

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 89

BY SENATOR MORRISH

A RESOLUTION

To designate May 5, 2014, as Vietnam Veterans Day and to commemorate the brave and steadfast service by America's Armed Forces during a time of upheaval on the home front and change on all sides.

WHEREAS, the Vietnam War was fought in the Republic of Vietnam from 1961 to 1975, and involved North Vietnamese regular forces and Viet Cong guerrilla forces in armed conflict with United States Armed Forces and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the United States Armed Forces became involved in Vietnam because the United States Government wanted to provide direct military support to the government of South Vietnam to defend itself against the growing Communist threat from North Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, members of the United States Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role to the government of the Republic of Vietnam in 1961; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2 and 4, 1964, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Public Law 88-408), on August 7, 1964, which provided the authority to the President of the United States to prosecute the war against North Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, United States Armed Forces ground combat units arrived in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, by the end of 1965, there were 80,000 United States troops in Vietnam, and by 1969, a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was reached; and

WHEREAS, on January 27, 1973, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which required the release of all United States prisoners-of-war held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United States Armed Forces from South Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, on March 30, 1973, the United States Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of combat units and combat support units from South Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, on April 30, 1975, North Vietnamese regular forces captured Saigon, the capitol of South Vietnam, effectively placing South Vietnam under Communist control; and

WHEREAS, more than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces were wounded, including many of Louisiana's finest; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in the District of Columbia to commemorate those members of the United States Armed Forces who died or were declared missing-in-action in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among the people of the United States and a conflict that caused a generation of veterans to wait too long for the United States public to acknowledge and honor the efforts and services of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, members of the United States Armed Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War were often wrongly criticized for the policy decisions made by four presidential administrations in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" would be an appropriate way to honor those members of the United States Armed Forces who served in South Vietnam and throughout Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana:

A. Honors and recognizes the contributions of veterans, particularly Louisiana veterans, who served in the United States Armed Forces in Vietnam during war and during peace.

B. Encourages the state and its local governments to establish "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day".

C. Encourages the people of Louisiana to observe "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" with appropriate ceremonies and activities that:

(1) Provide the appreciation Vietnam War veterans deserve, but did not receive upon returning home from the war.

(2) Demonstrate the resolve that never again shall the nation and this state disregard and denigrate a generation of veterans.

(3) Promote awareness of the faithful service and contributions of such veterans during their military service as well as to their communities since returning home.

(4) Promote awareness of the importance of entire communities empowering veterans and the families of veterans to readjust to civilian life after military service.

(5) Promote opportunities for such veterans to assist younger veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in rehabilitation from wounds, both seen and unseen, and to support the reintegration of younger veterans into civilian life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Governor Bobby Jindal, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, the Louisiana Municipal Association, the Police Jury Association of Louisiana, the Louisiana School Boards Association, and Alfred Cochran.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE