

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	8 - 0 - 1
Yeas:	Barnhart, Dembrow, Hicks, Holvey, Hoyle, Jenson, Kennemer, Garrett
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Berger
Prepared By:	Erin Seiler, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	6/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Honors Arden Hassenger for his service and sacrifice.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Service of Arden Hassenger

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: On June 8, 2012, after nearly 47 years, friends and relatives laid to rest Vietnam War airman Chief Master Sergeant, with full military honors.

Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger joined the Air Force and served as a gunner on several missions during the Vietnam War. On Christmas Eve 1965, his Air Force plane, nicknamed "Spooky," took off from Vietnam for a combat mission. The crew sent out a "mayday" signal while flying over Laos, and after that, all contact was lost. Two days of searches turned up nothing and the airmen, including Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger, were listed as missing.

During the next 47 years, the Defense Department changed the status of Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger from missing to dead in 1977 and conducted a memorial service in Lebanon. However, 10 years later, new reports came into the Air Force's Missing Persons Branch at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas that he had been sighted, alive and captive, in Laos. As a result, the Pentagon revised his status to "missing." There were tantalizing hints about sightings and second-hand stories from Laotians who said they had seen Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger, but then recanted.

Finally, during excavations of the crash site in 2010 and 2011 the remains of the airmen, including Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger, were recovered. The charred remains of the six airmen, identified through dental records, included personal items and other circumstantial evidence. Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger was laid to rest on June 8, 2012, at Lebanon IOOF Cemetery and honored on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. In addition, he was posthumously promoted to chief master sergeant of the United States Air Force and awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, the Air Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, the Good Conduct Medal, the Air Force Longevity Service Award, the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Chief Master Sergeant Hassenger is survived by his wife, Sherrie, his sons, Michael and Keith, and his daughter, Robin Hobson.

House Concurrent Resolution 34 honors Chief Master Sergeant Arden Hassenger and expresses the State of Oregon's deepest respect for his service and sacrifice.

6/3/2013 4:47:00 PM

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.