## **2003 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 18**

February 18, 2003 – Introduced by Senators Welch, George, Zien, Brown, Decker, Cowles, Kanavas, M. Meyer, Hansen and Carpenter, cosponsored by Representatives Huebsch, McCormick, Krawczyk, Hundertmark, Kreibich, J. Wood, Musser, Plale, Vrakas, Petrowski, Albers, Ladwig, Bies, Cullen, Schooff, Krug, Travis, Balow, Plouff, Huber and Turner. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

## **Relating to:** declaring May 14 Hmong–Lao Appreciation Day.

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Whereas, the Hmong–Lao, once an agrarian community from the mountainous regions of northern Laos, were recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency to fight for American interests, and thousands of Hmong–Lao men and young boys fought bravely alongside Americans; and

Whereas, the primary missions of the Hmong-Lao were to rescue downed American pilots, gather intelligence, safeguard U.S. radar installations, and conduct both guerrilla and conventional combat; and

Whereas, when Americans withdrew from Vietnam in the early 1970s, the Hmong–Lao were left to face the vengeance of the communist Lao and Vietnamese governments, who sought to destroy Hmong–Lao in retaliation for their support of the United States; and

Whereas, many Hmong-Lao fled Laos to live in refugee camps in Thailand and then settled in the United States and other countries, of which more than 250,000 are living in the United States; and

Whereas, General Vang Pao and other Hmong–Lao soldiers and people in Laos first fled Laos on May 14, 1975, to Thailand and then resettled in the United States and other countries. There are estimated to be 500,000 Hmong and Lao Americans in the United States in 2002. These numbers include the refugees who came from Laos and Thailand and the subsequent children born to these refugees in the United states in the last 26 years; and

Whereas, the U.S. government and Hmong and Lao soldiers and people worked together to defend peace, security, freedom, and democracy for the United States and the rest of the free world during the Vietnam War; and

Whereas, after the conclusion of the Vietnam War, thousands of Hmong and Lao soldiers were arrested, imprisoned, and killed by the communist Lao and Vietnamese governments; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That** the members of the Wisconsin legislature declare May 14 "Hmong–Lao Appreciation Day" for their heroic contributions on behalf of the United States during the Vietnam War and urge Congress to establish May 14 as Hmong–Lao Recognition Day throughout the United States; and, be it further

**Resolved, That** the senate chief clerk shall provide a copy of this joint resolution to the Lao Veterans of Wisconsin, to the president and secretary of the U.S. senate, to the speaker and clerk of the U.S. house of representatives, and to each member of the congressional delegation from this state attesting the adoption of this joint resolution by the 2003 legislature of the state of Wisconsin.