

DECEMBER 27, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Vail, Colorado)

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 4013 which redefines eligibility for members in the American Legion.

Membership in the American Legion is currently limited by its Federal Charter to persons who have served honorably in the military or naval forces of the United States or its allies during certain defined periods of time which correspond generally to the periods of U. S. participation in World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam conflict. The bill, which incorporates changes requested by the American Legion, establishes a specific cut-off date of August 15, 1973, for membership eligibility based on honorable service during the Vietnam era. The charter currently defines the Vietnam period as extending from "August 5, 1974, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States." The new termination date is apparently based on P. L. 93- a supplemental appropriations Act, which resulted in a cut-off of funds to support U. S. combat activities in Vietnam after August 15, 1973.

The bill also extends the periods for determining membership eligibility in the American Legion based on service during World War II and the Korean War. The new dates are the same as those established by the Veterans Administration for the purpose of determining entitlement to war-time veterans' benefits.

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