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House of Representatives
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**Help Preserve the History and Heritage
of our Nation's Heroes**

By U.S. Rep. C. W. Bill Young

As we honor our nation's veterans this week, I would ask you to join me in helping us preserve the history and heritage of their service in uniform and their contributions to protecting our freedom and liberty.

The Veterans History Project is a cooperative effort between the United States Congress and the Library of Congress to collect the personal accounts and oral histories of as many veterans as possible so that future generations of Americans can have the opportunity to hear those stories directly from the mouths of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen. This is not only an important project to ensure that we never forget the service and sacrifice of these men and women, but is also an invaluable tool for historians as they research and write about their experiences during war time.

The importance of this project is made clear to me every year when I look out over the thousands of veterans who attend Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies. I know that each of those men and women have a story to tell about their service and that if we do not take the time to record those stories, they will be lost for future generations. Having had the opportunity over the past year to join with a number of World War II veterans from Pinellas County and the State of Florida as they have traveled to our nation's Capital on Honor Flights to visit the World War II Memorial, I have heard them retell their compelling and heroic stories. These are stories that we must preserve and remember because they emphasize what makes our nation great and the tremendous price so many have paid to protect our freedom and liberty.

You can help me in many ways with this project. First and foremost, if you are a veteran and interested in including your narrative in the permanent collections of the Library of Congress, give me a call at 727-394-6950 or email me at Bill.Young@mail.house.gov so that I can schedule you for an interview and transmit your personal story to the Veterans History Project. In addition to these oral histories, the Library is collecting memoirs, photographs, letters, diaries, and other historical documents from World War I through current conflicts.

Second, you can join my team to conduct and record the stories of our veterans. My staff will provide training on how to carry out the interviews and the types of questions the Library of Congress suggests asking. You can call or e-mail me at the number or address above to schedule a time for training and to begin the interviewing process. This is not only a great project for veterans organizations, but also for student and scout groups.

Finally, if you are the family member of a deceased war veteran, you may submit through me to the Library of Congress a biography of your family member and any historical documents such as those mentioned above so that their story and service will be included in these archives. Please call or e-mail so that I can send you the proper forms to complete.

The Veterans History Project is a public and searchable database and you can access it and information about the program at www.loc.gov/vets. There you can find information about veterans by name, by unit, and by service area.

Veterans Day is a time to honor the legacy of service so many have given to our nation. The Veterans History Project is a way to honor that legacy forever and ensure that it is never lost on future generations of grateful Americans. Please join me in this important and most worthwhile project.

U.S. Rep. C. W. Bill Young represents the 10th Congressional District of Florida. He is the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense and a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs.