

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

Thursday, January 30, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We are honored to write to you on behalf of all generations of patriotic West Virginia Veterans, and at the request of the State Funeral for World War II Veterans Foundation. The noble mission of this organization is to designate a single state funeral for the last Medal of Honor Recipient from World War II and to honor all 16 million men and women who served from 1941 to 1945.

As you are well aware, Congressional Medals of Honor were awarded to 472 World War II Service Men and Women. Charles H. Coolidge, Francis S. Currey, Robert D. Maxwell, and West Virginia's own Hershel Woodrow "Woody" Williams, are the last remaining Medal of Honor recipients. These brave individuals embody the sacrifice of the World War II era. Their stories of service during and after the military have inspired future generations to serve our Country and underscore why we call them our "Greatest Generation."

The inspiration for this unique ceremony came from a student in Texas named, Rabel McNutt. Rabel is the goddaughter of Sgt. Walter D. Ehlers, who was the most senior recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor at the time of his passing. He personified heroism as an Army sergeant during the D-Day invasion of France as he, along with so many others, stormed the beaches of Normandy. After viewing videos of state funerals held for President Ronald Reagan and General Douglas MacArthur, Rabel felt impelled to advocate for a state funeral honoring Sgt. Ehlers and his brave brothers and sisters in arms. Soon after, the State Funeral for World War II Veterans Foundation came to fruition.


When visitors come to West Virginia, we jump at the chance to tell them we are home to some of the most patriotic and hardworking people in the nation. We have always done the heavy lifting and never complained. We are so deeply proud of what West Virginians have achieved and what they will continue to accomplish for the cause of freedom.

Woody Williams' act of storming four enemy pillboxes under tremendous fire, and continuing to fight through the entire five week long campaign on Iwo Jima earned him the Medal of Honor. It is these displays of bravery and fortitude that we feel our nation should be reminded of. The Greatest Generation represents the very best of West Virginia and America. For this reason, we can think of no greater tribute than to honor the last of our national heroes of this generation with a state funeral.


Sincerely,



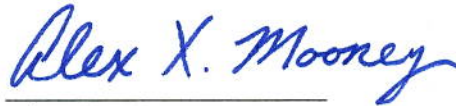
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



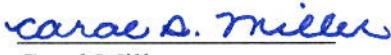
Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



David B. McKinley, P.E.
United States Representative



Alex X. Mooney
United States Representative



Carol Miller
United States Representative