



Date: April 10, 2024

To: Chair Founj Hawj
Environment, Climate, and Legacy
Assistant Majority Leader, MN State Senate
95 University Avenue W. Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3231
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-5285

From: Tong Vang
President, SGU Veterans and Families of USA
800 Minnehaha Ave. E., Ste. 375
St. Paul, MN 55106

Re: Statement in support of the 50th Anniversary: S.F. No. 5065 / H.F. No. 4996

Dear Chair Hawj:

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to present my testimonial in support of the S.F. No. 5065 / H.F. No. 4996. Our Hmong and Southeast Asian communities began our lives here in the State of Minnesota from nothing, beginning in 1975.

As a lieutenant of the Secret War, I saw many of my comrades being killed and were injured from the frontline. We lost everything when the Secret War/Vietnam War ended in 1975. We were forced from our homes, hunted down as U.S. allies by the communists Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese Army, and lived as refugees in the concentration camps in Thailand.

I urge you and your committee to pass this bill to provide Legacy funds for our Minnesota's SE Asian communities to create educational programs/activities to teach, reflect, honor, and celebrate this 50th Anniversary. Today, the majority of our SE Asian children who are born here have already forgotten our sacrifices for America from the Vietnam War. Thus, the programs created from this Legacy fund will educate our stories, bring communities together to share our common histories, and to pass on our legacies to the current and future generations of the hardships that we overcame to build our communities to what it is today.

I thank all of you for your exemplary leadership as public servants and for your consideration of my testimony. I can be reached by email at sguminnnesota@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'T' followed by a series of loops and a final vertical stroke.