

No Ceremony

**APPROVED**  
OCT 11 1976

8/10/11/76

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
October 4, 1976

ACTION

Last Day: October 12

Posted  
10/12/76  
archive  
10/12/76

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: JIM CANNON *J. Cannon*  
SUBJECT: H.J. Res. 519 - Providing for the promotion of George Washington

Attached for your consideration is H.J. Res. 519, sponsored by Representative Biaggi.

The joint resolution would both authorize and request that you posthumously elevate George Washington to the rank of General of the Armies of the United States, effective July 4, 1976 and would establish the grade of General of the Armies of the United States as having rank and precedence over all other grades of the Army, past or present.

Additional information is provided in OMB's enrolled bill report at Tab A.

OMB, Max Friedersdorf, Counsel's Office (Kilberg) and I recommend approval of the enrolled bill.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign H.J. Res. 519 at Tab B.





EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

OCT 1 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Enrolled Resolution H. J. Res. 519 -  
Providing for the promotion of George  
Washington  
Sponsor - Rep. Biaggi (D) New York

Last Day for Action

October 12, 1976 - Tuesday

Purpose

Authorizes and requests the President to appoint  
George Washington posthumously to the grade of  
General of the Armies of the United States.

Agency Recommendations

Office of Management and Budget	Approval
Department of Defense	Approval (Informally)


Discussion

H. J. Res. 519 would both authorize and request  
that you posthumously elevate George Washington to  
the rank of General of the Armies of the United  
States, effective July 4, 1976. The resolution  
would also establish the grade of General of the  
Armies of the United States as having rank and  
precedence over all other grades of the Army,  
past or present.

In its report on this resolution, the House Armed  
Services Committee notes that on the rolls of the  
Army, many officers hold grades superior to  
Washington, who is listed as lieutenant general.  
The report also states that in 1799, when war with  
France appeared imminent, Congress created the

rank of "General of the Armies of the United States" with the intention that Washington be appointed to fill it. The threat of war subsided, however, and the position was never filled. Since then, that rank has been established only once and was filled by General John J. Pershing. Finally, the Committee's report concludes:

"This legislation would recognize General Washington's unique contribution in the formation and leadership of the Army and the Nation by completing an action initiated by the Congress during his lifetime. It would place him in the preeminent position on the rolls of the Army."

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Paul H. O'Neill". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Paul H. O'Neill  
Acting Director

Enclosures

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

October 4, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JAMES M. CANNON

FROM: Jeanne W. Davis *JWD*

SUBJECT: *J* H. J. Res. 519

The NSC Staff concurs in the proposed enrolled resolution H. J. Res. 519 - Providing for the promotion of George Washington.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

1 OCT 1976

Honorable James T. Lynn

Director, Office of Management and Budget

Dear Mr. Lynn:

The Secretary of Defense has delegated responsibility to the Department of the Army for reporting the views of the Department of Defense on enrolled enactment H. J. Res 519, 94th Congress, "To provide for the appointment of George Washington to the grade of General of the Armies of the United States."

The Department of the Army on behalf of the Department of Defense recommends approval of the enrolled enactment.

This act provides for the establishment of the grade of General of the Armies of the United States, such grade to have rank and precedence over all other grades of the Army, past or present, and for the posthumous appointment of George Washington to that grade effective July 4, 1976. The enactment of this measure is considered desirable because it will confirm the long recognized stature of George Washington in the United States Army.

Approval of the enactment will cause no apparent increase in budgetary requirements for the Department of Defense.

This report has been coordinated within the Department of Defense in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Secretary of Defense.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martin R. Hoffmann".

Martin R. Hoffmann  
Secretary of the Army



THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.:

Date: October 2

Time: 400pm

FOR ACTION: Max Friedersdorf *mf* sc (for information): Jack Marsh  
 Bobbie Kilberg *bk* Jim Connor  
 NSC/S *ns* Ed Schmultz  
 Art Quern

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: October 4

Time: 1100am

SUBJECT:

H.J. Ress 519-Providing for the promotion of George Washington

ACTION REQUESTED:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Necessary Action         | <input type="checkbox"/> For Your Recommendations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Agenda and Brief     | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Reply              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Your Comments | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Remarks            |

REMARKS:

please return to judy johnston, ground floor west wing

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

\_\_\_\_\_  
K. R. COLE, JR.  
For the President

Date: October 2

Time: 400pm

FOR ACTION: Max Friedersdorf  
Bobbie Kilberg  
NSC/Scc (for information): Jack Marsh  
Jim Connor  
Ed Schmults  
Art Quern

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: October 4

Time: 1100am

SUBJECT:

H.J. Res. 519-Providing for the promotion of  
George Washington

## ACTION REQUESTED:

 For Necessary Action For Your Recommendations Prepare Agenda and Brief Draft Reply For Your Comments Draft Remarks

## REMARKS:

please return to judy johnston, ground floor west wing

10/4

No objection.

