

**RESOLUTION URGING PRESIDENT TO GIVE
PURPLE HEARTS**

1998 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Sponsor: Steve Barth

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATURE AND THE GOVERNOR URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO AWARD THE PURPLE HEART TO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY FORCES SERVING IN VIETNAM WHO WERE EXPOSED TO AGENT ORANGE.

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS in 1961, the U.S. Government signed orders allowing Agent Orange, which contains trace amounts of dioxin, to be used in Vietnam to defoliate areas of jungle growth and to destroy crops;

WHEREAS 18 million gallons of Agent Orange were reported to have been used in South Vietnam;

WHEREAS Agent Orange caused Vietnamese farmers to lose about 70 percent of their crops;

WHEREAS regretfully, the effects of Agent Orange spread to American military forces serving in Vietnam who were exposed to the chemical;

WHEREAS currently, thousands of Americans who served in Vietnam suffer from the effects of exposure to Agent Orange, which range from cancer to memory loss;

WHEREAS the Order of the Purple Heart for Military Merit, commonly called the Purple Heart, is awarded to members of the armed forces of the United States wounded or killed in battle;

WHEREAS the criteria for receiving the Purple Heart includes injury caused by chemical, biological, or nuclear agents released by the enemy, and the medal can be awarded if injury is the result of friendly fire designed to inflict damage or destroy enemy troops or equipment;

WHEREAS Agent Orange's use as a jungle defoliant and crop destroyer was intended to inflict damage on enemy troops by depriving them of hiding places and food;

WHEREAS American soldiers exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam have received no

medal or recognition for the injuries sustained by exposure to the chemical;

WHEREAS the fact that the United States Government provides medical treatment to American soldiers exposed to Agent Orange and their descendants clearly demonstrates that it is an injury deserving of recognition;

WHEREAS American soldiers suffering from the effects of exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam should receive the Purple Heart in recognition of injuries sustained while standing in harm's way for their country;

WHEREAS Members of Disabled Americans, American Veterans, and Veterans of Foreign Wars support the granting of Purple Hearts to these soldiers; and

WHEREAS the President of the United States should act to ensure that the sacrifice of these soldiers does not go unrecognized:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, urge the President of the United States to grant the Order of the Purple Heart to American soldiers who were injured from their exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States and representatives of the Utah Disabled American Veterans, American Veterans Association, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.