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A Communication From

REPRESENTATIVE BOB LYNN

Chairman

House Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee

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HB 245

Veterans' and POW's Vehicle Fees/Taxes

Sponsor Statement

This bill will allow DMV to issue special registration plates for one noncommercial motor vehicle to a person who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The bill will also delete the \$30.00 license plate fee for Purple Heart recipients who want to obtain a specialized Purple Heart license plate for their vehicle. It also waives any registration or plate fees for the Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and to a current prisoner of war or the spouse of a current prisoner of war.

Sec. 28.10.181. Registration of unique and special vehicles and vehicles used for special purposes.

(a) The department shall register unique and special vehicles and vehicles used for special purposes and issue registration plates as provided in this section. Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, registration plates issued under this section remain with the person or organization to whom they are issued when vehicle ownership is transferred or title or interest in the vehicle is assigned, except for plates issued under (b), (h) and (i) of this section. Registration plates issued under this section may not be used on, or transferred to, a vehicle other than the vehicle for which the plates are issued without the approval of the department and payment of any required fees and taxes prescribed in AS 28.10.421 (d), 28.10.431 and 28.10.441; however, if the plates issued under (c), (f) and (j) of this section are transferred to a vehicle for which the registration fee is more than the fee for the vehicle from which the plates are transferred, the owner shall pay the difference between the two fees. Registration plates issued under this section to which a person is no longer entitled or the transfer of the plates to another vehicle which the department does not approve shall be returned immediately to the department by the person or organization to whom the plates were originally issued.

(b) Historic vehicles. The owner of a historic vehicle may make application for special registration under this subsection. The department, when satisfied that the vehicle meets the requirements for historic vehicle registration under regulations adopted by the commissioner, shall register the vehicle and (1) issue two permanent registration plates of distinctive design and color bearing no date; vehicles qualifying for registration under this paragraph shall be issued registration plates numbered in a separate numerical series beginning with "Historic Vehicle No. 1"; or (2) allow the vehicle to use registration plates of this state supplied by the vehicle owner that correspond to the year the vehicle was manufactured if the vehicle was manufactured 30 or more years before the year of application. Registration plates issued under this subsection remain with the vehicle as long as the vehicle is registered under this subsection.

(c) Special request plates. Upon application by the owner of a passenger vehicle, motorcycle, noncommercial van or pick-up truck, or motor home, the department shall design and issue registration plates containing a series of not more than six letters or numbers or combination of letters and numbers as requested by the owner. The department may, in its discretion, disapprove the issuance of registration plates under this subsection when the requested symbols are a duplication of an existing registration or when the symbols are considered unacceptable by the department.

(d) Vehicles owned by veterans with disabilities, including persons disabled in the line of duty while serving in the Alaska Territorial Guard, or other persons with disabilities. Upon the request of a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk, as defined in 23 C.F.R. 1235.2, the department shall (1) register one passenger vehicle in the name of the person without charge; and (2) issue a specially designed registration plate that displays (A) recognition of the disabled veteran if the applicant's disability originated from the applicant's service with the Alaska Territorial Guard or the armed forces of the United States; (B) the international symbol of accessibility (the wheelchair logo); and (C) if the applicant is a veteran, the Alaska and United States flags and red, white, and blue colors. A person who is not otherwise qualified under this subsection, but who meets the qualifications of a disabled veteran under AS 29.45.030 (i), may register one passenger vehicle without charge, and the department shall issue a specially designed registration plate that displays recognition of the disabled veteran that does not display the international symbol of accessibility and does not carry with it special parking privileges. For purposes of this subsection, proof of disability may be provided by a person licensed as a physician or physician assistant under AS 08.64 or as an advanced nurse practitioner under AS 08.68.

(e) Vehicles owned by the state, municipalities, and charitable organizations of the state. Every certificate of registration and registration plate issued to the state, a municipality, or charitable organization of the state is in effect until the vehicle for which the registration certificate and plate were issued is no longer owned and operated by the state, the municipality, or the charitable organization of the state or until the department, in its discretion, declares its expiration. The state, municipality, or charitable organization of the state shall maintain a current listing of all vehicles registered to it in the order of the registration number assigned to each vehicle, and shall provide a copy of the listing to the department upon request. The listing must include a description of each vehicle and other identifying information required by the department. Registration plates issued under this subsection must be of a distinctive design and numbering system. For the purposes of this subsection, "charitable organization" means a nonprofit association, corporation, society, or other entity organized, incorporated, or headquartered in the state for educational, cultural, scientific, or other charitable purposes, as prescribed in regulations of the department.

