

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Recognizing the sailors and marines who gave their lives for ship and shipmates while fighting the devastating 1967 fire onboard the USS *Forrestal* and commemorating, during the week of the 55th anniversary of the tragic event, the efforts of the sailors and marines who survived the fire.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. LANKFORD submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the sailors and marines who gave their lives for ship and shipmates while fighting the devastating 1967 fire onboard the USS *Forrestal* and commemorating, during the week of the 55th anniversary of the tragic event, the efforts of the sailors and marines who survived the fire.

Whereas, in 1967, the ongoing naval bombing campaign against North Vietnam from Yankee Station in the Gulf of Tonkin was one of the most intense and sustained air attack operations in the history of the Navy;

Whereas, on June 6, 1967, the USS *Forrestal* and Carrier Air Wing 17 departed Norfolk, Virginia, for duty in the Western Pacific;

Whereas, on July 28, 1967, during an underway replenishment, the crew of the USS *Forrestal* were required to onload deteriorated bombs, which were more vulnerable to exploding at high temperatures;

Whereas, on July 29, 1967, the older ordnance were used to avoid canceling a planned strike mission over North Vietnam;

Whereas, despite safety precautions taken by the crew, on July 29, 1967, a devastating fire erupted on the USS *Forrestal* after—

- (1) a malfunction in a parked aircraft caused the aircraft to fire a Zuni rocket that ruptured a fuel tank on another aircraft; and

- (2) the burning fuel ignited a chain reaction of 9 bomb explosions on the flight deck;

Whereas the explosions destroyed multiple aircraft and tore massive holes in the armored flight deck of the USS *Forrestal*, and burning fuel dripped into the living quarters of the crew and the aircraft hangar below deck;

Whereas, for 18 hours, sailors and marines on the USS *Forrestal*, assisted by helicopters and crews from 8 other ships, fought to bring the fire under control while hospital corpsmen navigated the mangled flight deck and tended to the wounded; and

Whereas the fire onboard the USS *Forrestal* ultimately—

- (1) left 134 men dead and 161 men injured;

- (2) destroyed 21 aircraft; and

- (3) caused the USS *Forrestal* to terminate its support to the fight in Vietnam and return to Norfolk, Virginia, for repairs: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) commemorates the 55th anniversary of the
2 fire onboard the USS *Forrestal*;

3 (2) recognizes the sailors and marines who gave
4 their lives for ship and shipmates while fighting the
5 devastating fire and commemorates the efforts of the
6 sailors and marines who survived the fire;

7 (3) recognizes that—

8 (A) if not for the heroic actions of the crew
9 of the USS *Forrestal*, the consequences of the
10 fire would have been far more devastating to
11 the sailors and marines onboard and the USS
12 *Forrestal*; and

13 (B) the selfless sacrifices of the sailors and
14 marines who came to the rescue of fellow ship-
15 mates and the USS *Forrestal* represent, and are
16 consistent with, the highest traditions of the
17 Navy; and

18 (4) expresses gratitude to the sailors and ma-
19 rines who served aboard the USS *Forrestal* for their
20 faithful service.