

117TH CONGRESS
2^D 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 the most intense and sustained air attack operation 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 ordnance load for the strike was changed at the request of the crew of the USS *Forrestal* to expend the inventory of the newly unloaded older bombs as soon as possible;

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—

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

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

8 (3) recognizes that—

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

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

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