

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO URGE
PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA TO AWARD THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF
FREEDOM TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL MIGUEL ENCINIAS FOR HIS
MERITORIOUS SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY.

WHEREAS, Miguel Encinias was born and raised in Las
Vegas, New Mexico, the youngest of sixteen children; and

WHEREAS, he joined the New Mexico national guard in
1939, between his junior and senior year in high school, when
he was only sixteen years old; and

WHEREAS, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, when
President Roosevelt issued an urgent call for pilots, Miguel
applied to the cadet academy for flight training and graduated
as an air force pilot and officer in 1943; and

WHEREAS, he flew sixty-nine missions in North Africa,
Sicily and Corsica, and he was shot down, wounded and captured
by the German army; and

WHEREAS, he spent fifteen months in a German prison camp
on the Baltic coast and was released upon the liberation of
Europe by the allies; and

WHEREAS, following the war, he enrolled in Georgetown
university's school of foreign services, and after graduating
from Georgetown, he went to France to study, where he was
awarded the equivalent of a master's degree in political

science; and

WHEREAS, at the onset of the Korean Conflict, Miguel Encinias requested active duty status with the United States air force, and he flew over one hundred missions during that war; and

WHEREAS, on his sixty-fifth mission, he was shot down, rescued by helicopter, hospitalized and treated for his wounds; and

WHEREAS, upon recovery and convalescence, he returned to his squadron and continued to fly missions until the end of the war; and

WHEREAS, following the Korean Conflict, Miguel was selected to be the director of a project that trained pilots from other countries to be fighter pilots and, subsequently, he became a French teacher at the United States air force academy; and

WHEREAS, during the Vietnam Conflict, he once again volunteered for active duty and flew more than sixty combat missions while also serving as a French advisor in that country; and

WHEREAS, toward the end of his military career, Miguel Encinias was honored, receiving two commendations for his accomplishments, one by the chief of staff of the air force and the other by the chief of the military assistance advisory group in Spain; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from the military as a lieutenant colonel, he enrolled in the university of New Mexico, from which he was awarded a doctor of philosophy degree in Spanish and Latin American literature and education; and

WHEREAS, he pursued a second career as a university professor, teaching French and Spanish at western New Mexico university, and he was the director of bilingual programs for the Albuquerque public schools; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, he was appointed by President Bill Clinton to be a member of the World War II advisory board, and he served on that board for seven years; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious military career, Miguel was recognized and honored with three distinguished flying crosses, two purple hearts and fourteen air medals; and

WHEREAS, Miguel Encinias is the only Hispanic in the United States, and one of only five pilots, to have served and fought in three wars: World War II, the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam Conflict; and

WHEREAS, the presidential medal of freedom is the nation's highest civilian award, recognizing exceptional meritorious service, both in war and in peacetime; and

WHEREAS, Miguel Encinias has distinguished himself by a lifetime of service to his country, and he deserves consideration for the nation's highest civilian award;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional delegation be requested to urge President Barack Obama to award the presidential medal of freedom to Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Encinias for his meritorious service to our country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation.