

Montana Becomes First State to Pass Resolution Against Unconstitutional Wars

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Global Research, April 26, 2021

[The Libertarian Institute](#) 22 April 2021

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#)

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The Montana state legislature overwhelmingly passed a bipartisan and unprecedented resolution Tuesday calling on the federal government to end endless wars. The resolution passed 95-3 in the House and 47-2 in the Senate.

[House Joint Resolution 9](#), sponsored by **Rep. Ron Marshall** (R-Hamilton), is the first of its kind to be introduced by any state and is currently being used as a model for other states across the country.

The resolution specifically urges **President Joe Biden** and the United States Congress to “end the endless war in Afghanistan,” repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force, resist sending U.S. troops into combat without a declaration of war from Congress or specific authorization to do so, and to “execute a prudent foreign policy.”

Concerned Veterans for America, a veteran-run organization, endorsed the resolution and plans on utilizing it at the national level. The organization’s **Deputy Director Russ Duerstine** said in a statement that “the passing of the Endless War resolution is a firm statement—a strong message on behalf of Montanans that there is a better way than continuing to fight endless wars.”

According to *USA Today*, Montana has the [third-highest percentage](#) of veterans of all states in the United States. A recent YouGov and Concerned Veterans for America poll also determined that two-thirds of all US veterans [support the complete withdrawal](#) of troops from Afghanistan and Iraq.

“Our troops have served valiantly in Afghanistan and elsewhere, but perpetual war and fruitless nation building is not in America’s best interests,” Duerstine added. “Worse, endless conflicts marginalize the service of those who have sacrificed for our freedom. We owe our military community better, and we thank Rep. Marshall and Sen. Bogner for leading on this measure and commend all those who showed their support for it.”

Some lawmakers have asked what the resolution will accomplish, referring to it as a “letter to Santa” since it isn’t legislation, but Concerned Veterans for America’s Montana

Grassroots Engagement Director Chris Enget, a Purple Heart recipient who served in Afghanistan in 2012, said the resolution would put pressure on Montana's congressional delegation to take action to end overseas conflicts.

Enget, who helped write the resolution, added that the organization is using it as a model in other states and will also pressure their congressional delegations by passing similar resolutions.

Concerned Veterans for America will also send the resolution to Washington D.C. and use their lobbyists to put pressure on Congress, according to Enget.

"We are going to use this to show America is fed up," Enget said. "We're not just going to let it sit there. We're going to continue to bring it up and we're going to continue to show that the state of Montana has made this very large statement that we can not keep participating in endless wars."

The resolution passed a week after President Biden announced that the timeline for U.S. removal from Afghanistan would be delayed from May 1 to Sept. 11, 2021. Biden said, "I'm now the fourth United States President to preside over American troop presence in Afghanistan: two Republicans, two Democrats. I will not pass this responsibility on to a fifth."

Concerned Veteran's senior adviser **Dan Caldwell** said in a statement, "while we still believe a full withdrawal by the May 1st deadline in the Doha agreement best serves America's interests, we are pleased to hear Biden is firmly committed to bringing our troops home within the next few months."

The organization's Montana chapter feels the same way.

"We're going to support President Biden's timeline, but we're not going to let the pressure up," Enget said. "We now have a concrete date from him that this is what he wants to do and we're going to be supportive of the fact that he wants to fully withdraw troops, but he needs to keep that timeline then. We're going to pressure his administration to keep that timeline."

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