



Legislation Text

File #: RES 16-1925, **Version:** 1

Proclaiming November 5, 2016 to be Colonel Song Leng Xiong Day.

WHEREAS, Colonel Song Leng Xiong was born on June 15, 1935 and served in the Secret War of Laos defending and protecting American interests; and

WHEREAS, President Dwight D. Eisenhower and President John F. Kennedy in 1961, viewed Laos as the “cork in the bottle” in the United States’ strategy to prevent and contain communist dominion over most of the Far East, known as the Domino Theory; and

WHEREAS, in order to keep the “cork in the bottle” and while avoiding the risks of overt military intervention, as was prohibited by the 1954 Geneva Accord which prevented foreign troops in Laos , beginning in 1960, the United States Central Intelligence Agency recruited thousands of Hmong to fight against the Communist Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese Army regulars in Laos as surrogate soldiers of the United States Armed Forces; and

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

WHEREAS, the Hmong conducted tactical guerrilla actions, flew thousands of deadly combat missions, guarded radar installations, gathered critical intelligence about enemy movements and operations, and undertook rescue missions to save the lives of downed American pilots; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, after having served in the French Army since the age of 14, Colonel Song Leng Xiong was among the first to be selected by General Vang Pao and the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to further his military training in Hua Hin, Thailand; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, upon his return from Thailand, he was tasked with commanding battalion 1, which had the responsibilities of expanding the CIA base and headquarter of General Vang Pao, Long Tieng; and

WHEREAS, during Colonel Song Leng Xiong’s distinguished military career, he participated in many battles as well as personally rescued and retrieved over seven American pilots who were shot down over Laos; and

WHEREAS, after the United States pulled out of Laos on May 14, 1975, Colonel Song Leng Xiong became a refugee in Thailand until deciding to immigrate to Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1993, after the United Nations sponsored Ban Vinai Refugee Camp closed; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Xiong continued being an active member of the community advocating and improving the lives of all Hmong Americans who have made an impact to the cultural and social fabric of Saint Paul and the entire United States; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Xiong encouraged all community members to participate actively in social, cultural,

educational, economic, and political aspects of life in the United States; and

WHEREAS, even when Colonel Xiong was ill, he continued leading by example; he continued participating and supporting cultural and community events such as the unveiling of the Lao-Hmong American memorial statue on the MN State Capitol grounds in Saint Paul until his passing on September 28, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Xiong's legacy will forever be honored and celebrated by the community for his leadership, bravery, and sacrifices; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Saint Paul proclaims November 5, 2016 to be the Colonel Song Leng Xiong Day and to afford an opportunity for people to recognize the service and sacrifice of Colonel Song Leng Xiong with appropriate ceremonies and activities.