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LARSON, VETERANS, STUDENTS KICKOFF VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT IN CONNECTICUT

HARTFORD- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) was joined today by local veterans, high school students, the UConn Center for Oral History, and leaders of state veterans organizations in kicking off the Veterans History Project in Connecticut. The nationwide effort was established by legislation signed into law in 2000 and was instituted by the U.S. Library of Congress to create a national collection of historical materials based on interviews conducted with veterans by volunteers using audio or video recording equipment, and by collecting copies of wartime letters, diaries, and photographs. The collection captures the experiences of war veterans from all service branches to preserve their personal stories in history.

"More than 1,700 American veterans die each day, and their unique, first-hand accounts of some of the 20th Century's most important events are lost," said Larson. "The Veterans History Project was created by Congress to forever preserve in history

the personal stories and experiences of our veterans. The project, which is facilitated by the Library of Congress, cannot move forward without the time and effort of volunteers and veterans. Today, we are calling on the residents of the First Congressional District and the State of Connecticut to become a part of this noble and valuable program. Individuals can interview and work with a family member, neighbor or co-worker that is a veteran. Schools and service organizations can also lead the way in taking part in this project by working with veterans organizations or veterans that students or members know. Working together, Connecticut can lead the way in accomplishing the goals of this extraordinary project that will collect and forever preserve the stories of our fighting men and women."

Larson was joined by students from Conard High School in West Hartford, Bristol Central High School and Berlin High School, as well as local veterans that the students interviewed following the announcement. Chuck Berry of the American Legion, Al Church of Disabled American Veterans, Edward Giering and Pierre Kennedy of American Ex-Prisoners of War, Bruce Stave of the UConn Center for Oral History, and Edward Burke of Vietnam Veterans of America were also on hand. Larson is a member of the House Armed Services Committee.

The project documents the contributions of civilian volunteers, support staff, and war industry workers as well as the experiences of military personnel from all ranks and all branches of service--the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard and Merchant Marine. The rules, guidelines, and suggested questions can be found at the Library of Congress website at: www.loc.gov/vets or www.house.gov/larson/vhp.htm

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For a Question and Answer Page on the Project: http://www.house.gov/larson/vhp_qa.htm