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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 16

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES NELSON, Tarr, Hopkins, McCarty, Rasmussen, Kaufman, Johnson, Schrage, Tilton, Josephson, Cronk**SENATORS Begich, Wielechowski, Olson, Gray-Jackson, Costello, Shower, Hughes, Reinbold, Kawasaki, Stevens, Holland, von Imhof, Bishop, Stedman, Revak, Myers, Micciche, Wilson, Kiehl, Hoffman****Introduced: 4/9/21****Referred: House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs****A RESOLUTION**

1 **Encouraging the United States Congress to pass legislation granting the Hmong veterans**
 2 **of the Vietnam War access to the same veteran benefits received by United States**
 3 **veterans.**

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 **WHEREAS**, beginning in 1960, the United States Central Intelligence Agency
 6 recruited thousands of Hmong people to fight against the Communist Pathet Lao and North
 7 Vietnamese Army regulars in Laos; and

8 **WHEREAS**, in July 1961, Brigadier General Edward G. Lansdale wrote in a memo to
 9 General Maxwell D. Taylor that about 9,000 Hmong tribesmen had been equipped for guerilla
 10 operations and these operations were being conducted with considerable effectiveness in
 11 Communist-dominated territory in Laos; and

12 **WHEREAS** as many as 100,000 Hmong soldiers were recruited and trained as
 13 Special Guerrilla Units to engage the North Vietnamese Army; and

14 **WHEREAS** the United States relied heavily on the Hmong Special Guerrilla Units,
 15 although outnumbered by enemy forces, to intercept and prevent the flow of troops and war

1 supplies along the Ho Chi Minh Trail; and

2 **WHEREAS** the Hmong soldiers conducted tactical guerrilla actions, flew thousands
3 of deadly combat missions in support of the United States Armed Forces and the Central
4 Intelligence Agency, and fought in conventional and guerilla combat with an extremely high
5 number of casualties; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Hmong soldiers protected United States personnel, guarded United
7 States Air Force radar installations, gathered critical intelligence about enemy operations, and
8 undertook rescue missions to save the lives of downed United States pilots; and

9 **WHEREAS** approximately 40,000 Hmong soldiers lost their lives defending
10 democracy, approximately 50,000 Hmong soldiers were seriously injured and disabled, and
11 approximately 3,000 Hmong soldiers were missing in action; and

12 **WHEREAS** Hmong soldiers died at 10 times the rate of United States soldiers in the
13 Vietnam War; and

14 **WHEREAS**, because the war effort of the United States in Laos was covert, the
15 accounts of the sacrifices and service of the Hmong soldiers remain largely unknown; and

16 **WHEREAS** many Hmong soldiers became refugees because the United States
17 government encouraged them to fight for the United States, and, as a result, thousands of
18 family members of Hmong soldiers were evacuated to a United States air base in Thailand to
19 avoid bloody vengeance by the communists in Laos and Vietnam; and

20 **WHEREAS**, after the conclusion of the Vietnam War, thousands of Hmong soldiers
21 suffered acts of retribution and atrocities by the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese, causing
22 hundreds of thousands of Hmong refugees to flee to neighboring Thailand; and

23 **WHEREAS** approximately 50,000 Hmong veterans reside in the United States, and
24 150,000 Hmong and Laotian-born children have graduated from schools in this country; and

25 **WHEREAS** the Hmong warriors were promised that they would be treated just like
26 other United States veterans;

27 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the United States
28 Congress to pass legislation granting the Hmong veterans of the Vietnam War full access to
29 the same veteran benefits received by United States veterans.

30 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President
31 of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and

1 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Denis McDonough, United States Secretary of
2 Veterans Affairs; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives;
3 the Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Kevin
4 McCarthy, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Mitch
5 McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the
6 Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,
7 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 117th United
8 States Congress.