

## \*\*\*MEDIA RELEASE\*\*\*

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### **Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument in Arlington National Cemetery to be dedicated April 18, 2018**

WASHINGTON, DC – The Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument will be dedicated in a formal ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery at 4:00 PM, April 18, 2018. The monument will honor the nearly 5,000 helicopter pilots and crewmembers killed during the Vietnam War, and is the only monument established to honor all who died operating rotary-wing aircraft in what is frequently called, “the Helicopter War.”

During the Vietnam War the helicopter became the mainstay for joint operational mobility. Approximately 12,000 helicopters operated in the combat zone and were used by all military services: Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force. Of this number, 5,086 were destroyed.

Arlington National Cemetery holds the greatest cluster of helicopter casualties from the Vietnam War made up of immediate casualties, Medal of Honor recipients, and the remains of MIAs recovered in the decades after the war ended in 1975.

First submitted in August, 2014, the monument proposal was initially rebuffed by Army officials citing limited space in the national military cemetery. Public outcry and Congressional interest led to bipartisan legislation, the [\*Vietnam Helicopter Crew Monument Act\*](#), championed by U.S. Representative Mark Amodei (R-NV-2), and U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK).

The new commemorative monument was authorized in March, 2017 following conversations between the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) and Karen Durham-Aguilera, Executive Director of the Army National Military Cemeteries. “The outcome proved a win-win for Vietnam Veterans, Gold Star Families, and Arlington National Cemetery,” **said Bob Hesselbein, VHPA Legacy Committee Chairman.**

The April 18, 2018 dedication ceremony will see Vietnam Veterans, Gold Star Families, and helicopter combat crewmembers rejoin to honor friends lost in combat. “With more than 40 years having passed since the end of the Vietnam War, I’m pleased to know this group of deserving veterans will finally receive proper recognition – an honor that is long overdue,” **said Congressman Amodei.**

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