



Office of Governor  
**Edmund G. Brown Jr.**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**Wednesday, August 3, 2011**

**Contact: Governor's Press Office**  
**(916) 445-4571**

## **Governor Brown Issues Proclamation Declaring Purple Heart Veterans' Month**

**SACRAMENTO** - Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. today issued a proclamation declaring August, 2011, as Purple Heart Veterans' Month in the State of California.

The text of the proclamation is below:

### **PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

As a military decoration, the Purple Heart traces its origins to the very first military award of the United States Armed Forces. In his General Orders to the Continental Army on August 7, 1782, General George Washington established the Badge of Military Merit, directing that "whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear ... over the left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth." In the spirit of our Revolution, the Badge of Military Merit could be awarded to soldiers of any rank, breaking with the European tradition of military awards being reserved for high-ranking officers. In Washington's own words, "The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is thus open to all."

The Badge of Military Merit fell into disuse after the Revolutionary War, and the purple heart shape would not be revived until 1932, when the United States War Department authorized a new medal to be awarded to any member of the Armed Services who has been wounded or killed in action. The first recipients of the new Purple Heart received it retroactively for their service during the First World War. Since then, we have awarded nearly two million Purple Hearts to our combat veterans, including at least 42,000 in our current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. These figures represent a staggering amount of human suffering in the service of our country, and the unparalleled selflessness of our troops in performing their duties. This month, I urge all Californians to join me in saluting our Purple Heart recipients for their valor and sacrifice.

**NOW THEREFORE I, EDMUND G. BROWN JR.**, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim August 2011, as "California Purple Heart Veterans Month."

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 1st day of August 2011.

---

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
Governor of California

**ATTEST:**

---

DEBRA BOWEN  
Secretary of State

**Governor Jerry Brown**  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814