

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-458 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

Title: AN ACT DESIGNATING VARIOUS DAYS AND MONTHS.

Vote Date: 3/23/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/13/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

To honor various groups with a special day or month on the Connecticut calendar.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):

Amends when Lobster Roll Day occurs and adds additional history for Hiram Bingham IV Day.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Sandra Austin Goldstein: Ms. Austin Goldstein is in support of the bill. She states that military service has been in her family for generations. She explains that her grandfathers served during war and peace periods, her the father of her children served in the Army under Operation Iraqi Freedom, and her son is serving as a medic in the United States Army. She shares a story about her former husband, while he was in Iraq the translator he and his team relied on was murdered in his home. She adds a different story about her grandfather's experiences during World War II. She states that these are reminders that war does not end on the battlefield. She says that military service does not end at her family, but extends to close friends. She would like the committee to understand that veterans die by suicide at much higher rates than average citizens, which is why this bill is so important. She proposes that September 30 be established as Military Suicide Remembrance and Awareness Day.

Terry Battle: Mr. Battle is in support of the bill. He advocates for January 11th to be Harford Whalers day because it will preserve the Whalers who were a vital Sports club for Connecticut.

Robert Kim Bingham: Mr. Kim Bingham is in support of the bill. He explains that the Righteous Gentile Varian Fry worked with his father, Hiram Bingham IV, who helped refugees who were fleeing Hitler. He explains that at the U. S. Consulate in Marseille Harry Bingham IV would issue life-saving visas to Jewish and non-Jewish refugees even though he was in contradiction of orders from his superiors. His hope is that by passing the bill July 17 will be designated as Hiram Bingham IV Day. He believes that this is important to honoring his fathers sacrifice.

Jeremie M. Butlien, HERO Program Director, CT Voices of Hope: Ms. Butlien is in support of the bill. She states that Hiram Bingham IV represents one of the finest traditions of American values, which is the willingness to risk everything to protect the vulnerable. He explains that he issued thousands of visas to people fleeing Nazi Germany. She explains that in Connecticut he died without being recognized, but now Connecticut has the opportunity to change that. She explains that Professor David Pettigrew, who proposed this bill, has been teaching students about the contributions of Hiram Bingham IV and Varian Fry. This highlighted a need for more Connecticut-based connections to Holocaust history.

Joanne Cortesa, Former President, Harford Wheeler's booster club: Ms. Cortesa is in support of the bill as it will declare January 11 as Hartford Whalers Day. She believes this will honor the Hartford Whalers.

Bob Duff, Senate Majority Leader: Senator Duff is in support of the bill. He states that the bill will designate the month of May as Progressive Supranuclear Palsy Awareness Month. He explains that this is a rare and progressive neurodegenerative disorder affecting motor functions. He adds that there is no cure and the survival rate is between three to ten years after diagnosis. He believes that by having a month to recognize the disorder awareness will be raised which will pave the way to better treatments.

Sheila Horvitz, Esp: Ms. Horvitz is in support of the bill as it will make July 17 Hiram Bingham IV Day. She states that as a member of the Jewish Federation of Eastern Connecticut, and many other groups, she helps put together an annual commemoration of Yom HaShoah. She explains that this event features a presentation about the Righteous Gentiles and Righteous Diplomats who heroically rescued many from the Holocaust, and it highlights Hiram Bingham IV. She adds that dedicating a day to him will keep his legacy and memory of his work alive. Ms. Horvitz provides a second piece of testimony where she recounts the story of Hiram Bingham IV in more detail.

Kyle Knickerbocker, Creator & Producer, The Connecticut Native: Mr. Knickerbocker is in support of the bill as it will recognize March 4 as both 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day and Henry Breault Day. He believes that this is important to honoring and keeping the legacy of these individuals alive. He explains that one of these individuals is Henry Breault, who is the first and only enlisted submariner to receive the Medal of Honor. He adds that the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, the only all black female unit to serve in World War II equally important. He explains that these women delivered mail to Americans

in Europe which allowed families to stay connected. He provides a list of these women's names and states that in recent years they have finally started to get recognition and it's time for Connecticut to recognize them. He believes that this bill is important to recognizing the stories of these Americans.

Scott Martin: Mr. Martin is in support of the bill. He states that he is an Army Veteran, he served a three year tour and was discharged honorably. He adds that Gary Sirois convinced him to join with him, Gary left a mouth after he did. He explains that when Gary returned home he continued in the Army Reserve and he became a Drill Sergeant Instructor and kept moving up in the ranks. He states that Gary did go off to war, which changed him, and he would later commit suicide. Mr. Martin explains that he and his wife wanted to honor Gary so they created a profit called the Drive-on Foundation in order to raise awareness to Veteran Suicide. He states that he wants people to know there is no shame in asking for help.

