

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

March 4, 2008

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lamar S. Smith
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee
2142 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Conyers and Smith:

As the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., I am forwarding my organization's support of H.J. Res. 39/S.J. Res. 5 to posthumously proclaim American Revolutionary War hero Brig. Gen. Casimir Pulaski an honorary American citizen.

The fact that our nation has bestowed this ceremonial honor on only six people – the first being another Revolutionary War hero, the Marquis de Lafayette in 1824, and the latest being Mother Theresa in 1996 – is testament to how rigid the qualifications are just to be considered. But to state that precedent was set with Lafayette would not render the proper respect to General Pulaski's direct contributions to our young country when we needed his expertise the most.

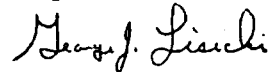
He was a Polish soldier, military commander and noted cavalryman who voluntarily fought under the command of George Washington from 1777 to Oct. 11, 1779, when he died of wounds received in the Battle of Savannah. He was one of Washington's most trusted generals, and the only one who would become known as the "Father of the American Cavalry."

Seven counties and a third of our states have cities and towns bearing his name; he has a statue here in Washington in Freedom Plaza; his bust resides in the U.S. Capitol; a Coast Guard cutter and a Navy ballistic missile submarine were commissioned in his name; and by Presidential Proclamation, Oct. 11 of every year is recognized as General Pulaski Memorial Day.

One year ago this month, the Senate unanimously agreed to posthumously recognize Pulaski as an honorary U.S. citizen, but for whatever reason, that joint resolution remains stalled in the House of Representatives. On behalf of the 2.3 million members of the VFW and our Auxiliaries, I ask for your prompt attention to bring this legislation back to center stage and posthumously bestow the honorary title of American Citizen upon a true patriot.

Should you require any further assistance, please contact VFW Washington Office Executive Director Bob Wallace at 202-543-2239 or at bwallace@vfw.org.

Respectfully,



**GEORGE J. LISICKI
Commander-in-Chief**

cc: Chairwoman and Ranking Member, House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law