

HB 2700 relates solely to members of the Armed Forces. HB 2700 should be revised to also include Oregon's civilians who were working under US Navy contract building Navy facilities in the Pacific and who became POW and MIA during WWII. The Navy's civilian construction contractors operated under the name "Contractors Pacific Naval Air Bases (CPNAB)".

Of the 1100 plus civilian construction workers employed at Wake Island when the Japanese attacked and eventually captured Wake beginning on Dec. 8, 1941, 133 were Oregonians. Thirty three (33) Oregonians died while defending Wake or subsequently as POW slave laborers at Wake at several Japanese POW Camps elsewhere. One Oregonian still remains MIA. Sixteen civilian POWs were laid to rest in DVA's National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) in Honolulu.

I have requested the names of the 33 civilians be added to the Oregon WWII Memorial on the Capitol grounds.

Each year the US Navy conducts memorial services at Soto Dam in Sasebo, Japan honoring the 52 civilian POWs taken at Wake Island – including 12 Oregonians who died as slave laborers building the dam during WWII.

The remains of 10 civilian Wake Island POWs were returned to Oregon for burial in 6 Oregon cities. With a revision to HB 2700, those 10 would be eligible for roadside markers.

The CPNAB workers were given VA benefits in 1981.

DPAA does not list Oregon's Wake Island POWs and MIAs although DPAA has listed names of recovered and returned civilian MIAs from the Cold War and Vietnam War.

DPAA has recently recovered and identified the remains of an Oregonian who became MIA during the Korean War. The remains are being stored in Hawaii due to COVID-19 with burial at Arlington National Cemetery planned for some time this year. It is not clear if the remains will be returned to Oregon or sent directly to ANC. HB 2700 should also be revised to include remains returned to family or next of kin as well as "returned to Oregon".