

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

National Committee on Legislation

Daniel R. Earl, Chairman



P. O. Box 664
Gilroy, California 95021-0664
(408) 847-8388 • FAX (408) 847-8567
danearl64@earthlink.net

7 July 2003

Mr. Robert E. Grim,
Commander-in-Chief
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
5367 State Road 72 South
Sabina, OH 45169-9425

Dear Commander Grim:

Included with this correspondence is my final report on behalf of the National Committee on Legislation, to be included in the record of the 2003 National Encampment. This report includes federal legislation from the start of the 108th Congress through 2 July 2003, inclusive.¹

There was a great deal of legislation that could be considered important to the Order during the first half of the first session of the 108th Congress. However, it was so extensive as to be unmanageable in a report such as this. I have reduced this report to what I am referring to as "significant legislation." It is sorted in to three categories, to wit: 1) legislation having a direct impact on the purpose, goals, and objectives of the Order; 2) legislation having an impact on the U.S. Constitution, the Flag, and the Pledge of Allegiance; and 3) legislation associated with patriotism in general. The attached appendix provides a listing of this legislation. Below is a summary.

Legislation Impacting the Order

The most important legislation in Congress that deals directly with the Order includes a proposal to restore the traditional day of observance of Memorial Day to May 30th of each year (S. 70). This bill was introduced on 7 January 2003 and referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary, where it remains today. There are NO co-sponsors in support of this bill and NO action has been taken on the bill since its introduction in January.

¹ There will be no need for me to make an oral report at the National Encampment this year.

Legislation Impacting the U.S. Constitution, our Flag, and the Pledge of Allegiance

As most Americans are aware, the controversial issue of the language “under God,” as used in our Pledge of Allegiance, has been one of the overriding hot topics impacting the Order. Thus far there seems to be an overwhelming support in the United States Congress for preserving these two words, both in the form of proposed laws and constitutional amendments. All of the proposed bills are currently awaiting action in House and Senate committees. The proposed constitutional amendments require a 2/3 vote by Congress, then ratification by 3/4 of the States. This is not very likely to happen; this type of legislation is typically introduced for symbolic and/or political purposes within Congress. (The most recent amendment to our Constitution was ratified in 1992 – the 27th Amendment, which regulates the compensation of Congress. It was introduced over two hundred years ago with no ratification restriction date. Prior to that the 26th Amendment, granting voting rights to 18-year old citizens was ratified in 1971.)

Legislation Associated with Patriotism and Pro-American Activities

There was an endless amount of “patriotic” legislation. This report is limited to just a few of the top issues. This includes legislation declaring English the official language of the United States, which is awaiting action in committee. Additionally, Legislation recognizing the bicentennial of the admission of Ohio into the Union was passed unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Camps and Departments are encouraged to establish their own respective legislation committees for purposes of monitoring their state and local lawmakers for pertinent legislation impacting the Order, and to bring such legislation to the attention of the National Committee on Legislation.
2. Brothers who have an interest *and* proficiency in the critical review and analysis of legislation are encouraged to participate on the National Committee on Legislation, regardless of the Department in which they hold membership.
3. The Commander-in-Chief should continue to have unfettered authority to appoint both the chairman and members of the National Committee on Legislation.

Respectfully Submitted in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,



Daniel R. Earl
Chair, National Committee on Legislation
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

cc: Mr. Harrison Scott Baker II, National Chief of Staff
Mr. Andrew M. Johnson (PCinC), Washington, D.C. Representative.
Mr. Brad Schall, Commander, Department of California and Pacific
Mr. Robert J. Kadlec, Commander, Phil Sheridan Camp No. 4, Dept. of Calif. and Pacific

**APPENDIX TO FINAL REPORT OF THE
NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION**

2 July 2003

Significant Federal Legislation

Impacting the SUVCW

1st Session of the 108th Congress
(7 January 2003 – 2 July 2003)

Order	U.S. Constitution/Flag/Pledge	Patriotism
S. 70 , To restore the traditional day of observance of Memorial Day.	H.R. 2162 , To provide for protection of the flag of the United States.	H.R. 997 , To declare English as the official language of the United States, and for other purposes.
H.R. 646 , To expand the boundaries of the Fort Donelson National Battlefield to authorize the acquisition and interpretation of lands associated with the campaign that resulted in the capture of the fort in 1862. (see S 524)	H.R. 2410 , To prohibit the importation for sale of foreign-made flags of the United States of America.	H.R. 2087 , To establish the Bob Hope American Patriot Award. (see also S. 1150).
S. 330 , Veterans' Memorial Preservation and Recognition Act of 2003. To further the protection and recognition of veterans' memorials, and for other purposes. (see also H.R. 2076)	S. 1297 , To amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of Federal courts inferior to the Supreme Court over certain cases and controversies involving the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.	H.R. 2237 , To establish within the National Park Service the 225th Anniversary of the American Revolution Commemorative program, and for other purposes (see also S. 1108)
H.R. 778 , To recognize the birthdays of Presidents George Washington and Abraham Lincoln..	H. J. Res. 8 , Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the U.S. authorizing the Congress and the States to prohibit the act of desecration of the flag of the U.S. and to set criminal penalties for that act.	H. Con. Res. 195 , Expressing the sense of Congress that a minute of silence should be observed annually at 11:00 a.m. on Veterans Day, November 11, in honor of the veterans of all United States wars and to memorialize those members of the Armed Forces who gave their lives in the defense of the United States.
H.R. 2449 , To establish a commission to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War (see also S. 1064).	S. J. Res. 4 , Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the U.S. authorizing Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the U.S.	H. Res. 122 , Recognizing the bicentennial of the admission of Ohio into the Union and the contributions of Ohio residents to the economic, social, and cultural development of the United States (see also S. Con Res. 9).

current as of 2 July 2003

(through HR 2657, HConRes 234, HJRes 61, HRes 304, S 1369, SConRes 57, SJRes 14, SRes 191, inclusive)

**APPENDIX TO FINAL REPORT OF THE
NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION
2 July 2003**

Order	U.S. Constitution/Flag/Pledge	Patriotism
H. Con. Res. 36 , Encouraging the people of the United States to honor and celebrate the 140th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and commending Abraham Lincoln's efforts to end slavery. (see also S. Con. Res. 15)	H.R. 2028 , To amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of Federal courts inferior to the Supreme Court over certain cases and controversies involving the Pledge of Allegiance.	