

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 967

To provide a fair and full opportunity for recognizing with awards of military decorations the meritorious and valorous acts, achievements, and service performed by members of the Army in the Ia Drang Valley (Pleiku) campaign in Vietnam in 1965.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 26 (legislative day, JUNE 19), 1995

Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. SMITH, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. HELMS, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. KEMPTHORNE, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. DOLE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. MCCAIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To provide a fair and full opportunity for recognizing with awards of military decorations the meritorious and valorous acts, achievements, and service performed by members of the Army in the Ia Drang Valley (Pleiku) campaign in Vietnam in 1965.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) The Ia Drang Valley (Pleiku) campaign,
6 carried out by the Armed Forces of the United

1 States in the Ia Drang Valley of Vietnam from Octo-
2 ber 23, 1965, to November 26, 1965, pitted forces
3 of the United States Army against North Vietnam-
4 ese Army regulars in vicious battles in which many
5 United States soldiers displayed extraordinary hero-
6 ism, sacrifice, and bravery which has not yet been
7 officially recognized through award of appropriate
8 decorations.

9 (2) One of those battles, a running 4-day battle
10 fought from November 14 to November 18, 1965,
11 encompassed the first battalion-sized Army engage-
12 ment with North Vietnamese Army regulars.

13 (3) The soldiers of the United States Army
14 units engaged in the battle encountered and fought
15 valiantly against an overwhelming force of more
16 than 2,000 North Vietnamese Army regulars for an
17 extended period under notably difficult conditions.

18 (4) Historical literature published in the early
19 1990s authoritatively documents repeated acts of ex-
20 traordinary heroism, sacrifice, and bravery on the
21 part of many of the United States Army soldiers
22 who were engaged in the battles of the Ia Drang
23 Valley (Pleiku) campaign, many of whom have never
24 been officially recognized for those acts.

1 (5) United States Army units involved in com-
2 bat in the Ia Drang Valley (Pleiku) campaign suf-
3 fered substantial losses, including casualties in ex-
4 cess of 90 percent of strength in the case of some
5 companies.

6 (6) The incidence of heavy casualties through-
7 out the campaign has inhibited the timely collection
8 of comprehensive and detailed information to sup-
9 port recommendations for awards for the acts of
10 heroism, sacrifice, and bravery performed in the Ia
11 Drang Valley (Pleiku) campaign engagements.

12 (7) Requests to the Secretary of the Army for
13 review of award recommendations for those acts
14 have been denied because of restrictions in law and
15 Army regulations that relate to timely filing of rec-
16 ommendations and requirements for documented
17 justification.

18 (8) Acts of heroism, sacrifice, and bravery per-
19 formed in combat by members of the Armed Forces
20 of the United States deserve appropriate and timely
21 recognition by the people of the United States.

22 (9) It is inappropriate for United States policy
23 to restrict recognition of military personnel for acts
24 of extraordinary heroism, sacrifice, or bravery that

1 are belatedly, but properly, documented by persons
2 who witnessed those acts.

3 **SEC. 2. IA DRANG VALLEY (PLEIKU) CAMPAIGN DEFINED.**

4 For the purposes of this Act, the Ia Drang Valley
5 (Pleiku) campaign is the campaign of military operations
6 carried out by the Armed Forces of the United States in
7 the Ia Drang Valley of Vietnam during the period begin-
8 ning on October 23, 1965, and ending on November 26,
9 1965, and includes the activities of Army units and Army
10 personnel in providing direct support in or for such oper-
11 ations during that period.

12 **SEC. 3. WAIVER OF RESTRICTIONS.**

13 (a) **AWARD AUTHORIZED.**—Notwithstanding any
14 other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense or the
15 Secretary of the Army may award a decoration to any per-
16 son for an act, an achievement, or service that the person
17 performed in the Ia Drang Valley (Pleiku) campaign while
18 serving on active duty in the Army.

19 (b) **DECORATIONS COVERED.**—Subsection (a) applies
20 to any decoration (including any device in lieu of a decora-
21 tion) that, during or after the period of the Ia Drang Val-
22 ley (Pleiku) campaign and before the date of the enact-
23 ment of this Act, was authorized by Congress or under
24 regulations of the Department of Defense or the Depart-
25 ment of the Army to be awarded to a person for an act,

1 an achievement, or service performed by that person while
2 serving on active duty in the Army.

3 (c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “active
4 duty” has the meaning given such term in section
5 101(d)(1) of title 10, United States Code.

6 **SEC. 4. REVIEW OF AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS.**

7 (a) REVIEW REQUIRED.—The Secretary of the Army
8 shall review all recommendations for awards for acts,
9 achievements, or service described in section 3(a) that
10 have been received by the Secretary before the end of the
11 period of the review, including recommendations received
12 before the date of the enactment of this Act.

13 (b) PERIOD OF REVIEW.—The Secretary shall begin
14 the review within 30 days after the date of the enactment
15 of this Act and shall complete the review within one year
16 after such date.

17 (c) PROCESS.—The Secretary may use the same
18 process for carrying out the review as the Secretary uses
19 for reviewing other recommendations for awarding decora-
20 tions to members of the Army for acts, achievements, or
21 service.

22 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—(1) Upon completing
23 the review, the Secretary shall submit a report on the re-
24 view to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate

1 and the Committee on National Security of the House of
2 Representatives.

3 (2) The report shall contain the following information
4 on each recommendation for award reviewed:

5 (A) A summary of the recommendation.

6 (B) The findings resulting from the review.

7 (C) The final action taken on the recommenda-
8 tion.

