



# HOUSE BILL 288: POW/MIA Flag/State Bldgs. & Schools.

2025-2026 General Assembly

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**Committee:** House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House **Date:** April 28, 2025  
**Introduced by:** Reps. Goodwin, Charles Smith, Majeed, Hastings **Prepared by:** Karyl Smith  
**Analysis of:** First Edition Staff Attorney

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**OVERVIEW:** House Bill 288 would require the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) flag to be flown at all State-owned buildings and all public school buildings under certain circumstances.

**CURRENT LAW:** The protocols for the flying of the United States and the North Carolina flags at State-owned buildings are a combination of federal and State statutes and policies.

Federal guidelines related to the treatment of the United States flag are contained in Chapter 1, Title 4 of the United States Code, which is commonly referred to as the Flag Code (Code). The Code includes instruction and rules on topics such as the pledge of allegiance, display and use of the flag by civilians, time and occasions for display, position and manner of display, and how to show respect for the flag.

Chapter 144 of the North Carolina General Statutes identifies the characteristics of the official North Carolina flag and sets out the requirements as to when the flag should be displayed in and on public buildings. G.S. 144-5 requires State agencies and other political subdivisions of the State to handle, display, and store North Carolina and United States flags in accordance with the Code.

There is only one statute that mentions the POW/MIA flag, G.S. 143-345.9, which authorizes the Department of Administration to fly the POW/MIA flag over the State Capitol on Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day, and all other national holidays honoring veterans.

**BILL ANALYSIS:** House Bill 288 would do the following:

- Require the official POW/MIA flag be displayed over all State-owned buildings and at all public school buildings whenever the United States flag is displayed if the POW/MIA flag can be attached to an existing flagpole.
- Require the POW/MIA flag be of suitable size and material and be displayed and flown in accordance with the appropriate policies and procedures concerning the display of the State and United States flags.
- Clarify that new G.S. 144-10 does not apply to the POW/MIA flag flown over the State Capitol pursuant to G.S. 143-345.9.
- Require the State to purchase POW/MIA flags for State owned buildings in the same manner as the North Carolina flag is purchased.
- Specify that local boards of education may accept donations of the POW/MIA flag or must purchase flags with available funds.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** The bill would become effective when it becomes law.

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