



Legislation Text

File #: RES 14-1256, **Version:** 2

Commemorating the life of Nai Koo Shong Ger Thao.

WHEREAS, Shong Ger Thao was born in Long Tieng, Laos on December 6, 1937; and

WHEREAS, he was the tenth child of thirteen to ZaThao Thao, father, and Ma Yang, mother; and

WHEREAS, at the age of nine, Shong Ger Thao joined the Lao Buddhist temple and in 1948, Shong Ger Thao later joined the Roman Catholic Church in Phonsavan, Laos; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, at the age of 24, Shong Ger Thao married his first wife Kia Vang; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Shong Ger Thao joined the Secret War Army of Laos under the support and auspices of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Shong Ger Thao served under the supervision of Col. Neng Chue Thao of the city of Phakhao and Long Tieng and in 1966 was promoted to Nai Koo; and

WHEREAS, Shong Ger Thao survived many combat battles before leaving the army and joining the Mayor's Office of Xao Chia Thao in the province of Xieng Hong, Laos; and

WHEREAS, in 1967 Shong Ger Thao was recruited by the Royal Lao Government to participate in the development and studies of Government in Sam Thong, Laos; and

WHEREAS, in 1971 Shong Ger Thao was recognized as a Scholar by the Royal Lao Government and, from 1971 to 1975, he served as a Justice of the Court in the Province of Xieng Hong in Laos; and

WHEREAS, in 1975 after his country fell into the hands of the Communist force, he and his family were forced to flee across the Mekong River in search of freedom in Thailand; and

WHEREAS, on June 14, 1975 Shong Ger Thao and his family became refugees and lived in the Nong Khai Camp; and

WHEREAS, Shong Ger Thao and his family later relocated to Nam Phong, Thailand in August 1975, then later forced to relocate to refugee Camp in Ban Vinai, Thailand in January 1976; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, Shong Ger Thao and his family arrived in the United States as refugees of the Secret War in Southeast Asia, and resided in Saint Paul, MN; and

WHEREAS, Shong Ger Thao served Saint Paul, Minnesota as a Civilian Leader, a Master Maker of Qeej (Hmong Bamboo Instruments), Blacksmith, Hmong Cultural and Traditional Expert, Mentor, and a Shaman (Spiritual Healer); and

WHEREAS, in 1993, Shong Ger Thao was invited as a Hmong Religious, Cultural and Traditional Expert by the Chinese Chancellor to attend a Cultural Event in China to talk about the history of the Hmong and its culture and traditions; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, Shong Ger Thao was a co-founding member of the Hmong Cultural Center and an advisor to Hmong 18 Clan Council in MN, established to deal with conflict resolution and mediation between Hmong cultural values that were not consistent with those of the American legal system; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Shong Ger Thao was asked as a Hmong Religious and Cultural Expert to provide testimony on Human Rights Program at the United Nation on the Hmong Grave Desecration in Thailand; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, Shong Ger Thao was provided a Certificate of Recognition for his expertise in Hmong Culture, Traditional Practices and History by the University of Saint Catherine, located in Saint Paul, MN; and

WHEREAS, Nai Koo Shong Ger Thao died on June 16th, 2014, in Saint Paul, MN, where he shared his life with all his 17 children, 32 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren, all whom were a source of great pride for Shong Ger Thao and his wife and life partner, Kia Yang, in their adopted homeland; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Saint Paul City Council, we commemorate the life of Nai Koo Shong Ger Thao for his service in the community and in Saint Paul, MN; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the City extends heartfelt condolences to the family of Nai Koo Shong Ger Thao.