B. Roth

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.If you have any questions or if you anticipate a  
delay in submitting the required material, please  
telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.James M. Cannon  
For the President



Date: October 2

Time: 400pm

FOR ACTION: Max Friedersdorf *M.F.* cc (for information): Jack Marsh  
 Bobbie Kilberg Jim Connor  
 NSC/S Ed Schmults  
 Art Quern

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: October 4

Time: 1100am

SUBJECT:

H.J. Res. 519-Providing for the promotion of George Washington

ACTION REQUESTED:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Necessary Action         | <input type="checkbox"/> For Your Recommendations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Agenda and Brief     | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Reply              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Your Comments | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Remarks            |

REMARKS:

please return to judy johnston, ground floor west wing

*Recommend Approval. [Signature]*

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

James M. Cannon  
For the President

Date: October 2

Time: 400pm

FOR ACTION: Max Friedersdorf  
Bobbie Kilberg  
NSC/S

cc (for information): Jack Marsh  
Jim Connor  
Ed Schmults  
Art Quern ✓

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: October 4

Time: 1100am

SUBJECT:

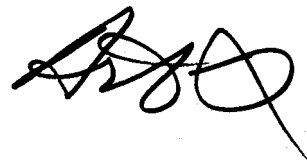
H.J. Res. 519-Providing for the promotion of  
George Washington

ACTION REQUESTED:

- For Necessary Action
- For Your Recommendations
- Prepare Agenda and Brief
- Draft Reply
- For Your Comments
- Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

please return to judy johnston, ground floor west wing

*Recommend Lynn*  


PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

James M. Cannon  
For the President

PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF GEORGE  
WASHINGTON TO THE GRADE OF GENERAL OF THE  
ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES

---

AUGUST 4, 1976.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

---

Mr. HÉBERT, from the Committee on Armed Services,  
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.J. Res. 519]

The Committee on Armed Services, to whom was referred the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 519) to provide for the appointment of George Washington to the grade of General of the Armies of the United States having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the joint resolution do pass.

PURPOSE

The purpose of House Joint Resolution 519 is to provide for the appointment of George Washington to the grade of General of the Armies of the United States.

BACKGROUND

George Washington was appointed General of the Army by the Continental Congress on June 15, 1775 and held that commission until December 23, 1783 when he resigned it. In 1798, after the adoption of the Constitution, Congress passed a law authorizing the President to raise a Provisional Army. Among the provisions of that Act was one which authorized the rank of Lieutenant General for the Commander of the Armies of the United States. General Washington was commissioned in that rank on July 13, 1798 and held it until his death.

On March 3, 1799, when war with France appeared imminent, Congress passed a law for the "better organization of the Troops of the United States." Section 9 of that Act provided that a commander of the Army of the United States "shall be appointed and commissioned by the style of 'General of the Armies of the United States' and the

present office and title of Lieutenant-General shall thereafter be abolished." The threat of hostilities with France, however, soon abated and apparently, as a result, President Adams never submitted Washington's name to the Senate for confirmation. Thus, Washington never occupied the position established by the Congress. The grade of General of the Armies of the United States ceased to exist in 1802 when a new act describing the military peace establishment failed to provide for a general. The rank was reestablished by the Congress in 1919 when General John J. Pershing was nominated to the position and held it until his death.

#### DISCUSSION

From July 3, 1798 until the time of his death, George Washington held the highest grade in the United States Army, Lieutenant General. Although the Congress in 1799 established the rank of General of the Armies of the United States for General Washington, his nomination was never submitted to the Senate; consequently, he never held that grade.

No United States soldier exceeded the grade of Lieutenant General Washington until 1866. Since that time, however, many officers have attained the grade of General; five have been appointed General of the Army and one has been named General of the Armies of the United States. On the rolls of the Army, each of those officers holds a grade superior to General Washington. In 1866 the Congress provided for establishment of the grade of General of the Army of the United States and authorized the President to select one officer for that grade. General U. S. Grant and, later, General W. T. Sherman were appointed to the grade of General. Shortly before his death in 1888 the grade was revived and conferred upon General P. H. Sheridan. The grade of general ceased to exist upon the death of General Sheridan and was not revived until World War I when it was conferred upon the Chief of Staff and the Commander of the United States forces in France.

