



STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

WHEREAS: In 1961, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the United States recruited and trained the Hmong and Lao hill tribes as the Special Guerrilla Unit (SGU) to support the United States during the Vietnam War from 1961 to 1975; and

WHEREAS: The Hmong and Lao SGU are best known for their heroic valor in intercepting enemy supply lines and rescuing American pilots; and

WHEREAS: When the United States withdrew from Southeast Asia, Hmong were driven out by the new regime who had been their long-time enemy; and

WHEREAS: May 14, 1975, was the last day of airlift evacuations of officers and their families from the covert headquarters in Long Tieng, Laos to the Nam Phong refugee camp in Thailand; and

WHEREAS: The thousands left behind went into hiding in the jungles of Laos and escaped across the Mekong River; and

WHEREAS: Many perished without proper burial, ceremony, or closure for their families and loved ones; with a death toll of more than 40,000, nearly wiping out the Hmong population in Laos; and

WHEREAS: The survivors were dispersed to countries like France, Canada, Australia, Argentina, and the United States, creating a diaspora of Hmong and Lao people; and

WHEREAS: Today, Minnesota is home to one of the largest Hmong communities in the United States, where the Hmong and Lao people have established strong and vibrant communities enriched with diversity, cultural identity, and economic sustainability; and

WHEREAS: The State of Minnesota honors the hardships, sacrifices, courage, and contributions of Hmong-Lao veterans and their families during the course of their exodus from Laos to the United States, and the devotion of Hmong-Americans to our community, our state, and our nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARK DAYTON, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim Sunday, May 14, 2017, as:

MINNESOTA HMONG MEMORIAL DAY

in the State of Minnesota.



Steve Pimm

SECRETARY OF STATE

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 16th day of June.

Mark Dayton
GOVERNOR