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(South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs)

Veterans Might Qualify for Republic of China Mutual Defense Commemorative Badge

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota veterans who served in Taiwan between 1955-1979 may be eligible for the Republic of China Mutual Defense Commemorative Badge.

From 1955 to 1979, a Mutual Defense Treaty was established between the United States of America and the Republic of China (ROC), which protected Taiwan from invasion in the aftermath of the Chinese Civil war.

The Ministry of National Defense of the Republic of China has produced the “U.S.-R.O.C. Mutual Defense Commemorative Badge” to express their appreciation for the contribution to maintain the peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, made by all American soldiers who served in Taiwan during that period.

“Recognizing these heroes provides us an opportunity to thank and honor the sacrifices they made,” said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. “Every veteran has a story to tell and along with that military service comes a variety of medals and awards.”

In addition, the Ministry also produced the “Honor Medal for the 823 Bombardment” for those who helped Taiwan defend itself during the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis.

Veterans that served in Taiwan during 1955-1979 are encouraged to contact their local county or tribal veterans service officer (<http://vetaffairs.sd.gov/veteransserviceofficers/locatevso.aspx>) for an application. Veterans will need a copy of their DD214 form as well.

“Veterans have sacrificed greatly in the defense of their country and it is only right that they receive all recognitions they are due,” Zimmerman said. “We owe our veterans a debt we cannot ever fully repay, but awarding these medals is a small gesture we can make on behalf of a grateful nation.”