



Jennifer Shilling

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR
32ND SENATE DISTRICT

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Shilling Co-Authors Hmong Veteran Bill

MADISON – During the Vietnam War, the CIA and U.S. military recruited ethnic Hmong and other Laotian fighters to serve in Special Guerilla Units (SGU) in support of paramilitary activity in Lao, known as the Secret War. These SGUs collected vital intelligence, performed target spotting missions, and rescued downed American pilots, and fought in combat operations. To escape persecution after the war ended, 150,000 Laotian Hmong entered the U.S. as refugees, including service members from the SGUs. Unfortunately, due to their lack of “veteran” status, these fighters have not been eligible for any sort of veteran benefits. Senator Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse) along with Representative Amanda Stuck (D-Appleton) are introducing legislation to expand the definition of veteran in Wisconsin statute to include individuals who have honorably served in these SGUs.

“These brave individuals fought for our country, side by side with U.S. forces, and this recognition is long overdue,” said Senator Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). “History is not well served by forgetting the important role they played and it is a disservice to these individuals not to have veteran status. We truly appreciate their service and sacrifice and this legislation ensures their contributions are not forgotten.”

There are estimated to be over 1,000 Hmong-Lao veterans living in Wisconsin.

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