

JERRY MORAN, KANSAS
CHAIRMAN
JOHN BOOZMAN, ARKANSAS
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
MIKE ROUNDS, SOUTH DAKOTA
THOM TILLIS, NORTH CAROLINA
DAN SULLIVAN, ALASKA
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE
KEVIN CRAMER, NORTH DAKOTA
KELLY LOEFFLER, GEORGIA

CAROLINE CANFIELD, STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

JON TESTER, MONTANA
RANKING MEMBER
PATTY MURRAY, WASHINGTON
BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, CONNECTICUT
MAZIE HIRONO, HAWAII
JOE MANCHIN III, WEST VIRGINIA
KYRSTEN SINEMA, ARIZONA

TONY McCLAIN, STAFF DIRECTOR

April 29, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As members of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, we write to seek your selection of Mr. Harry W. Colmery as a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Over 75 years ago, the "Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944" was signed into law, paving the way for millions of veterans to transition to civilian life. This landmark legislation afforded veterans enhanced opportunities to purchase homes, pursue higher education and provide for their families. Effectually, this legislation, commonly known as the G.I. Bill, allowed servicemembers to pursue the American dream they had selflessly sacrificed to preserve.

Having recognized the desperate situations many servicemembers returned to following admirable service in World War I, Mr. Colmery, a distinguished Kansan and World War I veteran himself, drafted and developed the G.I. Bill in 1944 to support servicemembers and new veterans' adjustment to peacetime. Mr. Colmery's chief concern, guided by his experience as the National Commander of the American Legion in 1936, was that World War II veterans would face similar hardships that his fellow veterans had faced in the wake of the First World War. Driven by this concern, Mr. Colmery worked to develop ways to help returning servicemembers find jobs, enroll in school, and receive loans. This activism culminated in the first draft of G.I. Bill, which received unanimous bicameral passage in 1944. As a testament to his leadership in crafting this legislation and deep respect for America's veterans, Mr. Colmery was selected to witness President Franklin D. Roosevelt sign the bill into law.

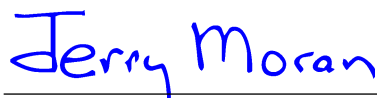
Mr. Harry Colmery devoted himself to our country through his own military service as a first lieutenant in the Army Air Corps during World War I, and subsequent efforts to ensure the nation dutifully addressed the needs of our Armed Forces. America's investment in the G.I. Bill has not only provided servicemembers with the benefits they deserve, but also strengthened families and communities in addition to bolstering our Nation's ability to attract an all-volunteer military force.

Posthumously, Harry W. Colmery continues to impact student veterans, survivors and families. In 2017, you worked with Congress to pass the "Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act," also known as the "Forever GI Bill." This was the largest expansion of

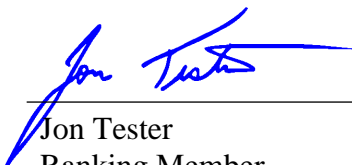
education and training programs since the Post-9/11 GI Bill was first signed into law and greatly impacted the lives of all who have served, continue to serve, and support or supported those that served. Through this law and thanks to your leadership, active duty servicemembers, veterans, Reservists, National Guardsmen, children and spouses benefited from expanded and unprecedented benefits. Congress and the veteran community named this bill in honor of Harry W. Colmery, because of the impact he had, not only on the military and veteran community, but the education community, the military and veteran family community, and the nation as a whole.

In honor of his service and profound impact on the lives of veterans and their families for generations past, present, and future, we request that you bestow the recognition Mr. Colmery so rightly deserves: the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

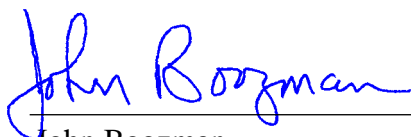
We thank you for your consideration.



Jerry Moran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs



Jon Tester
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs



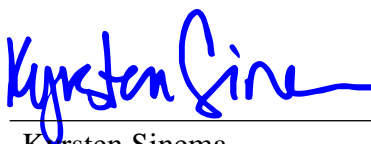
John Boozman
United States Senator



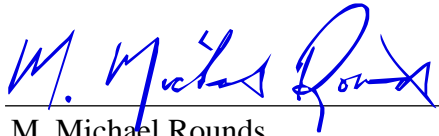
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



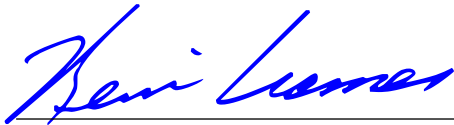
Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Kelly Loeffler
United States Senator