

HJR

17

<TARGET><BILL>HJR 17</BILL><SUBJECT>HJR
17</SUBJECT><COMM>HMLV30</COMM></TARGET>

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

HJR 17

“Encouraging the United States Congress to pass legislation giving full military burial rights to Hmong veterans of the Vietnam War.”

Sponsor Statement

When the Vietnam War ended, Hmong veterans were promised veteran recognition. HJR 17 encourages the United States Congress to pass legislation granting Hmong veterans of the Vietnam War the full military burial rights they were promised and deserve.

There are an estimated 6,000 Hmong-American veterans living in the United States, with a sizeable number in Alaska. Beginning in the 1960's, the Central Intelligence Agency began recruiting Hmong people to help U.S. soldiers in the fight against communism. Between 1962 and 1975, about 12,000 Hmong soldiers died fighting against the Laotians. After the US withdrawal from Vietnam in 1975, the Lao kingdom was overthrown by the communist party and the Hmong became targets. The Hmong people were displaced and forced to relocate from Laos to Thailand, with some ending up in UN refugee camps.

It has been estimated that 30,000 Hmong were killed by the communists while trying to reach refuge in Thailand. All in all, over 100,000 Hmong people died as a result of both the Vietnam and “Secret” Wars.

The Hmong people put their faith and trust in the United States government, which promised them citizenship and veteran status after the war. Over fifty years later, Hmong-American veterans have yet to receive the veteran designation they've earned. We are asking that the promises made to people who risked everything for our country be honored. We owe all our veterans respect for their efforts and sacrifices made on behalf of this great nation. We must recognize how much our Hmong veterans gave and lost for our country. These patriotic individuals deserve to have their services honored with burial benefits in our national cemeteries.

We ask for your support for HJR17, to fulfill a promise fifty years overdue.

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1179

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to inter in national cemeteries individuals who supported the United States in Laos during the Vietnam War era, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 18, 2017

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to inter in national cemeteries individuals who supported the United States in Laos during the Vietnam War era, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Hmong Veterans'
5 Service Recognition Act".

1 **SEC. 2. ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERMENT IN NATIONAL CEME-**
2 **TERIES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2402(a) of title 38,
4 United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the
5 following new paragraph:

6 “(10) Any individual—

7 “(A) who—

8 “(i) was naturalized pursuant to sec-
9 tion 2(1) of the Hmong Veterans’ Natu-
10 ralization Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-
11 207; 8 U.S.C. 1423 note); and

12 “(ii) at the time of the individual’s
13 death resided in the United States; or

14 “(B) who—

15 “(i) the Secretary determines served
16 honorably with a special guerrilla unit or
17 irregular forces operating from a base in
18 Laos in support of the Armed Forces of
19 the United States at any time during the
20 period beginning February 28, 1961, and
21 ending May 7, 1975; and

22 “(ii) at the time of the individual’s
23 death—

24 “(I) was a citizen of the United
25 States or an alien lawfully admitted

1 for permanent residence in the United
2 States; and

3 “(II) resided in the United
4 States.”.

5 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
6 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to an individual
7 dying on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

○

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE
TO: HJR 17

BY REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER

- 1 Page 2, line 24, following "veterans;":
- 2 Insert "and
- 3 **WHEREAS** Senator Lisa Murkowski has introduced in the United States Senate a bill
- 4 relating to the burial of Hmong veterans;"