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House to Korean War veterans: You are not forgotten

Washington, Jun 17 -

Today U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson (3rd Dist-Texas) lauded passage of legislation to grant a long-overdue national charter to the Korean War Veterans Association; the measure now heads to the President to become law.

"It's been said that the Korean War is called the Forgotten War. Nowhere is this more evident than the fact that the Korean War Veterans Association has not received a national charter. Giving the veterans of the Korean War a national charter will put them in the same echelon as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. It's truly a mark of distinction," said Johnson, a 29-year Air Force veteran who flew 62 combat missions in Korea.

After years of opposition in Congress, in 2007 U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson (3rd Dist.-Texas) authored House legislation with House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) to grant the Korean War Veterans Association the special recognition. Specifically, the charter will afford the Association the same status as other major organizations and would allow it to participate as part of select committees with other Congressionally-chartered veterans and military groups. A federal charter will also help the Association gain accreditation with the Department of Veterans Affairs, which will enable its members to assist in processing veterans' claims.

Ed Buckman, a Korean War veteran and Founder of the Sam Johnson Korean War Veterans Association Chapter 270 in North Texas, said, "This is a great day for all Korea service members who have served in Korea in a war that has lasted 58 years and still rages on. I am very proud and pleased that the Korean War Veterans Association has received a national charter. This gives notice that the Korean War is not forgotten." To learn more about the Sam Johnson Chapter, visit www.kwva270.org.

Congress has long recognized various military and veteran "patriotic" organizations in public law as a means to acknowledge that a group serves the public interest by providing member services and community support. In addition to bestowing special recognition, granting this charter to the Korean War Veterans Association would allow it to expand its mission and further its charitable and benevolent causes.

The Korean War, often overlooked in American history, is anything but forgotten by the nearly 1.2 million American veterans of the Korean War still alive today. During the three-year course of the war, some 5.7 million Americans were called to serve, and by the time the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed in July 1953, more than 36,000 Americans sacrificed their lives, 103,284 were wounded, 7,140 were captured and 664 were missing.

The KWVA is the only fraternal veterans' organization in the United States devoted exclusively to Korean War veterans and the only U.S. member of the International Federation of Korean War Veterans Association. Incorporated in 1985, the 25,000-member charitable association has established a strong record of service

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and commitment to fellow Korean War veterans, ranging from efforts on behalf of Project Freedom to its successful effort to construct a national Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall.

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