

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 26

Whereas, more than 82,000 United States service members remain unaccounted for from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Cold War, of which 2,297 are Missourians; and

Whereas, for over seventy years the families of those missing have been deprived of the peace that comes with laying to rest the remains of a loved one or at least knowing that loved one's fate; and

Whereas, the basic principle of national honor in the Armed Forces of the United States of America is that the United States leaves no one behind; and

Whereas, the United States has an obligation to the missing and to their families to enforce this principle and provide information and answers; and

Whereas, in 1993, the United States Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs noted in its final report that declassifying the records related to POWs and MIAs could have eliminated much of the controversy and unnecessary secrecy surrounding the United States government's handling of the POW/MIA issues, which bred suspicion and distrust; and

Whereas, federal statutes and multiple presidential executive orders have called for the declassification of records relating to POWs and MIAs, but such mandates have been limited in scope, lacked enforcement mechanisms, and included broad exceptions that have been routinely cited by federal agencies as justification for continued classification of documents; and

Whereas, all government agencies should be directed by Congress and the Executive Branch of the United States to identify, locate, review, and declassify this vital information, subject to reasonable standards and limitations; and

Whereas, declassification and availability of these records would allow families of the missing and others in the private sector to conduct research, gain relevant information, and, thereby, hold the federal government accountable; and

Whereas, the governments of Vietnam and the Republic of Korea are now offering increased support to the United States POW/MIA recovery efforts, and diplomatic efforts with other involved countries continue; and

Whereas, the "Bring Our Heroes Home Act", which will be introduced in the United States Senate, sets forth an integrated process for comprehensive declassification of records pertaining to missing Armed Forces personnel records, subject to legitimate limitations and exceptions:

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the members of the Missouri Senate, One Hundredth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby call on the Missouri members of the United States Senate to support and contribute to the early consideration and passage of the "Bring Our Heroes Home Act"; and

Be It Further Resolved that the members of the Missouri General Assembly, hereby call on all members of the Missouri Congressional delegation to lend their influence to the cause of resolving the cases of all Missourians who remain unaccounted for from past conflicts; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for each member of the Missouri Congressional delegation.

Resolution

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