

RESOLUTION NO. 7368

A RESOLUTION introduced by Mayor Harry Felker recognizing Harry W. Colmery and establishing June 22 as Harry W. Colmery Day in Topeka, Kansas.

WHEREAS, the life of Harry W. Colmery of Topeka, Kansas, was marked by service to his country and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Harry Colmery earned a degree in law in 1916 from the University of Pittsburgh and, through his practice of law, contributed to the Nation, notably by successfully arguing two significant cases before the United States Supreme Court, one criminal, the other an environmental legal dispute; and

WHEREAS, during World War I, Harry Colmery joined the Army Air Service, serving as a first lieutenant at a time when military aviation was in its infancy; and

WHEREAS, after World War I, Harry Colmery actively contributed to the growth of the newly formed American Legion and went on to hold several offices in the Legion and was elected National Commander in 1936; and

WHEREAS, in 1943, the United States faced the return from World War II of what was to become an active duty force of 15,000,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines; and

WHEREAS, Harry Colmery, recognizing the potential effect of the return of such a large number of veterans to civilian life, set out to craft legislation seeking to ensure that these Americans who had fought for the democratic ideals of the Nation and to preserve freedom would be able to fully participate in all of the opportunities the Nation provided; and

25 WHEREAS, in December 1943, Harry Colmery crafted the initial draft of the  
26 legislation that became the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the GI  
27 Bill of Rights; and

28 WHEREAS, the GI Bill of Rights is credited by veterans' service organizations,  
29 economists, and historians as the engine that transformed postwar America into a more  
30 egalitarian, prosperous, and enlightened Nation poised to lead the world in the 21st  
31 century; and

32 WHEREAS, since its enactment, the GI Bill of Rights has provided education or  
33 training for approximately 7,800,000 men and women, including 2,200,000 in college,  
34 3,400,000 in other schools, 1,400,000 in vocational education, and 690,000 in farm  
35 training; and

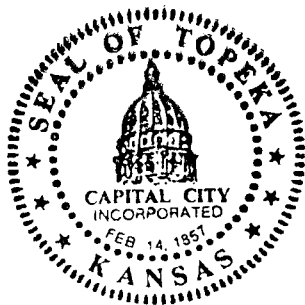
36 WHEREAS, as a result of the benefits available to veterans through the initial GI  
37 Bill, the Nation gained over 800,000 professionals as the GI Bill transformed these  
38 veterans into 450,000 engineers, 238,000 teachers, 91,000 scientists, 67,000 doctors,  
39 and 22,000 dentists; and

40 WHEREAS, 2,100,000 World War II veterans purchased homes through the GI Bill.

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
42 TOPEKA, KANSAS that June 22 of each year is hereby established within the City of  
43 Topeka, Kansas as Harry W. Colmery Day in recognition of the many contributions of  
44 Harry W. Colmery to the City of Topeka, the United States and to the many veterans who  
45 have fought for this country.

46 ADOPTED and APPROVED by the City Council July 15, 2003.

47 CITY OF TOPEKA, KANSAS



54 ATTEST:

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Harry Felker  
Harry Felker, Mayor

Iris E. Walker  
Iris E. Walker, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY

DATE 7/16/03 BY BL