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Immediately

WASHINGTON, D.C., Nov. 11, 1971 ---- U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.)
introduced legislation today to reinstate November 11 as Veterans
Day.

Following, is the full text of the statement the Kansas Senator made on the Senate floor today in support of his bill "to designate November 11 of each year as Veterans Day and to make such a day a legal public holiday."

Today, November 11, is a day of great significance to America. It is the day on which in the year 1918 the armistice ending World War I was signed. It is the day, which until this year, was set aside to honor the men and women who have served America's armed forces in defense of freedom. Millions of Americans have sacrificed of their service, their limbs and bodies, and of their lives to secure and strengthen the ideals of liberty, freedom and democracy which gave birth to our nation.

These Americans --- our veterans --- have earned in fullest measure the respect, gratitude and recognition of their fellow countrymen. Their contribution to America is unique, and likewise, America's tribute to them should be unique. For years that tribute, falling on the 11th day of November, was unique and appropriate. In 1954, in response to the efforts of Kansas Congressman Ed Rees, it was changed from "Armistice Day" to "Veterans Day," retaining its observance on November 11. The change was signed into law by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in June of that year. But recently, another change was made, and a new holiday was created to fall on a Monday in October with an ever-changing date and without historic or symbolic significance. Thus the date of November 11 was stripped of its officially sanctioned recognition leaving neither a unique nor appropriate national day of recognition for our veterans.

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Today, November 11, is Veteran's Day and always will be in the hearts and minds of millions of Americans. The change in the legal holiday cannot erase the significance of this date, even though it defeats the reason and the purpose of observing Veteran's Day. An extra three-day weekend is little justification for slighting this nation's tribute and homage to the men and women who have made free holidays possible at all. So with these thoughts in mind, I am today introducing legislation to reinstate the date of November 11 as Veterans Day, a legal holiday and once again provide a fitting and unique day of recognition for America's veterans.

I would welcome the cosponsorship of my colleagues in the Senate. And I would hope the Congress will act swiftly to correct this situation and restore November 11 as our official national day of salute and recognition to the men and women who have so proudly worn the uniform of the United States.

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