

Patriot Day: Fact Sheet

Updated September 11, 2024

Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

R44178

In 2001, P.L. 107-89 designated September 11 as Patriot Day to honor the individuals who lost their lives as a result of the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001. The law asks the President to issue an annual Proclamation for Patriot Day that directs the U.S. flag to be flown at half-staff and a moment of silence be observed.

The terrorist attacks, which claimed nearly 3,000 lives, involved four civilian airplanes hijacked by 19 members of the Al Qaeda terrorist network. The first two airplanes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. The third plane struck the Pentagon. The fourth crashed in southwestern Pennsylvania (near Shanksville) after passengers tried to take control of the aircraft.¹

Patriot Day is not a federal holiday.

In 2009, P.L. 111-13 also designated September 11 as the “National Day of Service and Remembrance.”

This fact sheet is designed to assist congressional offices with work related to Patriot Day observances. It contains links to CRS products, sample speeches and remarks from the *Congressional Record*, presidential proclamations, and selected historical resources.

Legislation

P.L. 107-89. Amending Title 36, *United States Code*, to designate September 11 as Patriot Day, December 18, 2001

P.L. 111-13. Serve America Act, April 21, 2009

CRS Reports and Products

CRS Podcast, *The Intelligence Community, Terrorism, and 9/11: A Retrospective*, Presenters Michael E DeVine and Alan Ott

CRS Report R45969, *The September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF)*, by Scott D. Szymendera

Selected Congressional Speeches and Recognitions

Members of Congress may make floor statements, issue press releases, or enter Extensions of Remarks into the *Congressional Record* to recognize Patriot Day. The following are some recent examples that may be of assistance in preparing such statements:

Representative Mikie Sherrill, “Remembering Loved Ones Lost on 9/11 from NJ-11,” press release, September 11, 2023, Representative Sherrill’s website

Representative Yvette Herrell, “Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the September 11th Attacks,” Extension of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 167 (September 10, 2021), p. E964

Representative Elissa Slotkin, “Slotkin Statement on Anniversary of September 11th Attacks,” press release, September 11, 2020, Representative Slotkin’s website

¹ See <https://www.911memorial.org/visit/museum/Exhibitions/historical-exhibition-september-11-2001>.

Representative Glenn Thompson, “Commemorating the 18th Anniversary of the September 11 Attacks,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 165 (September 11, 2019), pp. H7599-H7600

Representative Kevin Yoder, “Remembering and Honoring Victims of September 11, 2001 Attacks,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 164 (September 6, 2018), pp. H7881-H7882

Senator Charles Schumer, “Remembering September 11,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 163 (September 11, 2017), p. S5086

Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen, “15th Anniversary of September 11, 2001,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 162 (September 8, 2016), p. H5205

Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, “In Remembrance of the 14th Anniversary of September 11, 2001,” Extension of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 161 (September 11, 2015), pp. E1272-E1274

Senator Richard Durbin, “Remembering 9/11,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 160 (September 11, 2014), pp. S5552-S5553

Senator Mitch McConnell, “Remembering 9/11,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 159 (September 11, 2013), pp. S6338-S6339

Representative Ted Poe, “9-11-01—11 Years,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 158 (September 11, 2012), p. H5769

Representative Rush Holt, “Remembering 9/11,” Extension of Remarks, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 158 (September 11, 2012), p. E1480

Representative Joe Heck, “Reflections on September 11,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 157 (September 9, 2011), pp. H6037-H6040

Presidential Proclamations

Some recent proclamations commemorating Patriot Day from the *Compilation of Presidential Documents* include the following:

Presidential Proclamations—Joseph R. Biden (2021-)

Presidential Proclamations—Donald J. Trump (2017-2021)

Presidential Proclamations—Barack H. Obama (2009-2017)

Presidential Proclamations—George W. Bush (2001-2009)

Historical Resources

Resources that provide information on the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks include the following:

Commemorative Joint Meeting of the Congress of the United States: In Remembrance of the Victims and Heroes of September 11, 2001, held on September 6, 2002 (House Document No. 107-285). Pages 305-313 list the names of the victims of the terrorist attacks.

The 9/11 Commission Report—The report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, an independent, bipartisan commission created to prepare a complete account of the circumstances surrounding the terrorist attacks.

American Rhetoric-Rhetoric of 9/11—Notable speeches commemorating 9/11.

Bearing Witness to History—Descriptions of objects in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History collection that document and preserve the material record of the attacks. The objects include scanned images of newspaper and magazine covers reporting on the events. The site also includes stories of the curators who collect and maintain the objects.

September 11 Digital Archive—The archive uses electronic media to collect, preserve, and present September 11, 2001’s history, and its aftermath. It includes Frequently Asked Questions.

Memorials

9/11 Memorial & Museum

The National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial

Flight 93 National Memorial

9/11 Memorials by State and 9/11 Memorials by Country (maintained by VOICES of September 11). (CRS has not determined whether this list is comprehensive.)

Author Information

Audrey Celeste Crane-Hirsch
Reference Librarian

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. 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’s institutional role. 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 the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.