Rebecca Martinez, State Representative, Connecticut General Assembly:

Representative Martinez is in support of the bill. She states that designating September 30th as Military Suicide Awareness and Remembrance Day is important to recognizing the challenges that men and women face after their military service ends. She states that according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 17 veterans die by suicide every day in the United States. She explains that this issue is personal here in Connecticut as Sergeant Major Gary F. Sirois was a constituent of hers. She adds that he served the United States for over 20 years, but he was also known for his kindness, compassion, and dedication. She states that the idea for establishing this day came from his family and it would be very meaningful to raise awareness and support struggling veterans.

Brian Maynard, American Legion: Mr. Maynard is in support of the bill because he has a personal and organizational commitment to honoring the legacy of Henry Breault. He states that Henry Breault was a native of Connecticut and he exemplified the ideals of courage and devotion while he served in the Navy. Mr. Maynard explains that while in a submarine the vessel collided with the steamship, causing it to sink. Instead of fleeing, Henry Breault stayed to save a trapped shipmate. He adds that for this Henry Breault was awarded the Medal of Honor making him the first and only enlisted submariner ever awarded one. He believes that designating March 8th as Henry Breault Day would be a meaningful tribute to his legacy and would educate future generations about his heroism.

Patrick Morin: Mr. Morin is in support of the bill because he believes that the Whalers were an important part of Hartford's History. He adds that celebrating their first game could help Hartford become a contender again for a NHL team.

Marion Percy: Mr. Percy is in support of the bill. He states that Hiram Bingham IV is an unsung hero of Connecticut. He explains that Bingham helped more than 2,500 refugees from Nazi Germany and he made sure to keep families together despite the consequences it could have on him.

David Pettigrew, CSU Professor, Southern CT State University: Mr. Pettigrew is in support of the bill. He states that he has been teaching at SCSU since 1987 where he teaching a course on Holocaust and Genocide Studies since 2013. He adds that he also volunteers with the CT Voices of Hope and HERO where they offer information about Hiram Bingham IV. He states that he proposed a day for Hiram Bingham IV and he is appreciative

of the Committee accepting his proposal. He explains that Hiram Bingham IV would help refugees fleeing Nazi Germany and he would visit concentration camps in southern France to gather intelligence. He did this regardless of the backlash he faced. He adds that Hiram Bingham IV died in 1988 without being recognized and he only knows of his actions through letters his family found.

MD Rahman, State Senator, Connecticut General Assembly: Senator Rahman is in support of the bill. He states that the bill includes a proclamation that the first day of the Islamic month of Shawwal, the tenth month of the Islamic lunar calendar of each year. He believes this should be recognized because many of his constituents celebrate this holiday.

Sarah Snyder: Ms. Snyder is in support of the bill as it would designate July 17 as Hiram Bingham IV Day. She explains that Hiram Bingham IV was posting as Vice Consul in Marseille, France from 1939 to 1941. During this time he would help Jewish refugees trying to escape. She adds that he also investigated Nazi concentration camps and supported rescue operations in Marseille. He explains that when his supervisors found out they transferred him around which led to the end of his career. However, he has not been entirely forgotten, he has had many things done in his honor. He states that the establishment of Hiram Bingham IV Day will offer long-overdue public recognition for Bingham.

Alvin Wainhaus, Rabbi: Mr. Wainhaus is in support of the bill. He states that he has worked with Senator Richard Blumenthal to lead a community-wide commemoration of the heroic deeds of Hiram Bingham IV. As a result Bingham's son received a U.S Senate Certificate of Special Recognition on behalf of his late father and the remarkable acts of courage and conscience of Bingham were recognized. Mr. Wainhaus provides information about the experiences of Hiram Bingham IV. He adds that this bill is important because it will spotlight the life-saving deeds of Hiram Bingham in Connecticut.

Ryan Walker: Mr. Walker is in support of the bill. He states that when he first heard the story of Henry Breault he finally understood what would be expected of him as an aspiring submariner. He explains that when Henry Breault had the opportunity to escape a flooding torpedo room he turned back in order to save a shipmate. Since then he has spent his time researching and writing about Henry Breault to educate people about him. He believes that establishing this day is fitting for Connecticut because, Connecticut is the home of the modern Submarine Force, the actions of Breault reflect the best standard for our Navy, and ensures his legacy endures. He adds this will also have a meaningful impact regarding Connecticut's connection to its naval heritage, give educators a meaningful opportunity to teach this history, honor thousands of submariners, and ensure that young people are inspired by Breault's example.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Anonymous 86: Opposes the bill because it's not a core government function.

Anonymous 95: Opposes the bill for reasons unrelated to the bill.

Reported by: Olivia Buczak, Assist. Clerk

Date: 4/1/26