(f) Vehicles owned by elected state officials. The department shall issue special registration plates to each incumbent elected state official for display on noncommercial motor vehicles owned and driven by the official. The department shall number or design the plates so that registration by an elected state official is indicated upon the plates. The registration plates issued under this subsection remain with the owner of the vehicle only during the official's term of office.

(g) *[Repealed, Sec. 9 ch 20 SLA 1990].*

(h) Vehicles owned by ranchers, farmers, and dairymen. A vehicle not exceeding an unladen total gross weight of 16,000 pounds, owned by a person deriving the person's primary source of livelihood from the operation of a ranch, farm, or dairy where the person resides full-time, and that is used exclusively to transport (1) the person's own ranch, farm, or dairy products, or greenhouse or nursery products, including vegetables, plants, grass seed, sod, or tree seedlings, to and from the market, or (2) supplies, commodities, or equipment to be used on the person's ranch, farm, or dairy, or in the person's greenhouse or nursery, may be registered under this subsection and may be issued registration plates of a distinctive design or system of numbering.

(i) Amateur mobile radio station vehicles. A validly licensed amateur radio operator who presents satisfactory proof that the owner holds an unexpired Federal Communications Commission amateur radio operator's license of any renewable class, and who presents satisfactory proof that the vehicle contains or carries an amateur radio transmitter and receiving unit of a type applicable to the license class applied for, and who is permitted by law to operate a fixed station, may register one amateur mobile radio station vehicle for each radio license issued by the federal government and may receive for the vehicle distinctive registration plates instead of regular registration plates. The number on the plates must be the radio call sign of the owner.

(j) Vehicles owned by dealers. A state-registered and bonded vehicle dealer may apply for dealer registration plates. A plate issued under this subsection may be used only on dealer-owned vehicles during the routine and normal course of the dealer's business, excluding service vehicles, or for transporting an unregistered vehicle from a port of entry to the dealer's facilities or from one dealer to another or, in the case of a house trailer, from the retail facility to a trailer space. A vehicle permitted to have dealer plates must be affixed with two plates issued under this subsection. If the dealer sells or transfers the vehicle, the dealer plates may be used on the vehicle by the new owner or transferee for a period of not more than five days after the sale or transfer. The department may seize the dealer plates if it has reason to believe that the plates are being used to defeat the purposes of, or are in violation of, this chapter.

(k) *[Repealed, Sec. 3 ch 8 SLA 1993].*

(l) Vehicles owned by Pearl Harbor survivors and former prisoners of war. The department, upon receipt of written proof, shall issue without charge special registration plates for one noncommercial motor vehicle to a person who was on active military duty in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, or who has been a prisoner of war during a declared war or other conflict, as determined by the Department of Defense under federal regulations. The design and color of the Pearl Harbor survivor or prisoner of war plates shall be solely within the discretion of the commissioner.

(m) Special request plates for Alaska National Guard personnel. Upon application by the owner of a passenger vehicle, noncommercial van or pick-up truck, or motor home who presents satisfactory proof of current membership in the Alaska National Guard, the department may design and issue registration plates that identify the vehicle as registered to a member of the Alaska National Guard.

(n) *[Repealed, Sec. 9 ch 20 SLA 1990].*

(o) Special request university plates. Upon application by the owner of a passenger vehicle, van or pick-up truck, or motor home, the department may design and issue registration plates representing the University of Alaska Anchorage, University of Alaska Fairbanks, University of Alaska Southeast, or Prince William Sound Community College. The department may disapprove the issuance of registration plates under this subsection when the requested plates are a duplication of an existing registration.

(p) Vehicles owned by veterans. The department, upon receipt of written proof that the veteran is a sole or joint owner of a noncommercial motor vehicle, shall issue special registration plates for the noncommercial motor vehicle to a requesting person who is a veteran or retired veteran of the armed forces of the United States. The commissioner, after consulting with the director of the division of veterans affairs, shall determine the design and color of the veteran or retired veteran plates.

(q) Vehicles owned by recipients of the Purple Heart. The department, upon receipt of written proof that the person is the sole or joint owner of a noncommercial motor vehicle, shall issue special registration plates for the noncommercial motor vehicle to a requesting person who has received the Purple Heart medal awarded for wounds suffered in action against an armed enemy or as a result of the hostile action of an armed enemy. The commissioner, after consulting with the director of the division of veterans affairs, shall determine the design and color of the Purple Heart medal recipient plates.

