
HOUSE RESOLUTION

STRONGLY URGING THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO AWARD SGT. RAFAEL PERALTA THE MEDAL OF HONOR.

1 WHEREAS, Rafael Peralta was born in Mexico City, Mexico, on
2 April 7, 1979, to Rafael and Rosa Peralta, and was the oldest
3 child of four siblings; and
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5 WHEREAS, Rafael Peralta enlisted in the Marine Corps in
6 2000, the day after he got his green card and completed boot
7 camp at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego; and
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9 WHEREAS, during his training at Camp Pendleton's School of
10 Infantry, Rafael Peralta earned the military specialty 0311,
11 also known as Marine Rifleman, and was then issued orders to the
12 3rd Marines Regiment stationed at Marine Corps Base Hawaii in
13 Kaneohe; and
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15 WHEREAS, his battalion redeployed to Iraq's Anbar Province
16 in 2004 as part of Operation Phantom Fury to battle insurgents
17 in their stronghold of Fallujah; and
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19 WHEREAS, on November 15, 2004, while assisting one of his
20 rifle platoon's squads to clear a house of terrorists and
21 insurgents, Sgt. Peralta was mortally wounded when he smothered
22 an enemy grenade with his body to protect the soldiers in his
23 platoon, and is credited for saving the lives of six of his
24 fellow Marines; and
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26 WHEREAS, for Sgt. Peralta's heroic actions, he was awarded
27 the Purple Heart and Navy Cross; and
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29 WHEREAS, during his military career, he was also awarded
30 the Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq
31 Campaign Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, and the Sea Service
32 Deployment Ribbon; and
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1 WHEREAS, upon hearing of Sgt. Peralta's bravery, in late
2 2004, U.S. Representative Bob Fliner wrote a letter to then
3 Marine Corp Commandant Gen. Michael Hagee recommending Sgt.
4 Rafael Peralta for the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest
5 military award for valor in action against an enemy force that
6 can be bestowed upon an individual serving the U.S. armed
7 forces; and
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9 WHEREAS, Defense Secretary Robert Gates convened a five-
10 member board, which on September 18, 2008, concluded that Sgt.
11 Rafael Peralta's actions did not warrant the Medal of Honor,
12 citing that the evidence did not meet the exacting "no doubt"
13 standard necessary to support the awarding of the nation's
14 highest military award; and
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16 WHEREAS, in November 2008, Defense Secretary Robert Gates
17 rejected a request by several members of Congress to upgrade the
18 valor award for Marine Sgt. Rafael Peralta and announced his
19 decision not to conduct further reviews into Sgt. Peralta's
20 actions; now, therefore,
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22 BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
23 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
24 2009, that the Legislature strongly urges the Secretary of
25 Defense and the President of the United States to reconsider
26 their decisions and award Sgt. Rafael Peralta the Medal of Honor
27 for his bravery in sacrificing his life for his fellow soldiers;
28 and
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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
31 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,
32 the Secretary of Defense, each member of Hawaii's Congressional
33 delegation, the mother of Sgt. Rafael Peralta, and the President
34 of the Senate and Speaker of the House of the United States
35 Congress.
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