

Date of Hearing: June 23, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Patrick O'Donnell, Chair  
SB 254 (Borgeas) – As Amended March 3, 2021

**SENATE VOTE:** 38-0

**SUBJECT:** Public schools: September 11th Remembrance Day

**SUMMARY:** Designates and sets apart September 11 of each year as September 11th Remembrance Day, a day having special significance, and encourages each public elementary and secondary school to observe a moment of silence at an appropriate time while school is in session. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Designates and sets apart September 11 of each year as September 11th Remembrance Day, a day having special significance.
- 2) Encourages, when September 11th Remembrance Day falls on a schoolday, each public elementary and secondary school to observe a moment of silence at an appropriate time while school is in session.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Designates a number of days as days of special significance to the public schools and educational institutions, and encourages them to observe that day and to conduct suitable commemorative exercises. Those recognizing individuals are John Muir Day (April 21), Harvey Milk Day (May 22), Fred Korematsu Day (January 30), Ronald Reagan Day (February 6), Ed Roberts Day (January 23), Larry Itliong Day (October 25), and Dolores Huerta Day (April 10).
- 2) Requires public schools to close on a number of holidays, including January 1, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Lincoln Day, Washington Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, December 25, all days appointed by the Governor or the President of the United States for a public fast, Thanksgiving or holiday, and any other day designated as a holiday by the governing board of the school district.
- 3) Requires, for some specified holidays for which schools are required to close (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Lincoln Day, Washington Day), that schools conduct exercises in commemoration.
- 4) Authorizes public schools to close on two other days if the governing board of a school district, pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, agrees to close schools for that purpose. These days are César Chávez Day (March 31) and Native American Day (fourth Friday in September).
- 5) Requires public schools to remain open on specified days (unless otherwise closed to mark a holiday by decision of the governing board), and to celebrate the significance of those days with appropriate commemorative exercises. These days are the anniversary of the adoption

of the U.S. Constitution, the birthdays of Luther Burbank (March 7) and Susan B. Anthony (February 15), and the death of Crispus Attucks (March 5).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8, negligible state costs.

**COMMENTS:**

***Need for the bill.*** The author states, “Almost 20 years have passed since the September 11th attacks and the last generation of students alive during that tragic day are graduating from our public school system. By asking schools to observe a moment of silence, this legislation seeks to ensure that future generations remember the impact of the events of September 11th and help encourage dialogue and education surrounding what happened that day.”

***September 11<sup>th</sup> recognized in state’s new History-Social Science framework.*** The state’s History-Social Science Curriculum Framework, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2016, addresses the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> to a significant extent and in a variety of ways. Topics include September 11th’s effect on geopolitics, anti-western hostility, tension between national security and civil liberties, and rising international conflict.

***Related legislation.*** SB 911 (Borgeas) of the 2019-20 Session was substantially similar to this bill. This bill was held in the Senate Education Committee.

AB 2644 (Reyes), Chapter 130, Statutes of 2018, requires the Governor to annually proclaim April 10 as Dolores Huerta Day, and encourages all public schools and educational institutions to conduct exercises recognizing the life of Dolores Huerta.

HR 92 (Reyes) of the 2017-18 Session would have designated April 10 of each year as Dolores Huerta Day, and recognized the accomplishments and contributions of Dolores Huerta. This resolution was held on the Assembly Floor.

AB 7 (Bonta), Chapter 29, Statutes of 2015, requires the Governor to annually proclaim October 25 as Larry Itliong Day, designates that date each year as having special significance, and encourages all public schools and educational institutions to conduct exercises remembering his life and contributions.

***Arguments in support.*** The California Professional Firefighters Association writes, “It is important to hold onto the memories of every life that was lost on that day, and to honor them every year on the anniversary of that terrible day. SB 256 would establish September 11<sup>th</sup> of each year as a memorial to the bravery and sacrifice of the victims and ensure that their legacy is maintained moving forward. And as this year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that terrible day, it is more appropriate than ever that each Californian takes a moment of silent contemplation to mark their loss.”

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

California Professional Firefighters

**Opposition**

None on file

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