

SCR 175 / SR 111

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES
TESTIMONY ON SCR 175 REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO PROCLAIM MARCH
30, 2011, AS "WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY".

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS &
MILITARY AFFAIRS

April 4, 2011

Good afternoon Chair Will Espero, Vice Chair Michelle Kadani, and members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations & Military Affairs.

I am Gregory Jackson, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). We appreciate the opportunity to support SCR 175 requesting the Governor to proclaim March 30, 2011, as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day".

As noted in the proposed resolution, the courage and dedication of the troops in the Vietnam War was no less than their follows in uniform in other conflicts, and is equally deserving of honor, gratitude, and support. OVS supports the recognition of the sacrifice and hardship of our Vietnam veterans.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this resolution.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 8:44 PM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: luparker808@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR175 on 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM SCR175

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Luis A. Parker
Organization: Vietnam Veterans of America, Oahu Chapter 858
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: luparker808@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 4/1/2011

Comments:

Welina mai Kakou;

As President of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Oahu Chapter 858, and a combat-wounded Vietnam Veteran, I am in support of SCR175, and urge our State Legislature to pass this measure.

Vietnam Veterans returned to a nation that vilified their honorable service and while there are commemorations to honor our fallen from previous wars, there does not exist one solely for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam.

Remembering our fallen from all wars is honorable and to finally give our Vietnam Veterans a "Welcome Home Day" will help demonstrate our recognition for their service and the sacrifices they made for our great nation. Mahalo Nui Loa.

Aloha Pumehana,

Luis A. Parker, MSgt (USMC/USAF)
Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 858
808-685-6509

**IN SUPPORT OF SCR 175
Testimony (Submitted via Email)**

NAME: Harold (Hal) Alejandro

TITLE (Military): Retired Veteran MSgt, USAF / US Army
Iraqi and Enduring Freedom

TITLE (Civilian): Civil Engineer / Project Coordinator

ADDRESS: 91-336 Hoowalea Place
Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706

HEARING DATE: To Be Determined

MEASURE: Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR 175)

**SCR 175 REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO PROCLAIM
MARCH 30, 2011 AS "WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS
DAY".**

HONORABLE SENATOR ESPERO and FELLOW SENATORS of the Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs Committee...

Please find my testimony **IN SUPPORT** of the Senate Concurrent Resolution, SCR 175, *setting aside March 30, 2011 as "WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY"*.

HOWEVER...

Be it for the record that it would be a true honor if 30 March will be recognized henceforth, in perpetuity, by the people of the State of Hawaii as a day WE REMEMBER AND HONOR those who served, fought, and returned home from the Vietnam War this day, 30 March 1973. Having served at least two tours in the Middle East, I know how it felt to return home in a Country Divided and Torn, and not have received any welcome home for the service rendered.

With that said, this RECOGNITION is LONG OVERDUE.

In the late 60s – early 70s I recalled dropping my Uncle, PFC Artemio Beltran (US Army, 4th Infantry), at Hickam AFB Hawaii for his one of two deployments to Vietnam, and how proud I was to have an Uncle Serving in Vietnam and in the U.S. Army. I was shocked that to this day he has not shared or mentioned his experiences or made known to us of any official welcome home ceremony except the family homecoming we gave him. How sad that a young barely 18 years old Filipino Immigrant who was just ordered to Hawaii from the Philippines by my mother (his sister) so that he could enjoy the freedom we all shared. But how is it that within a two years time in Hawaii, he was drafted into the U.S. Army to protect this very Freedom that his sister (my mom) and the rest of us have often boasted about.

Sometimes I think that a mere silent honor as proclaimed by this here Resolution for their service would not do them justice for the courage, hardship, sacrifice, and disrespect they as veterans had endured. Having met many of them in our Veterans of Foreign Wars Organization as well as in my dealings with the military, I can honestly say that these groups of Veterans are generally not a boastful group but exhibit a somewhat quite humbleness when asked about their service. It is so sad that even this very day we fall short in giving them the recognition they deserve.

This Resolution is but a First Step for the people of Hawaii and the Nation to recognize a worthy group of Veterans to which I can truly say...They FOUGHT...They SACRIFICED...They ENDURED...and DID THEIR JOB amidst the Nation's unwillingness to support them and say With Sincerity...."GOOD JOB...from a GRATEFUL NATION." NOW it is OUR turn to give back and let them know.

