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February 16, 2011 - 12:16 PM

Sen. Burr Introduces “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day” Resolution

Legislation honors service members who fought in Vietnam

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Washington D.C – Today, Senator Richard Burr (R-N.C.), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, introduced a resolution to honor veterans who served in Vietnam by designating March 30th as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” March 30th marks the anniversary of the day that combat and combat support units withdrew completely from South Vietnam.

“Our soldiers served honorably and bravely in Vietnam. Unfortunately, they arrived home to a country in political turmoil, and never received the recognition they deserve,” Senator Burr said. “By setting March 30th aside as a day to focus on our Vietnam veterans, we can show our unified gratitude for their service and the sacrifices that these veterans made on our behalf.”

Senator Burr today also encouraged communities throughout the country to take measures to commemorate this day by honoring Vietnam veterans in their area. This is the second consecutive year that Senator Burr has introduced a resolution for the establishment of “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” Senators John Boozman (R-AR), Thad Cochran (R-MS), James Inhofe (R-OK), and Johnny Isakson (R-GA) co-sponsored the legislation.

The United States became involved in Vietnam because policy-makers believed that if South Vietnam fell to a communist government, communism would spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia. The US Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role to the South Vietnamese in 1961, and in 1965, ground combat troops were sent into Vietnam. After many years of combat, all US troops were withdrawn from Vietnam on March 30, 1973, under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. More than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives and more than 300,000 were wounded in Vietnam.

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112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 55

Expressing support for designation of a “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 16, 2011

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. JOHANNES) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for designation of a “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day”.

Whereas the Vietnam War was fought in the Republic of South 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;

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;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role to the Government of the Republic of South Vietnam in 1961;

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;

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

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;

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;

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

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

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;

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;

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;

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 4 presidential administrations in the United States;

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; and

Whereas March 30, 2011, would be an appropriate day to establish as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day”:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) honors and recognizes the contributions of
3 veterans who served in the United States Armed
4 Forces in Vietnam during war and during peace;

5 (2) encourages States and local governments to
6 also establish “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans
7 Day”; and

1 (3) encourages the people of the United States
2 to observe “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day”
3 with appropriate ceremonies and activities that—

4 (A) provide the appreciation Vietnam War
5 veterans deserve, but did not receive upon re-
6 turning home from the war;

7 (B) demonstrate the resolve that never
8 again shall the Nation disregard and denigrate
9 a generation of veterans;

10 (C) promote awareness of the faithful serv-
11 ice and contributions of such veterans during
12 their military service as well as to their commu-
13 nities since returning home;

14 (D) promote awareness of the importance
15 of entire communities empowering veterans and
16 the families of veterans to readjust to civilian
17 life after military service; and

18 (E) promote opportunities for such vet-
19 erans to assist younger veterans returning from
20 the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in rehabilita-
21 tion from wounds, both seen and unseen, and to
22 support the reintegration of younger veterans
23 into civilian life.

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Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day

Corps Connections, Features // March 29th, 2011 // By Pfc. Chelsea Flowers

On March 30, 1973 all U.S. troops withdrew from Vietnam. Instead of receiving a welcome fitting for the sacrifice they made for this country, the majority of the returning troops were met with criticism and hostility.

Frustration. Anger. Disloyal. Unappreciated. All of these words could describe the possible feelings and thoughts that went through the minds of these individuals. Some of these troops were drafted, yet still fought and died for the lives of the men to their right and left, only to be diminished for their accomplishments upon their return.

Over nine million military personnel served during the Vietnam War. Of that number 58,156 lost their lives, while 303,704 were wounded in action.

Politics played a key role in the lack of respect that was due to these individuals. Back then those who were against the war did not support the troops like many do today. Now, government is taking an opportunity to return that respect to the troops.

The U.S. Senate passed a resolution on March 7, 2011, declaring March 30 "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day." The resolution currently awaits a decision by the House. This day will be recognized across the U.S. as a day of commemoration, a day to pay the proper respect to the veterans who sacrificed so much during the war.

Vietnam Veteran's Day is a chance to repair the wrong done to these troops. The people of the United States can finally pay the respect due them.

Many cities and states have events planned for these veterans. Marines from Marine Corps Logistics Base in Barstow, Calif., have planned a ceremony honoring the Vietnam troops, followed by a parade through Fort Irwin. The base is also hosting a motorcycle ride in their honor.

We should all take this day to give our appreciation to our Vietnam veterans. Taking time out from our busy lives to give thanks for the sacrifices of those who we don't know is a display of kindness and admiration that means so much to those who expect so little.

Thank you all for what you have done. Semper Fidelis.

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