(r) Special request custom collector plates. Upon application by the owner of a custom collector vehicle, the department may design and issue registration plates appropriate for custom collector vehicles. The department may disapprove the issuance of registration plates under this subsection when the requested plates are a duplication of an existing registration.

(s) Special request dog mushing plates. Upon application by the owner of a passenger vehicle, van or pick-up truck, or motor home, the department may design and issue registration plates representing the sport of dog mushing in the state. The department may disapprove the issuance of registration plates under this subsection when the requested plates are a duplication of an existing registration.

(t) Special request Alaska children's trust plates. Upon application by the owner of a passenger vehicle, noncommercial van or pick-up truck, or motor home, the department may design and issue registration plates representing the Alaska children's trust under AS 37.14.200. The department may disapprove the issuance of registration plates under this subsection when the requested plates are a duplication of an existing registration.

(u) Special request plates commemorating the arts. Upon application by the owner of a passenger vehicle, van or pick-up truck, or motor home, the department may issue registration plates commemorating the arts. The commissioner, after consulting with the Alaska State Council on the Arts, shall determine the design and color of plates commemorating the arts. The department may disapprove the issuance of registration plates under this subsection when the requested plates are a duplication of an existing registration.

(v) *[Repealed, Sec. 4 ch 11 SLA 2002].*

(w) Special request plates commemorating Alaska veterans. Upon application by the owner of a passenger vehicle, van, pick-up truck, or motor home, the department may issue registration plates commemorating Alaska veterans. The commissioner shall determine the design and color of plates commemorating Alaska veterans. The department may disapprove the issuance of registration plates under this subsection when the requested plates are a duplication of an existing registration.

Sec. 28.10.190. , 28.10.200 Transfer of special plates; annual tax. [Repealed, Sec. 7 ch 178 SLA 1978].

Repealed or Renumbered



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A Brief History - The Medal of Honor*

The first formal system for rewarding acts of individual gallantry by the nation's fighting men was established by General George Washington on August 7, 1782. Designed to recognize "any singularly meritorious action," the award consisted of a purple cloth heart. Records show that only three persons received the ward: Sergeant Elijah Churchill, Sergeant William Brown, and Sergeant Daniel Bissel Jr.

The Badge of Military Merit, as it was called, fell into oblivion until 1932, when General Douglas MacArthur, then Army Chief of Staff, pressed for its revival. Officially reinstituted on February 22, 1932, the now familiar Purple Heart was at first an Army award, given to those who had been wounded in World War I or who possessed a Meritorious Service Citation Certificate. In 1943, the order was amended to include personnel of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Coverage was eventually extended to include all services and "any civilian national" wounded while serving with the Armed Forces.

Although the Badge of Military Merit fell into disuse after the Revolutionary War, the idea of a decoration for individual gallantry remained through the early 1800s. In 1847, after the outbreak of the Mexican-American War, a "certificate of merit" was established for any soldier who distinguished himself in action. No medal went with the honor. After the Mexican-American War, the award was discontinued, which meant there was no military award with which to recognize the nation's fighting men.

Early in the Civil War, a medal for individual valor was proposed to General-in-Chief of the Army Winfield Scott. But Scott felt medals smacked of European affectation and killed the idea.

The medal found support in the Navy, however, where it was felt recognition of courage in strife was needed. Public Resolution 82, containing a provision for a Navy medal of valor, was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on December 21, 1861. The medal was "to be bestowed upon such petty officers, seamen, landsmen, and Marines as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry and other seamanlike qualities during the present war."

Shortly after this, a resolution similar in wording was introduced on behalf of the Army. Signed into law July 12, 1862, the measure provided for awarding a medal of honor "to such noncommissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action, and other soldierlike qualities, during the present insurrection."

Although it was created for the Civil War, Congress made the Medal of Honor a permanent decoration in 1863.

Almost 3,400 men and one woman have received the award for heroic actions in the nation's battles since that time.

* Quoted from "Armed Forces Decorations and Awards," a publication of the American Forces Information Service. Copies of the pamphlet are available upon request (in print format only), via the "DefenseLINK Comment/Question Form" in the "Questions" section.

Updated: 22 Jun 1998

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The Nation's Highest Military Award

The Medal of Honor

The Bravest of the Brave

**World War II Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient
Lieutenant Audie L. Murphy**



Major General "Iron Mike" O'Daniel, CG, 3rd Infantry Division, presents the Medal of Honor to Lieutenant Audie L. Murphy for heroism during World War II.



