



Legislation Text

File #: RES 16-1024, **Version:** 1

Proclaiming MN Hmong Lao Secret War Special Forces Memorial Statue Recognition Day

WHEREAS, from 1961 to 1975, during the Secret War, the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) ran a covert counterinsurgency operation in Laos that became known as the Secret War; and

WHEREAS, the CIA recruited Hmong Lao individuals from Laos to help fight the communists; and

WHEREAS, the Hmong Lao soldiers fought shoulder-to-shoulder with American soldiers; and

WHEREAS, the Hmong Lao were recruited initially to shield Laos from communist takeover, and were later instructed to interdict convoys of supplies on the Ho Chi Minh Trail; and

WHEREAS, these young Hmong Lao earned a reputation as capable, loyal, and brave fighters, and their service in combat proved to match the best guerrilla fighters in the world; and

WHEREAS, many Hmong Lao soldiers paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country, and our nation owes a debt of gratitude to them; and

WHEREAS, these Hmong Lao soldiers played an important and unique role in United States military history; and

WHEREAS, about 90,000 Hmong Lao Americans now live in Minnesota after the 1975 communist takeover as political refugees; and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2003, Minnesota legislature approved the construction of the memorial on the Capitol Mall Monument to honor the Hmong Lao Veterans who served in the "Secret War" in Laos, during the Secret War; and

WHEREAS, in March 2013, funding legislation was introduced in the Minnesota Senate and House of Representatives and passed in the 2014 Bonding Bill; and

WHEREAS, in May 2014, the Governor signed and approved funding to build the memorial; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the memorial statue was funded by the Hmong-Lao American communities throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, on May 16, 2015, the ground-breaking ceremony took place, beginning the initial foundation for the construction of the memorial statue; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the City Council that the City of Saint Paul hereby proclaims June 11, 2016 as MN Hmong Lao Secret War Special Forces In Lao Memorial Statue Recognition Day; be it further

RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul recognizes the MN Hmong Lao Special Forces who fought bravely for the United States during the Secret War; be it further

RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul recognize the dedication and unwavering commitment of the members of the Statue Committee, the Hmong-Lao American communities, and the MN Legislature and Governor.