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New laws boost funding for The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial

LANSING, Mich., June 29, 2018 — Sens. Steve Bieda (D–Warren) and Marty Knollenberg (R–Troy) are one step closer to raising the necessary funds for Michigan’s first World War II memorial after Governor Snyder signed their bills into law as Public Acts 256 and 257.

The new laws, which were originally Senate Bills [816](#) and [817](#) respectively, create a funding mechanism for [The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial](#) in Royal Oak and allow the state to accept memorial contributions from taxpayers. The memorial will honor the 620,000 Michigan residents who served in the armed forces overseas and at home, and provide a lasting tribute to the 15,458 service members who lost their lives.

“Michigan’s role in the ‘Arsenal of Democracy’ should never be forgotten,” Sen. Bieda said. “This memorial will not only honor the brave soldiers who risked their lives, but also those non-combat patriots in our state who mined iron ore in Ironwood to build tanks and airplanes, or who produced K-rations for soldiers at the Kellogg’s facility in Battle Creek, among many others.”

Senate Bill 817 sponsored by Sen. Bieda, would establish The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial Fund in the Michigan Department of Treasury to collect and distribute the donated funds. Senate Bill 816, sponsored by Sen. Knollenberg, would amend the Income Tax Act to allow an individual to make a voluntary contribution on Form 4642 when they file their state tax returns.

“This project is an extension of the Honor Flights, which began in 2007, to connect more than 1,400 veterans with their respective memorials in Washington, D.C.,” said Debi Hollis, President of The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial. “It’s a way to cement the work we did during Honor Flights for future generations to experience the sacrifices of their ancestors.”

Proposed plans for the \$3 million memorial include statues to honor soldiers; pillars to represent Michigan’s contributions to the war effort; a walkable and interactive map with military, commercial and government points of interest; and an amphitheater. So far, organizers have raised more than \$530,000 toward the completion of the project.

“First, we brought Michigan to the memorial through Honor Flights, and now we’re bringing the memorial to Michigan,” said Russell Levine, Vice President of The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial. “The timing of this bill is incredibly important to meet our goal of honoring the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II by unveiling the memorial in 2020.”

Taxpayers wishing to contribute to The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial must check a box indicating the dollar amount they would like to contribute on Form 4642 when they file their taxes. [Donors can also purchase engraved bricks](#) lining the walkway around the memorial for veterans or organizations.

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Pictured from L-R are Russell Levine, Vice President of The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial, Sen. Steve Bieda (D-Warren), Sen. Marty Knollenberg (R-Troy), and Debi Hollis, President of The Michigan World War II Legacy Memorial

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