AUDIE L. MURPHY

**AMERICA'S MOST DECORATED WAR
HERO**



Audie Murphy was born on June 20, 1924, near Kingston (Hunt County) Texas, one of thirteen children. On June 30, 1942, at the Federal Building in Dallas, Texas, Audie was inducted into the United States Army-Paratroopers. Audie had initially applied to the Marines but was turned down as being underweight and too short. He received his basic training at Camp Wolters, Texas, and advanced infantry training was carried out at Ft. Meade, Maryland. On March 3, 1943, Audie was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division. On May 7, 1943, he was promoted to Private First Class; through subsequent promotions including Corporal, Sergeant, Staff Sergeant, and finally on October 14, 1944, was given a battlefield commission to Second Lieutenant. He was promoted to First Lieutenant after his Medal of Honor of Honor action.

Before his 21st birthday, and after more than two years overseas, most of it front line duty, Audie Murphy returned home at the end of World War II with every decoration for valor this country could bestow. He participated in nine battle campaigns, including participating in the assault landings at Sicily and Southern France. His fame earned him the title of "The most decorated combat soldier of World War II."

Audie's string of decorations began on March 2, 1944 with the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device for valorous conduct in action against the enemy on the Anzio Beachhead, Italy. This was followed with the First Oak Leaf Cluster on the Bronze Star Medal for his exemplary conduct in ground combat on or about 8 May, 1944. Also at this time, Audie was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge.

After landing near Ramatuelle in Southern France, Audie earned the Distinguished Service Cross on 15 August, 1944. Audie Murphy advanced inland with his squad but was halted by intense machine gun and small arms fire from a boulder covered hill to his front. Acting alone, he obtained a light machine gun and in the ensuing duel, he was able to silence the enemy weapon. Killing two of its crew and wounding the third. As he proceeded further up the draw, two Germans advanced toward him. They were quickly killed. Still alone, Audie then dashed further up the draw toward the enemy strong point disregarding the hail of bullets directed at him. Closing in, he wounded two more Germans with Carbine fire, killed two others in a fire fight, and forced the remaining five to surrender. But it was during this action that took the life of his dear friend, Lattie Tipton. So devastated by this loss, that Audie co-dedicated his autobiographical book "To Hell and Back" to PVT Lattie Tipton and to PVT Joe Sieja who was killed in action on the Anzio Beachhead in January, 1944.



On the morning of 2 October 1944, near the Cleurie Quarry, France, Audie inched his way over rugged terrain toward an enemy machine gun which had fired upon a group of American Officers on reconnaissance. Getting to within fifteen yards of the German gun, Audie stood up, and disregarding a burst of enemy fire, flung two hand grenades into the position, killing four Germans and wounding three more thus destroying the position. For this action, Audie was awarded the Silver Star. Just three days later, on October 5, 1944, on a hill in the Vosges Mountains near Le Tholy, France, he earned an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star. Carrying an SCR536 radio, and alone, Audie crawled fifty yards under severe enemy machine gun and rifle fire, to a point 200 yards from a strongly entrenched enemy. For an hour Audie Murphy directed artillery fire upon the enemy, killing fifteen Germans and inflicting approximately thirty-five casualties.

Audie Murphy's three Purple Hearts recognize wounds he received on 15 September 15, 1944, in his action near Genevreville, France; October 26, 1944 in action near Les Rouges, Eaux, France; January 25, 1945, in action in the Colmar Pocket.



Audie Murphy received a severe hip wound from a German mortar on October 26, 1944. Tired of the monotony of hospital life, he took it upon himself to rejoin Company B. He was still in a state of convalescence on January 26, 1945 when Audie earned the Nation's highest tribute for action in the Riedwihr Woods near Holtzwihr, France. The Third Division was engaged in fierce fighting in the Colmar Pocket which consisted of a heavily fortified bulge stretching from the Rhine into France. At midnight on January 25, Company B moved through the Riedwihr Woods, but fierce fighting reduced the company to two officers and about 28 men. Despite five replacements, the company remained critically under strength. As the senior ranking officer, Audie was placed in charge of the company and was ordered to advance to the edge of the forest and hold the line until relieved. Company B was supported by two tank destroyers from the 601st Tank battalion which were attached to the 15th Infantry, but they would soon be out of action.

