

# **Legislation to award Vietnam Service Medal to veterans who participated in Operation End Sweep**

**Senator Tammy Baldwin**

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## **Background:**

The signing of the Paris Peace Accords on January 27, 1973, officially ended direct U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and began the subsequent withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. Under the Hague Convention of 1907, the U.S. was required to eliminate the mine threat it had created after the end of hostilities.

For this reason, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps conducted Operation End Sweep to remove naval mines from Haiphong harbor and other coastal and inland waterways in North Vietnam between February and July 1973. Since Operation End Sweep occurred after the official end of the Vietnam War, servicemembers who participated in the operation are not eligible for the Vietnam Service Medal. This determination by the Department of Defense is despite the location and dangerous circumstances these servicemembers faced due to the operation occurring after the official end of U.S. hostilities in Vietnam.

## **The Solution:**

Veterans of Operation End Sweep have previously not been recognized with the main indicator of service in Vietnam, the Vietnam Service Medal.

This bill would direct the Department of Defense to award veterans who participated in Operation End Sweep with the Vietnam Service Medal, formally recognizing these veterans for their involvement in the campaign.

## **House Companion:**

Congressman Tony Wied (R-WI-8)

## **Support:**

VFW-Department of Wisconsin