

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

At Charleston

A PROCLAMATION

By the Governor

WHEREAS, Hershel “Woody” Williams, a native and proud West Virginian, great friend and advocate for veterans and their families, and the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from World War II, passed away at the age of 98 on the morning of June 29, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Woody Williams’s actions during the battle of Iwo Jima, commitment to his fellow service members, and heroism were recognized on October 5, 1945, when he received the Congressional Medal of Honor from President Truman at the White House; and

WHEREAS, following the war, Woody worked for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for over three decades as a Veterans Service Representative, allowing him to continue serving veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, Woody also served as the Commandant of the Veterans Nursing Home in Barboursville for nearly 10 years, helping veterans who were often in their last years of life; and

WHEREAS, Woody’s personal commitment to veterans and their families brought about the creation of the Woody Williams Foundation, where Woody continued his commitment to servicemembers and the Gold Star families who have lost loved ones to their service to this Great Nation and her People; and

WHEREAS, to date, Woody and his foundation are responsible for establishing 103 Gold Star Families Memorial Monuments across the United States with more than 72 additional monuments underway in 50 states and 1 U.S. Territory; and

WHEREAS, the West Virginia Legislature included Woody Williams in the West Virginia Hall of Fame and named him a Distinguished West Virginian in 1980 and in 2013, also being named to the Wall of Fame in the Civic Center in the city of Huntington, West Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Woody Williams's heroic actions and lifetime of service have often been recognized by our military and its highest officers, most recently the Secretary of the Navy named T-ESB 4 (Expeditionary Sea Base Ship 4) the USS Hershel "Woody" Williams mobile base sea vessel, which entered service in early 2018; and

WHEREAS, the Huntington VA Medical Center, near Woody's home in West Virginia, was renamed in his honor in 2018 and the Hershel "Woody" Williams VA Medical Center now works to improve the health of the men and women who have so proudly served our nation since 1932; and

WHEREAS, the Hershel "Woody" Williams Armed Forces Reserve Center, located in Fairmont, is the only National Guard facility in the country to be named after a Marine; and

WHEREAS, the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) Hershel "Woody" Williams Post 7048 in Fairmont, West Virginia, and the main bridge in Barboursville, West Virginia, are also named for this native son; and

WHEREAS, Woody Williams passed away on June 29, 2022, at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center bearing his name in Huntington, West Virginia, and was preceded in death by his wife Ruby in 2007, he is survived by his two daughters Travie and Tracie Ross; and

WHEREAS, Hershel "Woody" Williams will be honored with a funeral to be held at the State Capitol on Sunday, July 3, 2022.

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NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIM JUSTICE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as the Governor of West Virginia, hereby **ORDER**, effective immediately, that all United States and State flags displayed at all state facilities shall immediately be lowered to half-staff in commemoration of the life and service of Hershel “Woody” Williams, and shall remain at half-staff through sunset on Monday, July 4, 2022.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol in the City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this Thirtieth Day of June, in the Year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Two in the One Hundred Sixtieth Year of the State.



GOVERNOR



SECRETARY OF STATE

