

Patriot Day: Fact Sheet

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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:

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, “Gillibrand Statement on Anniversary of 9/11,” press release, September 11, 2024, Senator Gillibrand’s website

Representative Tom Cole, “Cole Remembers September 11, 2001,” press release, September 11, 2024, Representative Cole’s website

Representative Dan Goldman, “Statement from Congressman Dan Goldman on the Anniversary of the September 11 Terror Attacks,” press release, September 11, 2024, Representative Goldman’s website

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

Representative Glenn Thompson, “23rd Anniversary of 9/11,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 170 (September 11, 2024), p. H5167

Representative Mike Lawler, “We Will Never Forget,” remarks in the House, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 169 (September 12, 2023), p. H4259

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

Selected Presidential Proclamations

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

Presidential Proclamations—Donald J. Trump (2025-)²

Presidential Proclamations—Joseph R. Biden (2021- 2025)

Presidential Proclamations—Donald J. Trump (2017-2021)³

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

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

Government 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.

The National September 11 Collection—Descriptions of objects in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History collection that document and preserve the material record of the attacks.

Nongovernment Resources

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

² Link provides access to proclamations and remarks made by President Trump during both of his terms, where available.

³ Link provides access to proclamations and remarks made by President Trump during both of his terms, where available.

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.)

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