

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 406

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Honoring and commending the Lao Veterans of America, Laotian and Hmong veterans of the Vietnam War, and their families, for their historic contributions to the United States.

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Whereas one of the largest clandestine operations in United States military history was conducted in Laos during the Vietnam War;

Whereas the Central Intelligence Agency and the United States Armed Forces recruited, organized, trained, and assisted Laotian and Hmong guerrilla units and conventional forces, including ethnic lowland Lao and highland

Laotians composed of Hmong, Khmu, Mien, Yao, Lahu, and other diverse tribal and nontribal ethnic groups, from 1960 through 1975 to combat the North Vietnamese Army and Communist Pathet Lao forces;

Whereas Laotian and Hmong special forces who served in the United States sponsored “Secret Army” courageously saved numerous American pilots and aircrews who were shot down over Laos or North Vietnam and interdicted and helped to destroy many enemy units and convoys intended to engage United States military forces in combat;

Whereas Laotian and Hmong special forces served in key roles with air force elements of the United States Air Force, United States Navy carrier-based air units, United States Army heliborne units, and the Central Intelligence Agency’s “Air America” in distinguished roles such as T-28 fighter pilots, “Raven” spotter co-pilots, Forward Air Guides, and mobile group rescue and combat reconnaissance units;

Whereas Laotian and Hmong special forces, including highly decorated group mobile units, served in daring and courageous heliborne and airborne combat operations in support of joint United States and Royal Lao Army military operations in Laos and Vietnam, including interdiction of enemy troop movements and supply convoys using the Ho Chi Minh Trail;

Whereas Laotian and Hmong special forces guarded one of the most highly sensitive United States intelligence and electronic targeting sites in all of Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, LIMA Site 85, which permitted the United States Air Force and Navy to conduct the all-weather and night bombing of enemy targets in North Vietnam;

Whereas tens of thousands of members of the Laotian and Hmong special forces and their families were trapped in Laos when the Communists took over, and many of these persons were brutally persecuted, imprisoned, or killed because of their role in defending Laos and assisting the United States as allies;

Whereas many of those members of the Laotian and Hmong special forces and their families who avoided capture suffered for years in horrific conditions as political refugees in refugee camps in neighboring Thailand;

Whereas the United States is now the home to significant communities of the Laotian and Hmong veterans and their families after providing them with political asylum, refugee status, and citizenship because of their unique contribution to United States national security interests during the Vietnam War;

Whereas the Lao Veterans of America was founded as a non-profit veterans organization in 1990 to honor and assist Laotian and Hmong veterans who served with or assisted the United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam War;

Whereas the Lao Veterans of America has established chapters throughout the United States that have sought to serve their communities and educate the public about the historic contribution of the Lao and Hmong veterans during the Vietnam War;

Whereas the Lao Veterans of America spearheaded and led national efforts in the Congress to seek to provide citizenship to elderly Laotian and Hmong veterans, as well as their spouses or widows;

Whereas in 1995, a historic Lao Veterans of America ceremony was held at the airbase and headquarters of the 144th Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard in Fresno, California, along with a memorial service and overflights of T-28 fighter aircraft to honor the Laotian and Hmong veterans, their American advisers, and the Lao Veterans of America and other veterans organizations;

Whereas in 1997, long overdue national recognition and honor was finally bestowed upon the Lao Veterans of America and thousands of Laotian and Hmong veterans and their American advisers at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the District of Columbia and at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, by Members of the Congress and representatives of the United States intelligence, military, and diplomatic communities;

Whereas in 1997, a monument was dedicated at Arlington National Cemetery by the Lao Veterans of America to honor the Laotian and Hmong veterans and their American advisers who served during the Vietnam War; and

Whereas in 2000, thousands of additional Lao and Hmong veterans were again honored, after a veterans memorial service and parade lead by the Lao Veterans of America that progressed from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, past the White House, and down Pennsylvania Avenue to the United States Capitol, where a national commemorative service was held: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That Congress honors and commends the Lao
 3 Veterans of America, Laotian and Hmong veterans of the
 4 Vietnam War who served with or assisted the United
 5 States Armed Forces, and the families of these Laotian

1 and Hmong veterans, for their historic contributions to
2 the United States.

Passed the House of Representatives October 10,
2002.

Attest:

Clerk.