



SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
History Department

2 November 2011

Representative Frank R. Wolf
U.S. House of Representatives
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4610

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Dear Representative Wolf:

I am writing to express my strong support for the legislation that you introduced on 21 June 2011 to reestablish the official federal holiday and recognition of Washington's Birthday on 22 February.

After Congress unanimously appointed him Commander in Chief of the Continental Army in 1775, Washington employed a brilliant Fabian Strategy to win American Independence by defeating Great Britain, the most powerful empire on earth. By returning his military commission back to Congress at the end of the war rather than trying to establish a military dictatorship, Washington helped to ensure the success of the American experiment in republican government. Instead of slipping into an easy retirement, Washington continued to pursue his vision for a strong Union of states capable of preserving the liberty and prosperity of the American people. Three more times he answered the unanimous call of his countrymen, first by serving as president of the 1787 Constitutional Convention, and later by serving two terms as President of the United States. As Chief Executive, Washington (as Historian Joseph Ellis has aptly put it) helped hold the United States together until it became strong enough to hold itself together. The advice Washington provided in his Farewell Address rings as true today as it did in 1796: The national must pursue unity at home and the national interest abroad.

I hope that restoring the observance of Washington's birth to the historically correct day will remind Americans to honor his legacy and to emulate his example.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Stuart Leibiger'.

Dr. Stuart Leibiger
Associate Professor and Department Chair
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Author: *Founding Friendship: George Washington, James Madison, and the Creation of the American Republic*, University Press of Virginia (1999, 2001, 2006).

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