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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R.

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BERA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on _____

A BILL

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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 COMMUNITIES WHO SUP-**
5 **PORTED AND DEFENDED THE ARMED**
6 **FORCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.**

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

8 (1) During the conflict in Southeast Asia dur-
9 ing the 1960s and 1970s, many Hmong, Cham,
10 Cambodians, Iu-Mien, Khmu, Lao, Montagnard, and
11 Vietnamese people—

12 (A) supported the Armed Forces;

13 (B) rescued United States pilots shot down
14 in enemy-controlled territory and returned the
15 pilots to safety;

16 (C) gathered and provided intelligence to
17 the Armed Forces about enemy troop positions,
18 movement, and strength; and

19 (D) provided food, shelter, and support to
20 members of the Armed Forces.

21 (2) The national armed forces of Cambodia fa-
22 cilitated the evacuation of the United States Em-
23 bassy in Phnom Penh on April 12, 1975, by fighting
24 Khmer Rouge forces that advanced upon the capital.

25 (3) A tragic legacy of the conflict in Southeast
26 Asia is the lethal risk posed by landmines,

1 unexploded ordnance (in this Act, referred to as
2 “UXO”), and explosive remnants of war in Vietnam,
3 Laos, and Cambodia that still litter forests, rice
4 fields, villages, school grounds, roads, and other pop-
5 ulated areas, hindering development and efforts to
6 reduce poverty.

7 (4) Vietnam remains one of the world’s most
8 contaminated countries, with an estimated 800,000
9 tons of UXO left over from the conflict in Southeast
10 Asia that ended more than 40 years ago. Since
11 1975, UXO accidents have caused more than
12 105,000 casualties, including more than 38,000
13 deaths of Vietnamese civilians.

14 (5) In Laos, much of the country’s land re-
15 mains contaminated with tens of millions of small,
16 unexploded cluster munitions. Since 1964, UXO and
17 other explosive remnants of war have injured or
18 killed more than 50,000 civilians in Laos.

19 (6) Cambodia has experienced one of the high-
20 est rates of landmine and UXO casualties in the
21 world. Over 64,000 Cambodians have been injured
22 or killed by landmines, UXO, or other explosive rem-
23 nants of war since 1979.

24 (7) The United States is the world’s leading fi-
25 nancial supporter of demining and programs to re-

1 move UXO. Since 1993, the United States has pro-
2 vided more than \$4,200,000,000 in assistance for lo-
3 cating and destroying UXO and other explosive rem-
4 nants of war and related programs in more than 100
5 countries, including more than \$185,000,000 in
6 Vietnam, \$310,000,000 in Laos, and \$180,000,000
7 in Cambodia.

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

10 (1) the Hmong, Cham, Cambodian, Iu-Mien,
11 Khmu, Lao, Montagnard, and Vietnamese people de-
12 serve recognition for their support and defense of
13 the Armed Forces during the conflict in Southeast
14 Asia; and

15 (2) the United States should continue to sup-
16 port activities to clear landmines, UXO, and other
17 explosive remnants of war and to provide related as-
18 sistance in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, while
19 strengthening people-to-people ties and reaffirming
20 the long-standing commitment of the United States
21 to Southeast Asia.

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

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The President may provide hu-
4 manitarian assistance to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia
5 for programs to support the following:

6 (1) The development or updating of national
7 surveys of landmines, UXO, and other explosive
8 remnants of war.

9 (2) Clearance of such landmines, UXO, and
10 other explosive remnants of war.

11 (3) Stockpile management of small arms, light
12 weapons, and ammunition.

13 (4) Capacity building, risk education, destruc-
14 tion, and physical security related to landmines,
15 UXO, and other explosive remnants of war.

16 (5) Survivors of incidents involving landmines,
17 UXO, and other explosive remnants of war, includ-
18 ing by providing medical assistance and prosthetic
19 devices related to landmines, UXO, and other explo-
20 sive remnants of war.

21 (b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, the
22 President shall seek to consult, partner, and coordinate
23 with international organizations, civil societies, donor gov-
24 ernments, and other stakeholders, as the President deter-
25 mines appropriate, to leverage the expertise, financial sup-
26 port, and resources of such entities to minimize duplica-

1 tion of efforts and maximize the efficient and effective pro-
2 vision of assistance from the United States.

3 (c) REPORTING AND BRIEFING.—

4 (1) REPORTING.—Not later than 90 days after
5 the date of enactment of this Act, the President
6 shall provide a report to the appropriate committees
7 of Congress on activities undertaken in accordance
8 with this section on the progress of amounts made
9 available from the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism,
10 Demining, and related programs account for
11 demining and clearance of landmines, UXO, and
12 other explosive remnants of war in Vietnam, Laos,
13 and Cambodia. Such reports shall also include—

14 (A) the status of amounts made available
15 from the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism,
16 Demining, and related programs account that
17 are obligated pursuant to authorities provided
18 by prior Acts and the status of unallocated
19 amounts made available to such account as of
20 the date of enactment of this Act;

21 (B) a description of how Nonproliferation,
22 Anti-terrorism, Demining, and related programs
23 account funds have contributed to landmine,
24 UXO, and other explosive remnants of war

1 clearance efforts in Vietnam, Laos, and Cam-
2 bodia;

3 (C) estimates of contaminated land that
4 has been cleared, land that still contains land-
5 mines, UXO, and other explosive remnants of
6 war, land that has not been assessed for con-
7 tamination, and data on the origin of any anti-
8 personnel mines cleared, to the extent possible;

9 (D) a description of collaboration between
10 the United States and the governments of Viet-
11 nam, Laos, and Cambodia including past and
12 current progress to date in establishing nation-
13 wide contamination databases in such countries
14 to refine landmine, UXO, and other explosive
15 remnants of war locations and target clearance
16 efforts; and

17 (E) an assessment on the efforts of the
18 Department of State to work with the Govern-
19 ment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic
20 regarding the repatriation of and the efforts to
21 reintegrate into Laotian society those of
22 Hmonh, Lao, Khmu, and Mien or Yao descent
23 who arrived in the United States as refugees
24 but have since been removed.

1 (2) BRIEFINGS.—The President shall annually
2 brief the appropriate committees of Congress on ac-
3 tivities undertaken in accordance with this section
4 for each year for which amounts are authorized
5 under subsection (d).

6 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
7 authorized to be appropriated to the President
8 \$100,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2024 through
9 2028 to carry out this section.

10 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

11 In this Act:

12 (1) The term “appropriate committees of Con-
13 gress” means—

14 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations,
15 the Committee on Armed Services, and the
16 Committee on Appropriations of the House of
17 Representatives; and

18 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
19 Committee on Armed Services, and the Com-
20 mittee on Appropriations of the Senate.

21 (2) The term “unexploded ordnance” or
22 “UXO” has the meaning given such term in section
23 101 of title 10, United States Code.