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SCR-103 Veterans of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day. (2023-2024)

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 103

CHAPTER 183

Relative to veterans.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 28, 2024.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 103, Nguyen. Veterans of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day.

This measure would recognize June 19, 2024, as Veterans of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The Republic of Vietnam Military Forces, or South Vietnamese armed forces, were formally established on December 30, 1955, by Ngo Dinh Diem, the first President of South Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, The Republic of Vietnam Military Forces consisted of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Vietnam Air Force, and the Republic of Vietnam Navy, which included the Republic of Vietnam Marine Division; and

WHEREAS, The duties of those branches included protecting the sovereignty of the free Vietnamese nation and the Republic, maintaining the political and social order and the rule of law by providing internal security, defending the newly independent Republic of Vietnam from external and internal threats, and helping to reunify Vietnam, a country that had been divided since the Geneva Accords of 1954; and

WHEREAS, The Vietnam War brought about the loss of more than 250,000 members of the South Vietnamese armed forces and more than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, More than 300,000 members of the United States Armed Forces and more than 1,000,000 members of the South Vietnamese armed forces were injured; and

WHEREAS, After the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975, more than 250,000 members of the South Vietnamese armed forces were sent to prison camps where many spent 18 years or more in captivity and more than 20,000 died before they were released; and

WHEREAS, The end of the Vietnam War left the South Vietnamese armed forces in disarray. Many military personnel and their family members fled Vietnam to escape tyrannical authoritarian rule and oppression, hoping to find democracy and freedom in the United States and other free nations. They spent months at sea and in jungles, battling hunger, thirst, and separation from their families and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Many of those who reached the United States found refuge in California and other states throughout the country. They faced socioeconomic challenges but were determined to build entirely new lives here; and

WHEREAS, In the United States, these military personnel continued to fight for their home country and the people there. They have been a strong voice for democracy, religious freedom, and human rights in Vietnam and have contributed culturally and economically to our society and to the diversity of our nation; and

WHEREAS, These veterans were fighting side by side with American soldiers against a common enemy and risked their lives to save many American lives. All veterans who risked their lives fighting for freedom in the Vietnam War should be honored for their distinguished service and for the contributions they continue to provide to the United States as American citizens. It is the intent of the State of California to honor the sacrifices, commitment, dedication, and courage of everyone who fought for the freedom of the Republic of Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, Annually, Vietnamese Americans around the world recognize the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day on June 19, and this year, 2024, marks the 59th anniversary of this annual commemoration; and

WHEREAS, Thousands of veterans of the South Vietnamese armed forces now reside in the United States and participate in activities sponsored by American veterans, including Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Independence Day, and there are more than 100,000 veterans from the Republic of Vietnam living in California today; and

WHEREAS, The service members who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their nation and those who have contributed greatly to the development of our society deserve to be honored and recognized; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes June 19, 2024, as Veterans of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Day in memory of the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for freedom and democracy and the victims of the Vietnam War and in honor of the survivors, activists, and freedom fighters of that war; and be it further

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