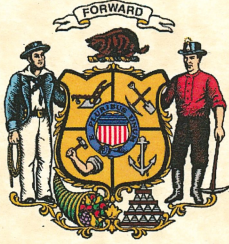# STATE *of* WISCONSIN

OFFICE *of the* GOVERNOR

Proclamation

WHEREAS; during the Vietnam War, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and United States Armed Forces recruited, organized, trained, and assisted Hmong-Lao forces to combat the North Vietnamese Army and communist Pathet Lao forces; and

WHEREAS; thousands of Hmong-Lao people courageously fought alongside Americans during this "secret war"; and

WHEREAS; when the United States withdrew from Vietnam in the early 1970s, the Hmong-Lao faced harsh retribution from the Vietnamese and Lao governments for their involvement in the American war effort, and many were ultimately forced to flee their native lands; and

WHEREAS; on May 14th, 1975, the last of the Hmong-Lao soldiers and their families fled Laos for the Nam Phong refugee camp in Thailand, later resettling in communities throughout the United States, including in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS; the United States is home to a significant number of Hmong-Lao veterans, after providing political asylum and citizenship because of their unique contribution to American interests during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS; the Wisconsin Lao Veterans of America (WLVA) has established local chapters throughout our state to serve the communities in which they are located and educate the public about the historic contributions of our Hmong-Lao veterans during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS; today, the state of Wisconsin joins the WLVA and all Wisconsinites in reflecting on the tremendous, and too often overlooked, heroism and sacrifice of our Hmong-Lao veterans;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, do hereby proclaim May 14, 2020, as

HMONG – LAO VETERANS DAY

out the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance to all our state's residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 27th day of April 2020.

TONY EVERS
GOVERNOR

By the Governor:

DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE
Secretary of State