In 1919 the Congress revived the grade of General of the Armies of the United States. General John J. Pershing was the only officer appointed to that grade and held it until his death.

In 1944 the new grade of General of the Army was established. Generals George C. Marshall, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Henry H. Arnold all were appointed to that grade in 1944. In 1950 General Omar Bradley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was also appointed to the grade of General of the Army.

Since World War II many officers have held the rank of general. For example, the most recent United States Army Register reflects that 12 officers held the grade of general on January 1, 1974.

This legislation would recognize General Washington's unique contribution in the formation and leadership of the Army and the nation by completing an action initiated by the Congress during his lifetime. It would place him in the preeminent position on the rolls of the Army.

#### DEPARTMENT POSITION

The Departmental position is set forth in the following letter:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,  
Washington, D.C., March 25, 1976.

HON. MELVIN PRICE,  
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services,  
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Reference is made to your request to the Secretary of Defense for the views of the Department of Defense on H.J. Res. 519, 94th Congress, a bill "To provide for the appointment of George Washington to the grade of General of the Armies of the United States." The Department of the Army has been assigned responsibility for expressing the views of the Department of Defense on this bill.

The title of the resolution states its purpose.

The Department of the Army, on behalf of the Department of Defense, has no objection to the enactment of the proposed legislation; however, it is desired to point out possible consequences that may arise from its enactment.

Irrespective of his rank or grade, George Washington is considered by all Americans to be the outstanding military figure of our nation. The military prowess and stature of those who served in our armed forces during earlier periods of history should properly be assessed against a background of the conditions and national temperament at the time their service was rendered; accordingly the rank or grade of such individuals is of little practical value in determining the position of prominence they should receive. It is felt that an attempt to appoint George Washington to a new grade and rank could result in a movement to reevaluate the rank of all notable military personnel of the past solely upon the basis of the present armed forces grade structure without regard to the evolution of rank necessitated by the expanding size of the armed forces.

The enactment of this bill will cause no apparent increase in budgetary requirements of the Department of Defense.

This report has been coordinated within the Department of Defense in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Secretary of Defense.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that, from the standpoint of the Administration's program, there is no objection to the presentation of this report for the consideration of the Committee.

Sincerely,

NORMAN R. AUGUSTINE,  
Acting Secretary of the Army.

#### COMMITTEE POSITION

The Committee on Armed Services, a quorum being present, by rollcall vote, favorably reported House Joint Resolution 519 on August 3, 1976 without amendment.

## FISCAL DATA

It is the belief of the Armed Services Committee that any costs which might be associated with the legislation would be minimal.

## COMPLIANCE WITH CLAUSE 2(1)(3)(c) OF RULE XI OF THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Because of the absence of any budgetary impact, no report was obtained from the Congressional Budget Office concerning the effect of this legislation on budget authority or outlays over the next five years.

## INFLATION IMPACT STATEMENT

The Armed Services Committee believes that the Resolution does not contain any inflation factor.

## OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

The Committee indicated a need to insure that this legislation should not be construed as a precedent for reevaluation of the grade of notable military personnel of the past. The unique contributions of General Washington to the Army and the nation which warrant this action would not exist in other situations.



# Ninety-fourth Congress of the United States of America

## AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the nineteenth day of January,  
one thousand nine hundred and seventy-six*

### Joint Resolution

To provide for the appointment of George Washington to the grade of General of the Armies of the United States.

Whereas Lieutenant General George Washington of Virginia commanded our armies throughout and to the successful termination of our Revolutionary War;

Whereas Lieutenant General George Washington presided over the convention that formulated our Constitution;

Whereas Lieutenant General George Washington twice served as President of the United States of America; and

Whereas it is considered fitting and proper that no officer of the United States Army should outrank Lieutenant General George Washington on the Army list: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) for purposes of subsection (b) of this section only, the grade of General of the Armies of the United States is established, such grade to have rank and precedence over all other grades of the Army, past or present.*

*(b) The President is authorized and requested to appoint George Washington posthumously to the grade of General of the Armies of the United States, such appointment to take effect on July 4, 1976.*

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

*Vice President of the United States and  
President of the Senate.*