

A Senate resolution

recognizing the Lao Freedom Fighters and the people of the former Kingdom of Laos.

**WHEREAS**, in 1961, President John F. Kennedy authorized the dispatch of 666 United States military advisors to Laos. The Central Intelligence Agency of the United States began recruiting and training the Lao, Lao Theung, and the Hmong highlanders as the Special Guerrilla Units (SGUs) to support American objectives in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1963, President Kennedy and King Savang Vatthana of Laos met at the White House to discuss strategies for containing the destabilizing threats spreading throughout Southeast Asia; and

**WHEREAS**, the Royal Lao Armed Forces and the Special Guerrilla Units were United States loyal allied fighters and became best known for their heroic valor in intercepting enemy supply lines and rescuing American pilots; and

**WHEREAS**, the Royal Lao Armed Forces and the Special Guerrilla Units were armed and fought valiantly in the Secret War, enduring over 50,000 killed or missing in action with several thousand more veterans and their families perishing in Laos or fleeing across the Mekong River to Thailand; and

**WHEREAS**, when America withdrew from Southeast Asia, the allied forces and their families were driven out by the new Communist regime and were dispersed to many different Western countries, creating a diaspora of the people from Laos; and

**WHEREAS**, when the Communists took over Laos, more than 36,000 Lao soldiers of all ethnicities and government employees were sent to the re-education camps/prisons where thousands died by hardship, malnutrition, lack of medicine, and firing squad; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of Minnesota that it recognizes the Lao Freedom Fighters and the people of the former Kingdom of Laos for their service and valor in the Secret War in Laos during the Vietnam War on behalf of the United States of America.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Secretary of the Senate is directed to prepare an enrolled copy of this resolution, to be authenticated by the Secretary's signature and that of the Chair of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, and transmit it to Colonel Khao Khinsixiangmay on behalf of the Lao Freedom Fighters.

Cal R. Ludeman  
Secretary of the Senate

Paul E. Gazelka  
Chair, Senate Committee on  
Rules and Administration

John A. Hoffman  
State Senator, District 36