

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 163

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 132

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 163—Relative to the 25th anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 18, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 163, Cook. California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

This measure would recognize the 25th anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial on November 23, 2013, and encourage all Californians to take part in ceremonies, organized by the California State Council of Vietnam Veterans of America along with assistance from the Department of Veterans Affairs and other veterans service organizations. This measure would call upon the state archives to display memorabilia in a special display on the Vietnam War, as provided, the California State Military Museum to prepare and display exhibits on the Vietnam War, as provided, and the Department of Veterans Affairs to add names to the memorial, as provided.

WHEREAS, California has the largest United States veterans' population in the nation, comprised of approximately 2 million armed services veterans, which is 12.3 percent of the nationwide veteran population of nearly 25 million veterans, who represent approximately one-fifth of California's total population; and

WHEREAS, More than 350,000 California veterans served in Vietnam, resulting in 5,822 of them being killed or missing in action, which comprised more than 10 percent of the nation's total, and 40,000 of them being wounded; and

WHEREAS, More California residents died in Vietnam than residents of any other state and California veterans received more Medals of Honor, Bronze Stars, and Purple Hearts than veterans of any other state; and

WHEREAS, The history of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial began when Herman Woods, a double amputee who served in the 1st Air Cavalry Division, United States Army (1970), returned to California from the dedication of the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial in our nation's capitol, Washington, D.C. in 1982; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Member Richard Floyd subsequently held a rally on the steps of the State Capitol, and over 800 people attended; he was convinced that construction of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial was the will of California Vietnam veterans; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Member Richard Floyd introduced Assembly Bill 650, which created the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Capitol

Park, that was signed into law by Governor Deukmejian in September 1983; and

WHEREAS, The newly formed Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission was comprised of nine veterans, eight of whom served in Vietnam, including Linda J. McClenahan, Chairperson, Leo K. Thorsness, Medal of Honor recipient and Vice Chairperson, and members Gregory C. Green, Treasurer, Abel A. Cota, Secretary, B.T. Collins, Don A. Drumheller, Jesse G. Ugalde, Senator Jim Ellis, Assembly Member Richard E. Floyd, member and author of Assembly Bill 650, and Jerri L. Dale, Executive Officer, which led to the creation of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial; and

WHEREAS, The California Vietnam Veterans Memorial is located in the northeast section of the Capitol Park grounds of the State Capitol and is a standing tribute to the 5,822 servicemen and servicewomen killed and missing in action; and

WHEREAS, The California Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated on December 10, 1988, in Capitol Park; and there were thousands in attendance at the dedication ceremonies where Brigadier General George B. Price was the keynote speaker at the dedication; and the dedication events were spread out over a two-day period, commencing with “Buddy Search” registrations, unit reunions, open houses, and concluding with the dedication ceremony in Capitol Park; and

WHEREAS, The theme of the memorial reflects the overwhelming majority of those who were killed in Vietnam, including 19-year-old infantry soldiers, their youth, camaraderie, the fatigue of the war, and the American women who served, with the winning entry in the opening design competition awarded to Michael Larson, a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran, and Thomas Chytrowski; and

WHEREAS, B.T. Collins and Stan Atkinson, who had traveled to Vietnam together after the war, undertook the mission of raising the necessary funds to complete the memorial; and

WHEREAS, The California State Council of Vietnam Veterans of America will be the organizer of this event as they were for the 2008 20th anniversary event; and

WHEREAS, all California components of veterans service organizations will be participating in this historic event; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby commemorates 2013 as the 25-year anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial, encourages all Californians to take part in the ceremonies commemorating the 25-year anniversary, to be held on November 23, 2013, including opening ceremonies; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges that all steps necessary to inform all Californians of the date of these ceremonies and locations of these events be taken so that all Californians may have the opportunity to remember and honor the service, efforts, and sacrifices of Vietnam veterans, and to pay homage to those veterans who are still alive; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Veterans Affairs shall provide assistance to the organizers of the 25th anniversary commemoration event in promoting and conducting this historic event; and be it further

Resolved, That the state archives display memorabilia that have been left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, since the memorial was dedicated, and that are currently deposited in the state archives, in a special display for 2013 on the Vietnam War; and be it further

Resolved, That the California State Military Museum shall prepare and display exhibits on the Vietnam War at the Department of Veterans Affairs and at the State Capitol; and be it further

Resolved, That all state agencies shall promote the memorial event and honor men and women who are Vietnam War veterans; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Veterans Affairs should establish a task force to compile a list of California servicemen and servicewomen whose names may not be currently listed on the memorial so that they can be added to the memorial; and be it further

Resolved, That names should be added to the memorial of California Vietnam veterans whose passing since their service in Vietnam can reasonably be attributed to their wartime service, based upon recommendations from interested parties; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature calls upon the Governor to issue a proclamation on November 23, 2013, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.