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SCR-165 Republic of Vietnam Month. (2015-2016)

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 165

CHAPTER 187

Relative to the Republic of Vietnam Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 09, 2016.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 165, Nguyen. Republic of Vietnam Month.

This measure proclaims the month of October 2016 as Republic of Vietnam Month, in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the first Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam, in honor of the lives lost for freedom and democracy during the Vietnam War, and in recognition of the positive contributions of Vietnamese Americans to the State of California.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The people of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) and the United States found common ground in their shared principles of democracy and individual liberties, coming together to valiantly defend these tenets against communism; and

WHEREAS, October 2016 marks the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the first Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam, which established that nation's first democracy; and

WHEREAS, Until the Fall of Saigon in 1975, the government of the Republic of Vietnam sought to defend the lives, freedom, and property of its people and was at the forefront of the fight for democracy in Southeast Asia; and

WHEREAS, In an effort to protect the democratic government of the Republic of Vietnam from socialist control, the United States, Australia, the Philippines, New Zealand, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand fought vigorously to aid the Republic of Vietnam in their fight against communism; and

WHEREAS, Despite a valiant effort from countries around the world, Saigon fell, compelling nearly three million Vietnamese to flee the country in search of freedom and refuge in neighboring countries with approximately half of these individuals perishing at sea before reaching a safe haven; and

WHEREAS, The United States welcomed many Vietnamese refugees following the collapse of the Republic of Vietnam, and today, the State of California is home to more than 500,000 Vietnamese Americans that enrich the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our state through their significant contributions to the fields of education, business, politics, arts, science, and technology; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of State's 2014 edition of the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for Vietnam estimates 125 political detainees are being held, and the International Labor Rights Forum reports that mistreatment has continued at reeducation centers, including forcing detainees to produce goods for private companies; and

WHEREAS, Human rights, religious freedom, democracy, and protection against threats of aggression are important concerns of Vietnamese Americans and Vietnamese communities worldwide stemming from human rights abuses that continue to occur in Vietnam in the following areas, among others, child labor, human trafficking, religious and political persecution, suppression of the press, unlawful deprivation of life, forced disappearances, and land seizure; and

WHEREAS, We must teach our children and future generations important lessons from the Vietnam War and the continuing situation in Vietnam, including how the plight of the Vietnamese refugees following the end of the war serves as a powerful example of the values of freedom and democracy and how we can improve the quality of life of the veterans and disabled veterans of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and draw attention to the plight of the wives of the fallen soldiers who continue to suffer; and

WHEREAS, For their brave resolution to defend freedom around the world, Republic of Vietnam Month seeks to recognize the sacrifice of the more than 58,000 American service members who lost their lives to defend democracy in Vietnam, as well as the more than one million people, including service members, supporting personnel, and their families, who made great sacrifices and contributions to the fight for freedom; and

WHEREAS, Republic of Vietnam Month also honors the members of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and government officials, many of whom perished or were captured and held in communist labor camps where they suffered unspeakable abuses, as well as to recognize the sacrifice of their families, especially the wives who displayed admirable courage in the face of tragedy; and

WHEREAS, To honor the great sacrifices made in the fight for democracy, communities throughout California will dedicate the month of October as a time to reflect on principles of freedom and democracy and the sacrifices that have been made towards the attainment of these ideals, as well as to commemorate the anniversary of the first democracy of the Republic of Vietnam and to thank the millions of veterans around the world who fought during the Vietnam War; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby proclaims the month of October 2016 as Republic of Vietnam Month, in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the first Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam, in honor of the lives lost for freedom and democracy during the Vietnam War, and in recognition of the positive contributions of Vietnamese Americans to the State of California; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.