"May GOD BLESS OUR VIETNAM VETERANS...and OUR HEART FELT GRATITUDE FOR A JOB WELL DONE!!"

ALOHA and GOD BLESS....

Hal Alejandro

Ewa Beach, Hawaii

Retired Veteran – Iraqi and Enduring Freedom

Veterans of Foreign Wars - Post 970 Trustee

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 5:00 PM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: sonnyfernan@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR175 on 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM SCR175

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Stanley Y. Fernandez, Sr.
Organization:
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: sonnyfernan@msn.com
Submitted on: 3/31/2011

Comments:

On March 29, 1973, the Paris Peace Accord was signed and US troops started their return from Vietnam. No welcome or salutation from our Government either at the Federal or State level was ever made. It is time to officially recognize and welcome home all of our Vietnam veterans and declare 30 March 2011 and hereon after every March 30th as "Vietnam Veterans Appreciation Day." Thank you for allowing me to express my support for this resolution.

Stan Fernandez, Sr.
State Senior Vice Commander
Dept of Hawaii
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 7:17 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: kenneth.b.wiseman@navy.mil
Subject: Testimony for SCR175 on 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM SCR175

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kenneth Wiseman
Organization: Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 970
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: kenneth.b.wiseman@navy.mil
Submitted on: 4/1/2011

Comments:

Vietnam veterans are the largest group of American veterans today from a previous war and they were shunned by the country they served. We have an obligation to honor them and to fix this tragedy. As a member of the newest generation of veterans, I support recognizing our Vietnam veterans because of their service and their support of my generation. They pledged to never allow a repeat to my generation of the horrors they faced upon return. Our new GI Bill and medical benefits exist because of their firm dedication to support us. Please pass this bill and allow Hawaii to finally say "welcome home" and "thank-you" to a generation before it is too late.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 03, 2011 12:07 PM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: KOAALOHA1369@AOL.COM
Subject: Testimony for SCR175 on 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM SCR175

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: JOSE R. NATER
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: KOAALOHA1369@AOL.COM
Submitted on: 4/3/2011

Comments:

As a Vietnam Veteran myself, I feel this a well overdue action towards the generation of veterans that started and still fighting for something that they earned, some by giving their ultimate sacrifice, some by dropping their blood on foreign grounds and yet some others coming back home with the invisible scars of War, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. If it wasn't because of the Vietnam Veterans' actions, the Veterans of today's wars wouldn't be getting what they are getting today. A "Vietnam Veterans Appreciation Day" would heal a lot of wounds! Probably more than you will ever know!

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, April 02, 2011 10:37 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: frank@netsolutionshawaii.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR175 on 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM

Testimony for PGM 4/5/2011 2:55:00 PM SCR175

Conference room: 224
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Frank Fiorentino
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: frank@netsolutionshawaii.com
Submitted on: 4/2/2011

Comments:

Please recognize Vietnam veterans. We went to a thankless war and too many lost their lives for our country. It now seems like it was to keep the military-industrial complex profitable. We should still be recognized as military veterans that supported the US government.

From: marcia futa [mfuta@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 3:36 PM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: fourewa_hi@yahoo.com
Subject: SCR 175/SR 111

To Senator Will Espero, Chair
To Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

I would be remiss not to address this long overdue recognition owed to the thousands of veterans who served in Vietnam nearly 50 years ago. Many of these men, barely out of their teens paid the ultimate sacrifice so that others could enjoy the freedom that we often take for granted. During the years of the war protests against US involvement were vile and rampant. When the war ended there was no recognition for the thousands of soldiers who returned home. My husband was one of those soldiers. He spoke very little of his time in Vietnam but embodied an enormous pride for our country. To this day, he wears his Vietnam Veterans shirt every year on Veterans Day and was very moved by a young woman's thank you upon noticing his shirt. That was the only thank you he received 40 years after his discharge.

Please give these veterans their day of recognition. For many, it is too late but it is still better late than never.

Thank you,
Marcia Futa, wife of veteran
Gerald Futa, Spc 5 US Army