag means to them to keep those memories alive. Legislation to recognize the Honor and Remember Flag has previously been brought before this committee. This bill has addressed many concerns that were raised in those discussions,

To me the most important sentiment that was shared was that these families may have different values and political views but they have worked together over the years on the mission to encourage NH to adopt the Honor and Remember Flag as a symbol recognizing and honoring fallen members of the armed forces from NH. It is equally significant that we co-sponsors are coming together in a bipartisan way to support their mission. This past Memorial Day, my town of Rye raised the Honor and Remember Flag, and I was proud to stand with my community to recognize those who have died in service to our country.

We are all grateful for the service and sacrifice of our gold star families. Let's join the other states who have already adopted the flag and display it proudly. I urge you to support HB 142 and recommend Ought to Pass.

Thank you.
Peggy Balboni
New Hampshire State Representative
Rockingham 38 - Greenland, North Hampton, Rye
PO Box 723
Rye Beach, NH 03871

Stephanie Ouellette

Chairman: Gregory Hill
Vice Chairman: Vanessa Sheehan
Committee Assistant: Karen Davis
Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB 142, which seeks to designate the Honor and Remember Flag as a state symbol of remembrance and establish its display at the State House on select days.

I want to acknowledge the thoughtful discussions that have taken place regarding this legislation. I also want to recognize the concerns raised and emphasize that this flag has a very specific and meaningful purpose—to honor service members who died while serving or as a result of their service.

I became a Gold Star family member on March 22nd, 2009. There was a knock at the door that informed my mother that on behalf of a grateful nation, they regretted to inform her that my brother had been killed while serving in the Now Zad province of Afghanistan. That moment profoundly and irrevocably changed the path of not only her life but the lives of everyone who loved my brother.

Being a Gold Star Family member carries a unique and profound weight that is distinct from other types of grief and loss. When a loved one dies in military service, whether in combat, during training, or as a result of service-related injuries or conditions, the loss is not just personal but deeply tied to national service and sacrifice. This is why it's so important to listen to Survivors themselves when discussing recognition, remembrance, and the symbols that represent their loss. Their grief is personal, but their loved one's sacrifice is shared by the nation.

One of the main concerns expressed during previous discussions is that no Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) have formally endorsed this bill. While understandable, I want to be very clear: This is not a Veterans issue—it is a Survivor issue.

New Hampshire Surviving Family Members - those who have lost loved ones in military service, are the ones asking for this recognition. The experiences of Veterans and Survivors are distinct, though deeply connected. While VSOs play a critical role in advocating for Veterans, we must listen to the voices of those directly impacted by this unique loss when considering a symbol that reflects their sacrifice. Survivors should not need the approval of Veterans to be heard. When legislative or symbolic recognition efforts for Survivors are made contingent on Veteran approval, it misplaces the decision-making power. Survivors are the ones living with the loss, and their voices should be the primary ones shaping how they are recognized and supported. To require or seek Veteran approval

on issues that solely impact Survivors is to silence those who have already sacrificed beyond measure.

Listening to Survivors without requiring validation from others is not just the right thing to do, it is the respectful and honorable thing to do. Survivors are telling you what they need. It is time to listen to them.

I appreciate that the committee has taken the time to consider how this legislation fits within New Hampshire's existing framework for military remembrance. I would like to directly address a few key concerns:

Some have expressed concern that the Honor and Remember Flag is attempting to replace or diminish the American Flag. This is not the case. The American Flag remains the ultimate symbol of national unity, reverence, and gratitude for service. The Honor and Remember Flag serves a distinct and complementary purpose— specifically recognizing the families and the individual sacrifice of those who gave their lives in service.

To further reinforce this distinction, I recommend limiting the flag's display at the State House to days that specifically honor fallen service members, rather than broader military recognition days. I propose:

- Memorial Day (Last Monday in May)
- New Hampshire Gold Star Mother's Day (First Sunday after Easter)
- National Gold Star Mother's and Family Day (Last Sunday in September)

By aligning this legislation with dates that are explicitly about honoring the fallen, we eliminate any confusion about its purpose. This adjustment also directly addresses concerns raised by VSOs and ensures that this flag is being used only for its intended purpose.

