



Voiture 1379 Communiqué for June 2013

On June 3, President Barack Obama signed into law The American Legion-backed Stolen Valor Act of 2013, which now makes it a "federal crime for an individual to fraudulently hold oneself out to be a recipient of any of several specified military decorations or medals with the intent to obtain money, property, or other tangible benefit."

The U.S. Supreme Court overturned the original Stolen Valor Act of 2005, deeming it unconstitutional because it was, in the justices' opinion, too broad in scope and violated the right of free speech. The Legion passed Resolution 283 during its 2012 National Convention, calling on Congress to amend the Stolen Valor Act of 2005, to provide that the elements of fraud be incorporated into previous Stolen Valor legislation. U.S. Rep. Joe Heck, R-Nev., and the Legion worked together to draft a new Stolen Valor Act that included this legal language in effort to meet the Supreme Court's objections to the old Stolen Valor Act.

On June 3, 2013, Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey passed away. Senator Lautenberg was the last remaining member of the Senate who had served in World War II. Two other WWII veterans, Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii died in December and Senator Daniel Akaka of Hawaii retired in January. In the House of Representatives there are two Congressmen who served in WWII, Rep. John Dingell of Michigan and Rep. Ralph Hall of Texas. On Friday, June 7, 2013, Dingell reached a milestone of being the longest serving member in the history of the United States Congress. Thanks must go to him and all veterans who continue to serve our country.

The current Congress has the lowest number of veterans since World War II. According to the Congressional Research Service's report on the Membership of the 113th Congress, which first met on January 3, 2013, there were 108 members (20% of the total membership) who had served or were serving in the military, 10 fewer than at the beginning of the 112th Congress. According to the CRS Report, "the number of veterans in the 113th Congress reflects the trend of steady decline in recent decades in the number of Members of Congress who have served in the military." In the 97th Congress (1981-1982) 64% of the members were veterans. In the 92nd Congress (1971-1972) 73% of the members were veterans. In addition, remember these numbers when you decide for whom to cast your next vote.

This month's Promenade will be on June 26th in Claycomo, MO with dinner at Post 61 at 18:00 HRS and the Promenade will begin at 19:00 HRS.

If there are any other functions you would like to "get the word out" please let me know and I will put them on in the next communiqué.

Thank you for your service to Our Great Nation and the 40et8 through Voiture 1379. If we all work together we can and do make a difference.

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