



STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

WHEREAS: Leo Thorsness was born on February 14, 1932, in Walnut Grove, Minnesota, where he grew up and became an Eagle Scout; and

WHEREAS: He enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1951 at age 19, receiving his wings as an Air Force pilot three years later; and

WHEREAS: As a fighter pilot for the 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Thorsness was assigned to Vietnam to locate and destroy surface-to-air missile sites; and

WHEREAS: In April 1967, on a mission to take out a surface-to-air missile site, Thorsness risked his own life and engaged four enemy planes to protect and save the crew of a fellow fighter plane that had been hit by enemy fire; and

WHEREAS: Thorsness was awarded the United States' highest award for valor in action against an enemy force, the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his bravery that day; and

WHEREAS: Eleven days after that heroic action, Thorsness was shot down over North Vietnam and spent six years as a prisoner of war at the Hoa Lo Prison, and was released on March 4, 1973; and

WHEREAS: Leo Thorsness was honored in October, 2016, at the annual Congressional Medal of Honor Convention in the Twin Cities for being the only living Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient from the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS: Leo Thorsness passed away on May 2, 2017, at age 85; and

WHEREAS: Leo Thorsness's legacy will be honored for generations to come by all who are inspired by his story of bravery and his dedication to his family, his faith, his friends, and his country.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARK DAYTON, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby order all United States flags and Minnesota flags be flown at half-staff at all state and federal buildings in the State of Minnesota, from sunrise until sunset, on Wednesday, February 14, 2018, in honor and remembrance of Leo Thorsness.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 12th day of February.




GOVERNOR



SECRETARY OF STATE