The recommendations outlined above represent a compromise that respects both Survivor Families and the broader military community.

- It ensures the flag is flown only on days that directly align with its purpose.
- It reassures VSOs and legislators that this flag does not compete with or replace the American Flag.
- It keeps the focus where it belongs—on honoring the fallen and listening to their families.

Surviving Families are simply asking to be seen, heard, and acknowledged in a way that is meaningful and impactful to them. They should not have to seek approval from others to do so. This is their experience, their loss, and their voice.

I respectfully urge the committee to support HB 142 with the proposed modifications, ensuring that New Hampshire continues to honor its fallen service members in a way that reflects the wishes of those left behind.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Roy Russell

This common sense bill is required to reset NH on a proper understanding of the human person and to protect the rights thereof.

Jared Mostue

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Jared Mostue, and I reside on New Castle Street in Concord. On January 10, 2015, my cousin, Special Warfare Operator (SO1) William Blake Marston, who grew up in Bedford and Concord, was tragically killed during a training exercise with his Navy SEAL squad. Since his passing, the Honor and Remember Flag has flown at my Aunt Nancy's home.

This flag serves as a source of comfort for those who have lost a loved one in service, as well as providing an opportunity for us to honor and share the stories of those we've lost. I distinctly remember one day when the flag was flying at my Aunt's house. I was on the porch with my young son when a couple walking their dog down Auburn Street noticed the flag and asked about it, as they hadn't seen it before. I was able to share a few stories of my cousin and explain why the flag was flying.

It is our responsibility to ensure that our fallen heroes are remembered. I am confident that this flag will continue to fly across the state, regardless of the outcome of these proceedings. However, I believe now is the time for it to be officially flown as a state symbol of remembrance. This is not to diminish any other flag that flies, but to demonstrate to New Hampshire Gold Star Families that our government truly and deeply values and honors the memory of our loved ones who now watch over us.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jared Mostue

The notes are often inaccurate, or aren't available until after a bill has been heard in committee. There's certaibly room for improvement there

Survivor Outreach Services

Chairman Gregory Hill, Vice Chairman Vanessa Sheehan, Committee Assistant Karen Davis, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding New Hampshire HB 142, which seeks to designate the Honor and Remember Flag as a state symbol of remembrance and establish its display at the State House on select days.

Today, I had the privilege of attending the hearing alongside several Gold Star Family members who spoke in support of this bill. I listened to both those who support and those who oppose it. I want to acknowledge the thoughtful discussions that have taken place, the questions that have been raised, and the concerns expressed. I hope to offer clarity, insight, and maybe a path forward.

For background, since 2020, I have served as Survivor Outreach Services Support Coordinator for New Hampshire. My role is to provide consistent support and resources to Families of the Fallen across all branches and components—Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard. This is accomplished primarily by offering Surviving Families personalized assistance, addressing benefit-related questions, and connecting Survivors with a supportive community. That supportive community is where this legislation falls into my mission of service.

The testimony you heard today from Survivors underscores a reality that cannot be compared to any other form of grief or loss. When a loved one dies in military service—whether in combat, training, or due to service-related injuries—the loss is not just personal. It is intimately tied to national service and sacrifice.

For every family I have had the responsibility and honor of serving, the flag that draped their loved one's coffin will never be unfolded to fly again. That flag remains folded, because it is a final tribute, a permanent symbol of sacrifice, and a promise that the fallen will never be forgotten.

To understand why the Honor and Remember Flag is needed, one must first understand the meaning of the folds of the American flag at a military funeral.

The folding of the American flag during a military funeral is a sacred act. Each of the 13 folds carries a deeply symbolic meaning:

1. First Fold – Represents life.
2. Second Fold – Signifies belief in eternal life.
3. Third Fold – Honors those who served to protect our country.
4. Fourth Fold – Symbolizes the nation's trust in God.

