



2005 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 37

September 22, 2005 - Introduced by Senators BROWN and ZIEN, cosponsored by Representatives KREIBICH, MOULTON, WOOD and MUSSER. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** recognizing and celebrating the life of Dr. Vang Pobzeb.

2 Whereas, Dr. Vang Pobzeb was born in Laos on July 12, 1957, and died in St.
3 Paul, Minnesota on August 23, 2005, of a heart attack at the age of 48; and

4 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb lived a life of sacrifice, working tireless hours to help
5 immigrants in Wisconsin to retain benefits and pursue a better life; and

6 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb was characterized by friends as compassionate and
7 selfless, often working 16 hour days to respond to every call and letter requesting
8 help; and

9 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb was among the first in the Hmong community to achieve
10 academic excellence in the United States by earning his Ph.D. from the University
11 of Denver in Political Science; and

12 Whereas, working with public and private groups, Dr. Pobzeb advanced the
13 cause of human rights and stood up for those who did not have the means or
14 opportunity to defend themselves; and

1 Whereas, in addition to issues surrounding the Hmong community, Dr. Pobzeb
2 was often called upon by other various human rights organizations to advocate on
3 their behalf; and

4 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb established the Lao Human Rights Council, in Eau Claire,
5 Wisconsin, in 1987, to promote human rights of Lao and Hmong people; and

6 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb worked as Director for the Lao Human Rights Council,
7 serving to educate and inform members of the U.S. government, United Nations,
8 state governments, and international human rights organizations to oppose forced
9 repatriation of Laos refugees and globally advocate for the protection of political
10 prisoners in Thailand and Laos; and

11 Whereas, through the Lao Human Rights Council, Dr. Pobzeb cooperated and
12 worked with other international human rights organizations to promote civil rights,
13 peace, and freedom for Lao and Hmong people; and

14 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb believed in democracy and freedom for all people, which
15 is why the acts of genocide and chemical and biological warfare going on inside Laos
16 inspired him to lead the Hmong community and urge political leaders to give aid to
17 political refugees and demand responsibility for the murdering of innocent civilians
18 in Communist Laos; and

19 Whereas, often serving as the voice of the Hmong people in the United Nations,
20 Dr. Pobzeb attended several international conferences, including the 23rd Session
21 in Geneva, Switzerland in 2005; and

22 Whereas, one of his greatest accomplishments was when, in 1994, he officially
23 registered the name “Hmong” into the book of the United Nations, whereas prior to
24 that Hmong were officially known as “Mao”; and

1 Whereas, through his work, Dr. Pobzeb had several correspondences with U.N.
2 Secretary General Kofi Annan, federal representatives and senators, ambassadors,
3 state and local representatives, as well as several other highly influential political
4 leaders, to advocate on behalf of the Hmong people; and

5 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb often said his purpose was to “promote and defend the
6 human rights of Lao and Hmong people in Laos and the Lao and Hmong refugees in
7 Southeast Asia and around the world,” and he achieved this purpose, positively
8 affecting thousands across the globe; and

9 Whereas, he was a leader to a group that had little representation in the United
10 States, and helped put a local, state, national, and international spotlight on an issue
11 that was not receiving the attention it deserved; and

12 Whereas, Dr. Pobzeb was more than a political leader to the people who knew
13 him, to the countless individuals and families he helped, and to the overall cause of
14 bringing peace and freedom to Lao and Hmong people, he was a hero; and

15 Whereas, his life was cut short, but he lived his 48 years to the fullest, making
16 a tremendous impact on Hmong rights, spending his time educating anyone who
17 would listen on the horrifying circumstances in Laos and his determination to stand
18 up for freedom; now, therefore, be it

19 ***Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That*** the members of the
20 Wisconsin legislature honor Dr. Vang Pobzeb for his dedication to the Hmong
21 community and his dream of peace and freedom for all people; and, be it further

22 ***Resolved, That*** the senate chief clerk shall provide copies of this joint
23 resolution to his wife, Nou Moua.

24

(END)