

A Senate resolution

honoring Soua Thao Heu.

**WHEREAS**, Soua Thao Heu was born on June 18, 1949, to Xeev Tsaab Thoj and Ntxhais Hawj in Nangha Mongpheng, Laos, and grew up without any formal schooling; and

**WHEREAS**, she married Chay Heu in 1964 and had five children: Foung Hawj, Fue Heu, Bao Heu, Chue Heu, and Thai Heu; and

**WHEREAS**, Soua was a self-made businesswoman who ran her own food-market stand at the Longtien Morning Market and opened and operated a pharmacy in Ban Xon City; and

**WHEREAS**, Soua and Chay bought their first home in the Duongpayna district in the capitol city of Vientiane in 1969 and gave free boarding to hill-tribe students attending school in the city; and

**WHEREAS**, after United States troops withdrew from Southeast Asia in 1975, Soua feared the genocide of her Hmong people and took her five children through the jungles of Laos and across the Mekong River into Thailand; and

**WHEREAS**, while in the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp, Soua applied for political asylum and came to the United States with her family on September 2, 1976; and

**WHEREAS**, Soua started her first job in the United States in April of 1979 and later worked two jobs to support her family after her husband became disabled; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1981, at the age of 32, Soua started school for the first time in her life and received a certificate in ESL from Donnelly College, while simultaneously encouraging her children to finish high school and attend college; and

**WHEREAS**, Soua and her family became naturalized United States citizens in 1981 and in 1984, she and her husband bought their first home in Kansas City in the Turner neighborhood; and

**WHEREAS**, Soua was a founding member of the First Hmong Missionary Alliance Church in Kansas City, Kansas, in 1988, and contributed support generously to the development of the church; and

**WHEREAS**, Soua retired at the age of 52 to help her husband with ministry work in Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, and Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2008, Soua moved permanently to Minnesota to be close to her children and worked tirelessly to help her eldest son, Foung Hawj, become elected as Senator of District 67; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2013, Soua's health began to suffer and, despite many surgeries, she continued to lead a meaningful and fulfilled life; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 14, 2019, Soua Thao Heu passed away peacefully at the age of 69 on Valentine's Day with her loving husband, children, and family by her side; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of Minnesota that it honors the life of Soua Thao Heu and extends its sincere condolences to her family and friends upon her passing.

**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 Senator Chris A. Eaton.

Cal R. Ludeman  
Secretary of the Senate

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

Foung Hawj  
State Senator, District 67

Chris A. Eaton  
State Senator, District 40

John A. Hoffman  
State Senator, District 36

Sandra L. Pappas  
State Senator, District 65

John Marty  
State Senator, District 66