

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4686

To recognize the refugee and immigrant communities from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam including the Hmong, Cham, Cambodian, Iu-Mien, Khmu, Lao, Montagnard, and Vietnamese Americans who supported and defended the Armed Forces during the conflict in Southeast Asia, authorize assistance to support activities relating to clearance of unexploded ordnance and other explosive remnants of war, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Ms. BALDWIN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To recognize the refugee and immigrant communities from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam including the Hmong, Cham, Cambodian, Iu-Mien, Khmu, Lao, Montagnard, and Vietnamese Americans who supported and defended the Armed Forces during the conflict in Southeast Asia, authorize assistance to support activities relating to clearance of unexploded ordnance and other explosive remnants of war, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Legacies of War Rec-
3 ognition and Unexploded Ordnance Removal Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. RECOGNITION OF THE HMONG, CHAM, CAMBODIAN,**
5 **IU-MIEN, KHMU, LAO, MONTAGNARD, AND VI-**
6 **ETNAMESE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES WHO**
7 **SUPPORTED AND DEFENDED THE ARMED**
8 **FORCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.**

9 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

10 (1) Many Hmong, Cham, Cambodian, Iu-Mien,
11 Khmu, Lao, Montagnard and Vietnamese Ameri-
12 cans—

13 (A) fought and died with United States
14 Armed Forces during the conflict in Southeast
15 Asia in the 1960s and 1970s;

16 (B) rescued United States pilots shot down
17 in enemy-controlled territory and returned the
18 pilots to safety;

19 (C) gathered and provided to the United
20 States Armed Forces intelligence about enemy
21 troop positions, movement, and strength; and

22 (D) provided food, shelter, and support to
23 the United States Armed Forces.

24 (2) The National Armed Forces of Cambodia
25 facilitated the evacuation of the United States Em-
26 bassy in Phnom Penh on April 12, 1975, by con-

1 tinuing to fight Khmer Rouge forces as they ad-
2 vanced upon the capital.

3 (3) A tragic legacy of the conflict in Southeast
4 Asia is the lethal risk posed by unexploded ordnance
5 (UXO) in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia that still
6 litter forests, rice fields, villages, school grounds,
7 roads, and other populated areas—hindering devel-
8 opment and poverty reduction efforts.

9 (4) Vietnam remains one of the world's most
10 contaminated countries, with an estimated 800,000
11 tons of UXO left over from the conflict in Southeast
12 Asia that ended more than 40 years ago. Since
13 1975, mine and UXO accidents have caused more
14 than 100,000 casualties, including 40,000 deaths of
15 Vietnamese civilians.

16 (5) From 1964–1973, the United States
17 dropped more than 2,000,000 tons of bombs on
18 Laos during American operations to disrupt North
19 Vietnamese military supply routes. As a result, Laos
20 is the most heavily bombed country per capita in the
21 world. Much of the country's land remains contami-
22 nated with tens of millions small, unexploded cluster
23 munitions. Since the end of the conflict, UXO have
24 injured or killed more than 25,000 civilians in Laos.

1 (6) Cambodia suffers from one of the highest
2 rates of landmine and UXO accidents in the world.
3 Over 64,000 Cambodians have been killed or injured
4 by UXO and other explosive remnants of war since
5 1979, with an average of one casualty every week.

6 (7) The United States is the world's leading fi-
7 nancial supporter of demining and UXO removal
8 programs. Since 1993, the United States has pro-
9 vided more than \$3,700,000,000 in assistance to lo-
10 cate and destroy UXO and other explosive remnants
11 of war in more than 100 countries, including more
12 than \$148,000,000 in Vietnam, \$230,000,000 in
13 Laos, and \$150,000,000 in Cambodia.

14 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
15 gress that—

16 (1) the Hmong, Cham, Cambodian, Iu-Mien,
17 Khmu, Lao, Montagnard, and Vietnamese Ameri-
18 cans deserve recognition for their support and de-
19 fense of the Armed Forces during the conflict in
20 Southeast Asia; and

21 (2) the United States should continue to sup-
22 port activities to clear UXO and other explosive rem-
23 nants of war in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, and
24 strengthen people-to-people ties and reaffirm Amer-
25 ica's long-standing commitment to Southeast Asia.

1 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE FOR VIETNAM,**
2 **LAOS, AND CAMBODIA.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to
4 provide humanitarian assistance for programs to support
5 the activities described in subsection (b).

6 (b) ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.—Activities that may be
7 supported by assistance under subsection (a) include the
8 following:

9 (1) Developing national surveys of unexploded
10 ordnance (UXO) and other explosive remnants of
11 war in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

12 (2) Providing for clearance of such UXO and
13 other explosive remnants of war.

14 (3) Providing assistance for capacity building,
15 risk education, and assistance to survivors, including
16 medical assistance and prosthetic devices, in Viet-
17 nam, Laos, and Cambodia related to both UXO and
18 other explosive remnants of war.

19 (c) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, the
20 President shall seek to consult, partner, and coordinate
21 with international organizations, civil society, donor gov-
22 ernments, and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to lever-
23 age their expertise, financial support, and resources to
24 minimize duplication of efforts and maximize the efficient
25 and effective provision of United States assistance.

26 (d) BRIEFINGS.—

1 (1) ANNUAL BRIEFINGS.—The President shall
2 provide annual briefings to the appropriate commit-
3 tees of Congress on activities undertaken in accord-
4 ance with this section.

5 (2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS
6 DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appro-
7 priate committees of Congress” means—

8 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations,
9 the Committee on Armed Services, and the
10 Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;
11 and

12 (B) the Committee of Foreign Affairs, the
13 Committee on Armed Services, and the Com-
14 mittee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
15 resentatives.

16 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
17 authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry
18 out this section \$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021
19 through 2025.

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