

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1477

Expressing support for the recognition of the month of September 2024 as “Boat People Awareness Month” to honor the hundreds of thousands of boat people who fled Vietnam’s oppressive Communist regime during the decades following the Vietnam war.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

Mrs. STEEL submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the recognition of the month of September 2024 as “Boat People Awareness Month” to honor the hundreds of thousands of boat people who fled Vietnam’s oppressive Communist regime during the decades following the Vietnam war.

Whereas the term “boat people” is used to refer to the Vietnamese people who fled the oppressive Communist regime between 1975 and 1995, in which almost 800,000 people left Vietnam by boat to arrive safely in another country;

Whereas many of the refugees failed to survive the passage, facing danger from pirates, overcrowded boats, and storms, and many people had no knowledge of sailing;

Whereas, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, between 200,000 and 400,000 boat people died at sea;

Whereas Vietnamese citizens employed many methods to leave the country, and most were secret and done at night;

Whereas, although a few thousand people fled Vietnam by boat between 1975 and 1978, the exodus of the boat people began in September 1978;

Whereas the fall of Saigon to the People's Army of Vietnam, and the subsequent evacuation of more than 130,000 Vietnamese closely associated with the United States in Operation New Life and Operation New Arrivals, led to a major influx of Vietnamese into the United States;

Whereas, in 1975, President Gerald Ford signed the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act (Public Law 94-3), budgeting roughly \$415,000,000 in the effort to provide transportation, health care, and accommodations to 130,000 Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Lao refugees;

Whereas, in 1979, the plight of the boat people made international news when the United Nations called a conference to address the situation, and the United Nations persuaded the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and France to allow more Vietnamese refugees into their countries;

Whereas, in the United States, Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-212), allowing Vietnamese refugees to come directly to the United States;

Whereas about 725,000 Vietnamese settled in the United States after the Vietnam war, and by 2000, more than

1,000,000 people of Vietnamese ancestry lived in the United States;

Whereas the plight of the Vietnamese boat people and the ensuing humanitarian crisis speaks to the resolve and spirit of the Vietnamese refugee community; and

Whereas, in California, many refugees settled in the county of Orange, beginning in the 1970s, and settled in an area of the city of Westminster that then went on to become Little Saigon, as well as other locations throughout the State, including large communities in the cities of San Jose and San Diego: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) expresses support for the designation of
3 “Boat People Awareness Month”; and

4 (2) calls on Congress to honor and recognize
5 the Vietnamese people who fled Communist Vietnam
6 by boats and ships following the end of the Vietnam
7 war.

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