

Lying in State or Honor in the U.S. Capitol by Non-Members of Congress

September 22, 2020

On September 25, 2020, [Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg](#), who died on [September 18](#), will lie in state at the U.S. Capitol after [lying in repose at the United States Supreme Court](#) on September 23 and 24. In a [press release](#), House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced that Justice Ginsburg would lie in state in National Statuary Hall. Because of COVID-19, the arrival ceremony for Justice Ginsburg is for invited guests only. At the time of this writing, details on viewings have not yet been announced.

Justice Ginsburg will be the 35th individual to have [lain in state or honor](#) in the Capitol Rotunda or National Statuary Hall. The most recent to lie in state was [Representative John Lewis](#) on July 27 and 28, 2020. The most recent to lie in honor was the [Reverend Billy Graham](#) on February 28 and March 1, 2018.

Lying in State v. Honor

Lying in State

Current or former government officials (e.g., Member of Congress, President, Vice President); military leaders; unknown servicemembers from World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era.

Lying in Honor

Private Citizens

Of the 35 individuals to have lain in state or honor (excluding four [unknown soldiers](#) from World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam who lay in state), 13 did not serve in Congress. Justice Ginsburg will be the first woman to lie in state (Rosa Parks was the first to lie in honor on [October 24, 2005](#)). Justice Ginsburg will be the first Supreme Court Justice to lie in state since Chief Justice William Howard Taft (who also served as President) lay in state on [March 11, 1930](#) (see [Table 1](#)).

Figure 1 shows President and Chief Justice William Howard Taft lying in state on March 11, 1930.

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Figure 1. Lying in State of President and Chief Justice William Howard Taft

March 11, 1930



Source: B.C. Mossman and M.W. Stark, "Chapter 2: Former President William Howard Taft State Funeral, 8-11 March 1930," *The Last Salute: Civil and Military Funerals 1921-1969*, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1991) at https://history.army.mil/books/Last_Salute/Ch2.htm.

Since President Abraham Lincoln's death in 1865, the caskets of most individuals who have lain in state or honor have rested on the Lincoln catafalque. The [Lincoln catafalque](#) is a platform constructed in 1865 "to support the casket of Abraham Lincoln while the president's body lay in state in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda."

Authorization Process

When an individual lies in state or honor in the Rotunda—a space jointly controlled by the House of Representatives and the Senate—a concurrent resolution is often used to authorize the event. For example, for Representative Lewis, two concurrent resolutions (H.Con.Res. 106—use of the Lincoln Catafalque; and H.Con.Res. 105—use of the Rotunda) were agreed to. In at least one instance, for [President Gerald Ford](#), Congress was out of session and a concurrent resolution was not adopted.

When an individual lies in state or honor in [National Statuary Hall](#), a space controlled by the House of Representatives, the Speaker often announces the event through a press release. For example, in October 2019, [Representative Elijah Cummings](#) lay in state in National Statuary Hall and Speaker Pelosi issued a [press release](#) to announce the occasion.

When an individual lies in state or honor in the Rotunda or National Statuary Hall, the [Architect of the Capitol](#) and/or the [U.S. Capitol Police](#) may issue special instructions about public access to the Capitol, public viewing hours, and other protocols.

Non-Members of Congress Lying in State or Honor

Justice Ginsburg will be the 13th individual to lie in state or honor who was not also a Member of Congress. Additionally, four [unknown soldiers](#) (World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam) have lain in state. **Table 1** lists the individuals who have lain in state or honor who did not serve as Members of Congress, the date of their death, the date of lying in state, and the positions they held in government, if any.

Table 1. Lying in State and Honor by Non-Members of Congress

Individual	Date of Death	Date of Lying in State	Position
Lying in State			
Pierre Charles L'Enfant	June 14, 1825 ^a	April 28, 1909	Planner, Architect
George Dewey	January 16, 1917	January 20, 1917	U.S. Navy Admiral
William Howard Taft	March 8, 1930	March 11, 1930	President, Chief Justice
John Joseph Pershing	July 15, 1948	July 18-19, 1948	General of the U.S. Armies
Douglas MacArthur	April 5, 1964	April 8-9, 1964	General of the U.S. Army
Herbert Clark Hoover	October 20, 1964	October 23-25, 1964	President, Cabinet Secretary
J. Edgar Hoover	May 2, 1972	May 3-4, 1972	FBI Director
Ronald Reagan	June 5, 2004	June 9-11, 2004	President, Governor
Lying in Honor			
Officer Jacob J. Chestnut, Jr.	July 24, 1998	July 28, 1998	Capitol Police Officer
Detective John M. Gibson	July 24, 1998	July 28, 1998	Capitol Police Officer
Rosa Parks	October 24, 2005	October 30-31, 2005	Civil Rights Leader
Reverend Billy Graham	February 21, 2018	February 28-March 1, 2018	Minister
Unknown Soldiers			
Vietnam Conflict	—	May 25-28, 1984	—
World War II	—	May 28-30, 1958	—
Korean War	—	May 28-30, 1958	—
World War I	—	November 9-11, 1921	—

Source: Compiled by CRS from U.S. Congress, Architect of the Capitol, “Those Who Have Lain in State or in Honor in the Rotunda,” October 2018, at <https://www.aoc.gov/sites/default/files/documents/basic-page/us-capitol-lain-state-honor-2019-01.pdf>; and U.S. Congress, House, Office of the Historian, “Individuals Who Have Lain in State or in Honor,” at <https://history.house.gov/Institution/Lie-In-State/Lie-In-State-Honor/>.

Notes:

- a. Pierre Charles L'Enfant's remains were brought to the Capitol to lie in state prior to being reinterred at Arlington National Cemetery. See S.Con.Res. 2 (61st Congress), agreed to March 26, 1909, and Arlington National Cemetery, “Pierre Charles L'Enfant,” at <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Notable-Graves/Science-Technology-Engineering/Pierre-Charles-L'Enfant>.

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