

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 3, 2019

The Honorable Ryan D. McCarthy  
Acting Secretary of the Army  
101 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0101

Dear Acting Secretary McCarthy:

We are writing to request a formal review by an award decision authority to posthumously award the Medal of Honor to Corporal Waverly B. Woodson, Jr., one of the Forgotten Heroes of WWII.

In the early hours of June 6, 1944, Cpl. Woodson, an Army medic assigned to the 320<sup>th</sup> Barrage Balloon Battalion, landed on Omaha Beach. Despite having been struck by shrapnel while aboard his Landing Craft Tank and being wounded in his groin and back, Cpl. Woodson went above and beyond the call of duty by spending 30 grueling hours saving the lives of dozens, if not hundreds, of his fellow soldiers. Cpl. Woodson was a war hero who has been inadequately recognized for his actions on D-Day.

We understand that the Army is preventing a formal review by an award decision authority due to the lack of an original award recommendation. The documentation of Cpl. Woodson's valorous actions on D-Day have been supported by Linda Hervieux, a journalist whose 2015 book titled *Forgotten: The Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, At Home and At War*, cited a memorandum in the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library that comments on Cpl. Woodson's extraordinary bravery. This memorandum to the Roosevelt White House from War Department aide Philleo Nash states:

*"Here is a Negro from Philadelphia who has been recommended for a suitable award. He was first recommended by his C.O. for a Distinguished Service Cross, but General Lee's offices said the act merited a Congressional medal ... This is a big enough award so that the President can give it personally...."*

This powerful statement refers to the recommendation of Cpl. Woodson by his Commanding Officer for the Distinguished Service Cross. It indicates that after the initial recommendation was made, the office of U.S. General John C.H. Lee in Britain said that Cpl. Woodson's actions merited a Congressional Medal—one given by the President of the United States. There is only one medal to which the General could have been referring: the Medal of Honor.

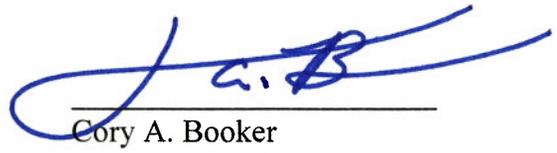
Based on extensive research on his service record, it is clear that Cpl. Woodson did not receive the Medal of Honor during WWII because of the color of his skin. We believe that the Army has sufficient evidence of the required recommendation to, at a minimum, permit a formal review by an award decision authority. Accordingly, we respectfully ask the Army to rectify this historic injustice and appropriately recognize this valorous Veteran with a posthumous recommendation for the Medal of Honor.

We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



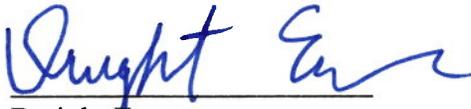
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris  
United States Senator



Elijah Cummings  
Member of Congress



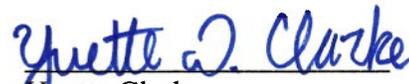
Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



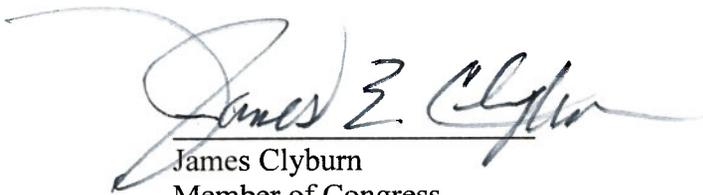
Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress



Yvette Clarke  
Member of Congress



James Clyburn  
Member of Congress



Danny Davis  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Brenda Lawrence  
Member of Congress



Marcia Fudge  
Member of Congress



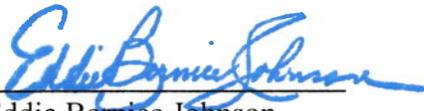
Frederica Wilson  
Member of Congress



Karen Bass  
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson-Lee  
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson  
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



Stacey Plaskett  
Member of Congress



Cedric Richmond  
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress



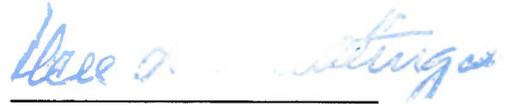
Bobby Scott  
Member of Congress



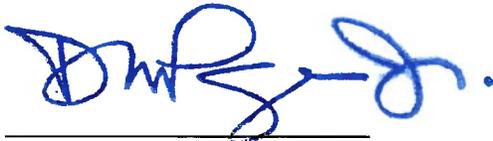
Bennie Thompson  
Member of Congress



Sanford Bishop  
Member of Congress



Alcee Hastings  
Member of Congress



Donald Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



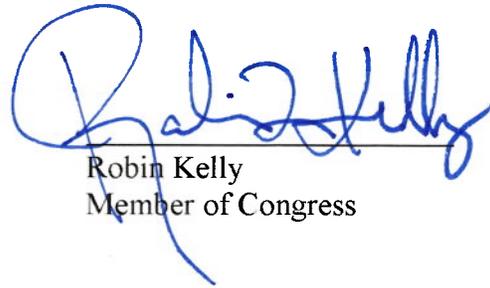
Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



G.K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress



Robin Kelly  
Member of Congress



William "Lacy" Clay  
Member of Congress

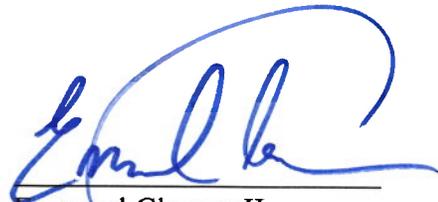


Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



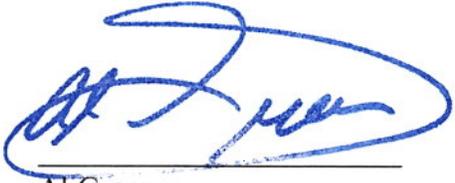
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David Scott  
Member of Congress



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Emanuel Cleaver II  
Member of Congress



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Al Green  
Member of Congress



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Al Lawson  
Member of Congress



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Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



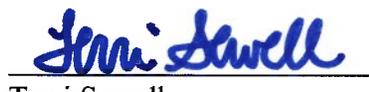
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John Lewis  
Member of Congress



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Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress



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Terri Sewell  
Member of Congress



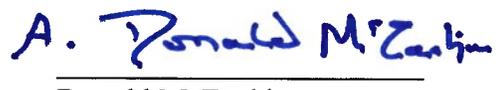
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Colin Allred  
Member of Congress



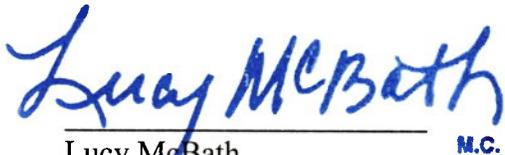
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Lauren Underwood  
Member of Congress



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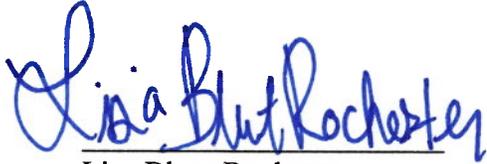
Donald McEachin  
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath <sup>M.C.</sup>  
Member of Congress



Val Demings  
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress



Alma Adams  
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress



Hakeem Jeffries  
Member of Congress