5. Fifth Fold – Pays tribute to the country.
6. Sixth Fold – Recognizes allegiance to the U.S.
7. Seventh Fold – Honors the military.
8. Eighth Fold – Remembers those who have passed into eternity.
9. Ninth Fold – Honors mothers, who give life.
10. Tenth Fold – Honors fathers, who guide and protect their families.
11. Eleventh Fold – Represents faith and Judaism.
12. Twelfth Fold – Represents faith and Christianity.
13. Thirteenth Fold – The final fold, leaving only the blue field with stars, symbolizing freedom and sacrifice.

Once folded into its triangular shape, resembling a cocked hat from the American Revolution, it is presented to the Next of Kin with the solemn words:

"On behalf of the President of the United States, the United States (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, or Coast Guard), and a grateful nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one's honorable and faithful service."

This moment is sacred. To unfold that flag and fly it again would be to unravel those 13 folds, undoing the solemn vow of our nation.

This is where the Honor and Remember Flag differs from the American Flag in honoring the Fallen. As Gold Star mother Jean Durgin testified today, the Honor and Remember Flag is made to be flown. It is a living tribute to the service members we have lost. It does not replace the American Flag. It does not diminish the American Flag. It serves a unique purpose—recognizing families of the fallen. The American Flag represents many things to many people. That is its greatest strength. It symbolizes freedom, service, unity, and national pride. The Honor and Remember Flag, however, has one meaning only: to honor those who died in service to this country.

One of the primary concerns raised today is that no Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) have formally endorsed this bill. Additionally, the State Veteran Advisory Council (SVAC) has openly opposed it. I want to be very clear: This is not a Veterans issue—it is a Survivor issue. While Veterans and Survivors are deeply connected, their experiences are not the same. It is an indisputable fact the experiences of Veterans and Survivors are distinct, though deeply connected. Veteran Service Organizations play a critical role in advocating for Veterans, but this bill is not about Veterans—it is about Survivors. To require Veteran and Veteran Service Organization approval for Survivor recognition misplaces the decision-making power. I also want to refute a statement made by the representative of SVAC. This is the 12th time Surviving Families have come before the NH Legislature asking for you to recognize this flag. This iteration did not come from an out of state entity. This effort was spearheaded by NH Gold Star Mother Nancy Marston who reached out to her state rep looking for assistance in moving this effort along. To insinuate other wise is a grave mischaracterization.

To further reinforce that this flag serves a specific and complementary purpose to the American Flag,

I recommended to the bill sponsors that its display be limited to days that specifically honor fallen service members, rather than broader military recognition days.
Gold Star Mother Nancy Marston brought this up today in her testimony. As a recap the days are as follows:
Memorial Day (Last Monday in May) – National remembrance of the fallen.
New Hampshire Gold Star Mother's Day (First Sunday after Easter) – Recognizing Mothers who lost children in service. For the Committees reference since it seemed that no one was aware of this day it was established via N.H. Rev. Stat. § 4:13-h - The governor shall annually issue a proclamation calling for the proper observance of the first Sunday after Easter which shall be known as Gold Star Mother's Day recognizing and honoring all mothers who have lost sons or daughters while on duty in the United States armed forces. The governor shall urge the citizens of the state to observe this day with appropriate events.
National Gold Star Mother's and Family Day (Last Sunday in September) – Honoring all Gold Star Families.
By aligning this legislation with dates explicitly honoring the fallen, we have eliminated confusion about its purpose, addressed concerns raised by VSOs and ensured that this flag is used only for its intended purpose.
This is their loss. This is their reality. This is their voice. To require approval from those who have not shared this experience is misplaced at best and dismissive at worst.

I respectfully urge the committee to support HB 142 with the proposed modifications, ensuring that New Hampshire continues to honor its fallen service members in a way that is meaningful to reflects the wishes of those families left behind.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Stephanie M Ouellette
Survivor Outreach Services Support Coordinator
stephanie.m.ouellette.ctr@army.mil

Karen Hudson Lounsbury

Dear Legislature committee,

Thank you for hearing bill HR 142. My name is Karen Hudson Lounsbury. At 18, my son was Active-duty Army, he was killed when hit by a car at his first duty station, Ft. Hood TX. My brother was active-duty Army, then National Guard and a Police officer when he died suddenly of a heart attack at age 50. I won't go into detail on how hard this has been on my family and friends, I will tell you that Honor and Remember has included both my son and brother in the Run to Remember, it has assisted our family, allowing us to honor them as the runners stop at each sign. A moment we will treasure forever.

