

# Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Speech Resources: Fact Sheet

name redacted,  
Digital Services Librarian

January 11, 2016

Congressional Research Service

7-....

[www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov)

R44339

## Introduction

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a federal holiday observed annually on the third Monday in January. It celebrates the life and legacy of the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. in honor of his birthday and achievements. The day is also referred to as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday; MLK Day; Martin Luther King Day; the King Holiday; and the King Day of Service. In 2016, this holiday is celebrated on January 18, and it marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first observance of King's birthday as a federal holiday.

This guide assists congressional offices with work related to Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. It contains links to legislation, CRS reports, sample speeches and remarks from the *Congressional Record*, and presidential proclamations and remarks. It also contains links to additional government web resources and selected educational, cultural, and advocacy organizations.

## History

On November 2, 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed legislation making the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a legal public holiday to be observed on the third Monday of every January (P.L. 98-144). When President Bill Clinton signed the King Holiday and Service Act on August 23, 1994 (P.L. 103-304), the holiday was designated as a day of community service, interracial cooperation, and youth anti-violence initiatives.

President Ronald Reagan delivered the remarks "Message on the Observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day" on January 14, 1986, and issued Proclamation 5431 on January 18, 1986, as part of the first recognition of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a federal holiday.

## Legislation

P.L. 98-144—Authorized Dr. King's birthday to be a legal public holiday, on the third Monday in January (97 Stat. 917; November 2, 1983).

P.L. 103-304—Authorized appropriations to support the planning and performance of national service opportunities in conjunction with the legal holiday honoring the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (108 Stat. 1565; August 23, 1994).

## CRS Reports

CRS Report R41990, *Federal Holidays: Evolution and Current Practices*, by (name redacted)

CRS Report R43743, *Monuments and Memorials Authorized and Completed Under the Commemorative Works Act in the District of Columbia*, by (name redacted)

## Sample Speeches and Recognitions

Elected officials often deliver speeches, make floor statements, issue press releases, or enter Extensions of Remarks into the *Congressional Record* to recognize federal holidays and observances. The following are some recent examples:

Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, “29<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday,” remarks in the Extensions of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, vol. 161, no. 7 (January 14, 2015), pp. E71-E72.

Representative John Conyers, Jr., “Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,” remarks in the Extensions of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, vol. 160, no. 9 (January 15, 2014), p. E80.

Representative Laura Richardson, “In Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day 2012,” remarks in the Extensions of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, vol. 158, no. 11 (January 25, 2012), pp. E70-E71.

Senator Ben Cardin, “Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 157, no. 10 (January 25, 2011), p. S80.

Senator Jon Kyl, “Remembering Martin Luther King, Jr.,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 157, no. 10 (January 23, 2008), pp. S195-S196.

## **Presidential Proclamations and Remarks**

One of the many uses of a presidential proclamation is to ceremoniously honor a group or call attention to certain issues or events. Some recent Martin Luther King, Jr. Day proclamations, from the *Compilation of Presidential Documents*, include

Presidential Proclamations—Barack H. Obama (2010-2015)

Presidential Proclamations—George W. Bush (2002-2009)

Presidential Proclamations—William J. Clinton (1994-2001)

Presidential Proclamations—George H. W. Bush (1993)

## **Government Resources**

Architect of the Capitol’s Bust of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in the Rotunda

The Corporation for National and Community Service, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

## **Educational, Cultural, and Advocacy Organizations**

The King Center—The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change (“The King Center”) was established in 1968 by Mrs. Coretta Scott King in Atlanta, GA. An online digital archive houses the works and papers of Dr. King.

Morehouse College King Collection—Provides information about Morehouse College’s collection of the personal books and papers of Dr. King. The Office of the Morehouse College King Collection establishes programming and community outreach initiatives that highlight the teachings and philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute (Stanford University)—A collection of facts, resources, primary documents, multimedia, and recommended readings.

Nobel Prizes and Laureates—Martin Luther King, Jr.—Biographical information and selected readings.

## **Author Contact Information**

(b)(6)(b)(7)(C)  
Digital Services Librarian  
-redacted@crs.loc.gov, 7-....

# EveryCRSReport.com

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) is a federal legislative branch agency, housed inside the Library of Congress, charged with providing the United States Congress non-partisan advice on issues that may come before Congress.

EveryCRSReport.com republishes CRS reports that are available to all Congressional staff. The reports are not classified, and Members of Congress routinely make individual reports available to the public.

Prior to our republication, we redacted names, phone numbers and email addresses of analysts who produced the reports. We also added this page to the report. We have not intentionally made any other changes to any report published on EveryCRSReport.com.

CRS reports, as a work of the United States government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.

Information in a CRS report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to members of Congress in connection with CRS' institutional role.

EveryCRSReport.com is not a government website and is not affiliated with CRS. We do not claim copyright on any CRS report we have republished.