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**Legislative Asian Caucus Honors 50th Anniversary of Southeast Asian Refugees in Wisconsin**

**Madison, WI** - Today, the Legislative Asian Caucus held a press conference commemorating the 50th anniversary of Southeast Asian refugees — including Hmong, Lao, Vietnamese, and Cambodian communities — arriving in Wisconsin. The event brought together community leaders from across the Hmong, Lao, and Khmer diasporas to reflect on the legacy of displacement and resilience following the end of the war in Southeast Asia.

May 2025 marks half a century since the war's end — a conflict whose consequences continued far beyond the fall of Saigon and the withdrawal of U.S. troops. Among the most affected were the Hmong, many of whom were recruited by U.S. forces during the war. When the United States withdrew, Hmong families faced retaliation, displacement, and death as a result of their allyship with the United States. And those who made it to this country and our state came not as survivors, but as refugees, forced to navigate a new land while carrying the heavy weight of grief, trauma, and unacknowledged sacrifice.

**Representative Hong released the following statement:**

“This moment in history must be remembered not just as a geopolitical event, but as a deeply human tragedy — one whose impact continues to shape the lives of millions, especially in our Southeast Asian communities here in Wisconsin.

We must honor the Hmong community and all Southeast Asian refugees not just by recognizing their pain, but by affirming their dignity, their rights, and their vital place in our shared future. We must be intentional about supporting their leadership and the voices fighting for collective liberation. We must reject any narrative that renders them invisible or unworthy. Because the refugee is not a burden. The refugee is a teacher, a fighter, and a survivor. Their existence is a form of resistance. And their presence in this country is not a charity, it is a call to conscience.

So today, as we remember 50 years, let us hold space for both mourning and hope. Let us tell the full story—not just of American soldiers, but of the Hmong and Vietnamese and Cambodian and Laotian families who survived. Let us acknowledge the ghosts of war that still walk among us. And let us declare that we will not let silence or indifference erase their memory.”

As chair of the Legislative Asian Caucus, Rep. Hong reaffirms her commitment to elevating Southeast Asian voices, uplifting organizations that support their resilience and safety, advancing policies that honor their stories, and building a Wisconsin where all communities are seen, heard, and valued.

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