

By: Smith of Harris

H.R. No. 840

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Americans have served courageously in every war they
2 have been summoned to fight, and those who saw duty in Southeast
3 Asia during the Vietnam War are deserving of acknowledgment for
4 their steadfast efforts during that long and difficult conflict;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, After France withdrew from Vietnam in 1954, the
7 United States moved to support the creation of an anti-Communist
8 government in the southern part of the country; along with sending
9 military aid, the United States also sent advisors to help train the
10 South Vietnamese Army; in 1959, two such advisors became the first
11 American military personnel to be killed in Vietnam when they died
12 at the hands of Communist guerillas; and

13 WHEREAS, Two years later, in May 1961, President John F.
14 Kennedy sent the first Green Beret advisors to South Vietnam to
15 assist its army in developing a counterinsurgency capability; by
16 the end of 1964, the number of American advisors in South Vietnam
17 had grown to 23,000; and

18 WHEREAS, In August 1964, Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin
19 Resolution, giving the president of the United States broad powers
20 to wage war; early the next year, the Vietcong launched a series of
21 attacks throughout South Vietnam; in response to the deteriorating
22 situation, 3,500 U.S. Marines were dispatched to that country, the
23 first American ground combat troops to be deployed there; at the
24 same time, the United States began an intensive bombing campaign

1 against North Vietnam; and

2 WHEREAS, The number of U.S. troops in Vietnam continued to
3 rise until it peaked at 543,400 in 1969; by that time, the number of
4 Americans killed in the struggle surpassed the number of Americans
5 lost in the Korean War; the United States fought on in Vietnam until
6 the signing of the Paris Peace Accords on January 27, 1973; two
7 months later, on March 29, the last American troops in Vietnam
8 withdrew from the country; and

9 WHEREAS, In addition to ending American military involvement
10 in Vietnam, the peace agreement provided for the exchange of
11 prisoners; during the war, most American POWs were held at camps in
12 North Vietnam, but some were imprisoned in South Vietnam, Laos,
13 Cambodia, and China; Operation Homecoming, the repatriation effort
14 mounted by the United States, returned 566 military personnel and
15 25 civilians over the course of February and March 1973; today,
16 approximately 1,700 Americans remain unaccounted for, most of whom
17 are presumed or known to have died; and

18 WHEREAS, Altogether, 3.4 million members of the U.S. military
19 served in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, and nearly 2.6
20 million saw duty in South Vietnam itself; more than 58,000 American
21 service members, including nearly 3,500 from Texas, lost their
22 lives in the war, and over 150,000 were seriously injured; and

23 WHEREAS, The men and women who served this country in the
24 Vietnam War, including those veterans who are members of the Texas
25 House of Representatives, are deserving of their fellow citizens'
26 deep respect and gratitude, and it is indeed fitting that a special
27 day be set aside to honor their bravery, their devotion to duty, and

1 their immeasurable sacrifice; now, therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
3 Legislature hereby recognize March 29, 2011, as Vietnam Veterans
4 Day in the State of Texas and encourage all citizens of the Lone
5 Star State to join in observing this solemn day of tribute and
6 commemoration.