

Department of Defense
Request for Assistance from Veteran and Military Service Organizations
Regarding Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander
Service Cross Review for the Korean and Vietnam Wars

All,

Section 586 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 requires that the Military Departments conduct a review of Service Crosses (Distinguished Service Cross – Army; Navy Cross – Navy and USMC; Air Force Cross – Air Force) awarded to Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander veterans from the Korean and Vietnam Wars to determine if they warrant upgrade to the Medal of Honor.

Section 586 also requires that the Military Departments consult with veteran and military service organizations to assist in identifying Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Service Cross recipients from the Korean and Vietnam wars whose Service records indicate that they are Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander for inclusion in the review.

The review mandated by Section 586 includes only those individuals “whose service records identify them as an Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander war veteran who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, or the Air Force Cross during the Korean War or the Vietnam War.”

The Department is using the following definitions for the purpose of this review:

Asian American: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. (Ref: Fed Reg, Vol 62, No. 210, 30 Oct 1997)

(NOTE: For the purpose of the Service Cross review directed by FY17 NDAA §586 the term “Asian American” also includes the countries of: Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar (Burma), Laos, Singapore, Taiwan, Indonesia, Mongolia, Borneo, Brunei, Afghanistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), and Papua New Guinea.

Native Hawaiian: Means any individual any of whose ancestors were natives of the area which consists of the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778 (Ref: 42 U.S.C. §2992c).

Native American Pacific Islander: Means an individual who is indigenous to a United States territory or possession located in the Pacific Ocean, and includes such individuals while residing in the United States (Ref: 42 U.S.C. §2992c). This includes: Guam, American Samoa, and Northern Mariana Islands.

The Department respectfully requests that each of your respective organizations look into this matter and identify any names of Service Cross recipients from the Korean or Vietnam wars who should be included in the review. Please provide the full name of any qualifying Service Cross

recipient, along with any associated documents from the veteran’s Service record that indicates he/she was an Asian American or a Native American Pacific Islander, to their respective Military Service by March 1, 2018. Based on the information provided the respective Military Department will determine if the Service Cross recipient is eligible for inclusion in the review in accordance with Section 586 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017. Contact for each respective Military Service is listed below. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Military Service	Contact Address
Army	Commander U.S. Army Human Resources Command Attn: AHRC-PDP-A 1600 Spearhead Division Ave., Dept 480 Ft. Knox, KY 40122-5408
Navy	Chief of Naval Operations (DNS-35) Navy Awards Office 2000 Navy Pentagon Washington, DC 20350-2000
Air Force	Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center AFPC/DPSIDRA 550 C Street West JB San Antonio-Randolph, TX 78150
Marine Corps	Commandant of the Marine Corps Military Awards Branch (MMMA) 2008 Elliott Road Quantico VA 22134-5100

SECTION. 586. REVIEW REGARDING AWARD OF MEDAL OF HONOR TO CERTAIN ASIAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER WAR VETERANS.

(a) **REVIEW REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of each military department shall review the service records of each Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander war veteran described in subsection (b) to determine whether that veteran should be awarded the Medal of Honor.

(b) **COVERED VETERANS.**—The Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander war veterans whose service records are to be reviewed under subsection (a) are any former members of the Armed Forces whose service records identify them as an Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander war veteran who was awarded the Distinguished-Service Cross, the Navy Cross, or the Air Force Cross during the Korean War or the Vietnam War.

(c) **CONSULTATIONS.**—In carrying out the review under subsection (a), the Secretary of each military department shall consult with such veterans service organizations as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(d) **RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON REVIEW.**—If the Secretary concerned determines, based upon the review under subsection (a) of the service records of any Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander war veteran, that the award of the Medal of Honor to that veteran is warranted, the Secretary shall submit to the President a recommendation that the President award the Medal of Honor to that veteran.

(e) **AUTHORITY TO AWARD MEDAL OF HONOR.**—A Medal of Honor may be awarded to an Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander war veteran in accordance with a recommendation of the Secretary concerned under subsection (d).

(f) **CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.**—No Medal of Honor may be awarded pursuant to subsection (e) until the Secretary of Defense submits to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives notice of the recommendations under subsection (d), including the name of each Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander war veteran recommended to be awarded a Medal of Honor and the rationale for such recommendation.

(g) **WAIVER OF TIME LIMITATIONS.**—An award of the Medal of Honor may be made under subsection (e) without regard to—

(1) section 3744, 6248, or 8744 of title 10, United States Code, as applicable; and

(2) any regulation or other administrative restriction on—

(A) the time for awarding the Medal of Honor; or

(B) the awarding of the Medal of Honor for service for which a Distinguished-Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross has been awarded.

(h) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “Native American Pacific Islander” means a Native Hawaiian or Native American Pacific Islander, as those terms are defined in section 815 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 ([42 U.S.C. 2992c](#)).