On August 15-17, 2025, the run will pay tribute to every New England Fallen Service member who died serving our country. I invite you to come and see how this honor helps the families.

I support the bill requesting New Hampshire to formally recognize and honor our fallen service members and those of us left behind. I would like to see the Honor and Remember flag flown on American Gold Star Mothers and Families Day, Gold Star Wives Day and Memorial Day. This would be a tribute to all those who have served our country.

I appreciate your time and dedication to our fallen,

Sincerely,

Karen Hudson Lounsbury
6178994489
khlounsbury@yahoo.com
Chester, NH
President, Department of NH American Gold Star Mothers Inc.
Proud other of PFC Bryan C Lounsbury deployed to heaven 1/21/2008

Barbara Mostue

As a Gold Star Family Member, I am writing in strong support of this bill and urge the State of New Hampshire to fly the Honor and Remember Flag. If you truly support our military, there is no reason to oppose this bill. This legislation designates the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol of remembrance for those who died in the line of duty or as a result of their service. Since 1900, nearly one million members of the U.S. Armed Forces have lost their lives in service to our country, yet New Hampshire currently lacks a state symbol to honor these fallen heroes and their families. The Honor and Remember Flag, created by Honor and Remember Inc., is a fitting tribute to New Hampshire's brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. The bill ensures that this flag is displayed at key times of the year, such as Memorial Day, Gold Star Mother's Day, Armed Forces Day, the Fourth of July, and Veteran's Day, at the state veterans cemetery and the State House. It's a powerful and necessary gesture to honor the service and sacrifice of our heroes and their families, and it is long overdue. I urge the State of New Hampshire to pass this bill and fly the Honor and Remember Flag with pride.

April Martinez

As a Gold Star mom, I believe all of our fallen soldiers would be honored well and deserve any and all respect from our nation with this beautiful flag.
Thank you
Mom of SPC Brandon Martinez

HB 142 - AS INTRODUCED

2025 SESSION

25-0318
07/06

HOUSE BILL ***142***

AN ACT relative to the Honor and Remember Flag.

SPONSORS: Rep. Moffett, Merr. 4; Rep. Balboni, Rock. 38; Rep. Creighton, Hills. 30; Rep. Edwards, Rock. 31; Rep. Grote, Rock. 24; Rep. Rollins, Sull. 3; Rep. Terry, Belk. 7; Sen. Avard, Dist 12; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17

COMMITTEE: Legislative Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill designates the Honor and Remember Flag as a state symbol of remembrance for those who died in the line of duty or as a result of service.

- -

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics.***
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

HB 142 - AS INTRODUCED

25-0318
07/06

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT relative to the Honor and Remember Flag.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 New Section; State Emblems, Flag, etc.; Display of Honor and Remember Flag. Amend RSA 3 by inserting after section 3-b the following new section:

3:3-c Display of Honor and Remember Flag.

I. Statement of Purpose. Since 1900, approximately one million members of the United States Armed Forces have died service-related deaths. New Hampshire does not have a state symbol to recognize New Hampshire service members who died in the line of duty or as a result of service, as well as their families.

II. The Honor and Remember Flag was created by the national organization Honor and Remember Inc., is hereby recognized as a New Hampshire symbol honoring the service and sacrifice of the New Hampshire's men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces who gave their lives while serving or as a result of serving, as well as their families.

III. The Honor and Remember Flag shall be displayed daily at the New Hampshire state veterans cemetery in Boscawen and at the State House in the most junior order of precedence on the following days:

(a) Memorial Day, the last Monday in May.

(b) National Gold Star Mother's Day, the last Sunday in September.

(c) Armed Forces Day, the third Saturday in May.

(d) The Fourth of July, both the national holiday day and the actual date.

(e) Veteran's Day, the eleventh day of November.

2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.