

First Regular Session
Seventy-first General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

ENGROSSED

LLS NO. R17-1180.01 Gwynne Middleton x4340

SJR17-039

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Kerr and Crowder,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Lebsack and Carver,

Senate Committees

House Committees

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 17-039

101 CONCERNING THE RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCE OF MILITARY
102 VETERANS IN COLORADO WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM WAR
103 AND TO COMMEMORATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
104 VIETNAM WAR.

1 WHEREAS, While the Vietnam War had started within the
2 country by 1955, direct United States military involvement in the Vietnam
3 War began in the Republic of South Vietnam in 1961 and continued until
4 1975, involving North Vietnamese regular forces and Viet Cong guerrilla
5 forces in armed conflict with U.S. Armed Forces and the Army of the
6 Republic of Vietnam; and

7 WHEREAS, During this period, more than three million American
8 soldiers, both volunteers and draftees, served tours of duty in Vietnam,
9 with a total of more than 9,000,000 active duty military personnel, in

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

SENATE
Final Reading
May 1, 2017

1 what was an extremely long, difficult, and complex war; and

2 WHEREAS, More than 58,000 members of the U.S. Armed
3 Forces, including 611 Coloradans, lost their lives in Vietnam, and more
4 than 300,000 members of the U.S. Armed Forces were wounded; and

5 WHEREAS, In addition, more than 2,500 members of the U.S.
6 Armed Forces were listed as "Prisoners of War" (POWs) or "Missing In
7 Action", including 41 Coloradans, 24 of whom remain unaccounted for;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, According to the Denver Regional Office of the
10 federal Department of Veteran Affairs, as of 2014, an estimated seven
11 million members of the U.S. Armed Forces who served their country
12 during the Vietnam era are still alive today, including more than 127,000
13 Coloradans; and

14 WHEREAS, On January 27, 1973, the Paris Peace Accords were
15 signed, which required the release of all U.S. POWs held in North
16 Vietnam and the withdrawal of all U.S. Armed Forces from South
17 Vietnam; and

18 WHEREAS, The U.S. Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of
19 combat units and combat support units from South Vietnam by March 30,
20 1973; and

21 WHEREAS, On April 30, 1975, North Vietnamese regular forces
22 captured Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, marking the official end
23 of the Vietnam War; and

24 WHEREAS, As American military personnel completed their tours
25 of duty in Vietnam, they returned home to a citizenry that was divided in
26 its opinions of that conflict, and many people failed to distinguish their
27 political and philosophical viewpoints toward the war from the
28 individuals who had served; and

29 WHEREAS, In the intervening decades, our citizenry has come to
30 understand more clearly the importance of recognizing and respecting the
31 service of military veterans, regardless of any other opinions or issues;
32 and

33 WHEREAS, The need for a formal recognition of the return of

1 veterans from the Vietnam War is as important now as ever, not only for
2 those veterans who served but for all citizens; and

3 WHEREAS, April 30, 2017, marks the 42nd anniversary of the
4 end of the Vietnam War; and

5 WHEREAS, In 2007, the 110th Congress incorporated language
6 in H.R. 4986, which would become law as the 2008 federal "National
7 Defense Authorization Act", that authorized the Secretary of Defense to
8 conduct a program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam
9 War to honor veterans of the war and to highlight the service of the U.S.
10 Armed Forces during the Vietnam War; and

11 WHEREAS, The United States of America Vietnam War
12 Commemoration began with the Presidential inaugural event at the
13 Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Memorial Day,
14 May 28, 2012, and concludes on Veterans Day, November 11, 2025, by
15 Presidential proclamation; and

16 WHEREAS, For the purposes of this Commemoration, November
17 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975, is the time period recognized to honor the
18 service and sacrifice of those who served on active duty in the U.S.
19 Armed Forces during the Vietnam War; and

20 WHEREAS, The Commemoration does not distinguish between
21 veterans who served in-country or in-theater or who were stationed
22 elsewhere during the Vietnam War; now, therefore,

23 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-first General Assembly*
24 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

25 That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, hereby:

26 (1) Honor the service and sacrifices of the military veterans in
27 Colorado who served in Vietnam, including the South Vietnamese
28 soldiers who served alongside American troops;

29 (2) Recognize the particular challenges faced by many of these
30 veterans, both while serving in Vietnam and upon returning home;

31 (3) Express our appreciation for their fortitude, their activism on
32 behalf of fellow veterans, their steadfast patriotism, and the many

1 accomplishments, contributions, and leadership that these veterans have
2 made to their families, community organizations, and the state; and

3 (4) Encourage all Coloradans to remember the sacrifices made by
4 Vietnam veterans on April 30, 2017, the 42nd anniversary marking the
5 end of the Vietnam War, and to continue to participate in the ongoing
6 50th anniversary Commemoration activities to pay solemn tribute to, and
7 to never forget, the veterans of the Vietnam War.

8 *Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
9 to the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; the United
10 Veterans' Committee of Colorado; Project Sanctuary; the United States
11 Vietnamese American Volunteers Alliance; the President of the United
12 States, Donald J. Trump; the honorable John Hickenlooper, Governor of
13 Colorado; and the Colorado Congressional delegation.