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## *House of Representatives*

# SUPPORTING THE SPIRIT OF '45 DAY!

### HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

I rise in support of this resolution: H. Con. Res. 226 which supports the Spirit of '45, a year-long national campaign to raise public awareness of the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II and the Spirit of '45 Day.

1945 was a defining year in the last century. Even after victory in Europe, our nation still faced many hard-fought battles in the Pacific and the decision to drop the atomic bomb. In August of that year, Japan surrendered, the war was over, and America joined the world to begin the work of peace.

The United States started with the job of rebuilding allies and former enemies alike, leading the effort to form the United Nations, and helping millions of returning veterans begin their civilian lives with the G.I. Bill.

This resolution calls on Congress to support the observance of the "Spirit of '45 Day." A national day of observance is planned for the second Sunday in August to ensure that future generations remember the inspiring courage, sacrifice, and service of what has been called the "greatest generation."

To raise awareness about this 65th anniversary, the Spirit of '45 has encouraged communities across the nation to hold commemorative events on August 14 of this year to honor the legacy of the World War II generation whose members are rapidly passing into history. Everyone is asked to collect first-hand memories of those who experienced August 14, 1945, memories that will be preserved on a web site and shared with schools, libraries, museums, memorials and the public as a permanent reminder of a time when people came together to face common challenges as a united country.

Many of the memories can also be provided to the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress.

We officially kicked off this year's activities at a reunion of World War II veterans on the USS Midway in San Diego, on January 18. We were joined by families, students, active duty military personnel, and veterans of WWII and other conflicts.

Also joining us at that momentous event was Edith Shain, the nurse who was photographed being kissed by a joyous sailor in Times Square on August 14, 1945. This photograph became an iconic reminder of the joy and enthusiasm felt by an entire generation who had sacrificed to bring an end to WWII, and who would take that same energy and devotion to rebuild in the war's aftermath.

Edith was a devoted spokesperson for the Spirit of '45, and I am sad to say that Edith recently passed away on June 20, 2010, at the age of 91. Although Edith is not here today to join us as we pass this resolution, I am pleased to know that by honoring the Spirit of '45 we are honoring the devotion of Edith Shain and millions of others like her whose dedication and actions changed the world.

The Spirit of '45 campaign focuses on how to assure that our "latest generation" of veteran gets the kind of welcome home as did their forefathers of the World War II generation, through education and training under the newly-passed "Post 9/11 G.I. Bill," employment opportunities, and ensuring they receive the care and support to reconnect with their families and communities.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the legacy and ideals of the Spirit of '45 by supporting this resolution.