The frozen ground was covered with 10-12 inches of snow; it was impossible for the men to dig in. Audie's company was strung along a three hundred yard front at the edge of the woods. Company B was in a defensive position when at 1400 hours, on January 26, 1945, the Germans began a fierce attack from Holtzwihr. This assault consisted of six heavy Jagdpanther tanks supported by approximately 250 German infantry attired in white snow capes. The first tank destroyer slid into a drainage ditch and could not extricate itself. The second TD received a direct hit from a German 88, killing the commander and gunner. Seeing that the situation was desperate, Audie ordered his men to fall back to an alternate position. At this time, Audie began calling in artillery supported by a field telephone through Battalion Headquarters. With his ammunition depleted, Audie decided to mount the burning TD and employ its .50 caliber machine gun. After removing the dead TD commander, Audie sprayed deadly fire upon the German infantry. With the TD in danger of blowing up at any moment, the Germans gave it a wide berth. The black smoke streaming from the TD made it difficult for the Germans to see Audie, but it also reduced his view of the advancing infantry. At this point, Audie called in more artillery support even though it was dangerously close to his own position. For an hour, Audie managed to kill or wound approximately 50 to 100 Germans and confused the rest as to the source of the deadly fire. The German tanks, lacking infantry support, were forced to withdraw. Audie jumped from the burning TD only to hear it explode seconds later. Thus ended one of the most famous Medal of Honor actions of World War II.

Following the presentation of the Medal of Honor on June 2, 1945, at an airfield near Werfen, Austria, Audie was also awarded the Legion of Merit. In addition to the US awards, Audie received the French Legion of Honor (Grade of Chevalier); the French Croix du Guerre with Silver Star; the French Croix du Guerre with Palm and the Belgium Croix du Guerre 1940 with Palm. Despite the weight and burden of his medals, Audie always stated that the "the real heroes were the ones with the wooden crosses."

On July 14, 1950, Audie was sworn in as a member of the Texas national Guard's 36th Infantry Division and promoted to the rank of Captain. He was promoted to the rank of Major on February 14, 1956.



Audie Murphy's fame earned him the cover of Life Magazine on July 16, 1945. His popular appeal led him to a film career in Hollywood. He was in forty-four movies, mainly westerns. His most noteworthy were "To Hell and Back," "The Red Badge of Courage," and "The Unforgiven."

Audie was a passenger in an Aero Commander 680E when it crashed in the Appalachian Mountains 12 miles northwest of Roanoke, Virginia on memorial Day weekend, May 28, 1971. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. Audie's resting place is one of the most frequently visited sites at Arlington. There were many tributes paid to Audie, mostly after his untimely death. In the end, Audie was destined to cast a longer shadow than most Medal of Honor recipients.

Visit the Audie L. Murphy Medal of Honor Tribute



Audie Murphy's Military Award List

Military Service Number 01 692 509

Medal of Honor

Distinguished Service Cross

Silver Star with First Oak Leaf Cluster

Legion of Merit

Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device and First Oak Leaf Cluster

Purple Heart with Second Oak Leaf Cluster

U.S. Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal

Good Conduct Medal

Distinguished Unit Emblem with First Oak Leaf Cluster

American Campaign Medal



European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with One Silver Star, Four

Bronze Service Stars (representing nine campaigns) and one Bronze Arrowhead

(representing assault landing at Sicily and Southern France)

World War II Victory Medal

Army of Occupation Medal with Germany Clasp

Armed Forces Reserve Medal

Combat Infantry Badge

Marksman Badge with Rifle Bar

Expert Badge with Bayonet Bar

French Fourragere in Colors of the Croix de Guerre

French Legion of Honor, Grade of Chevalier

French Croix de Guerre With Silver Star

French Croix de Guerre with Palm

Medal of Liberated France

Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 Palm



Reprinted from a letter dated 7 Sept 1979, from the Department of the Army, Office of the Adjutant General and the Adjutant General Center, Washington, D.C. 20314; Subject: Maj Audie Murphy - Authorization for Awards and Decorations

World War II Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Audie L. Murphy - General Alexander Patch of the U.S. 7th Army decorates Lt. Audie Murphy of Farmersville, Texas with the Congressional Medal of Honor. Lt. Murphy is the most decorated American soldier, holder of every decoration for bravery save the legion of merit. He rose from the rank of private to become a company commander in 30 months of combat duty with the veteran third division.

General Alexander Patch of the U.S. 7th Army decorates Lt. Audie Murphy of Farmersville, Texas with the Congressional Medal of Honor. Lt. Murphy is the most decorated American soldier, holder of every decoration for bravery save the legion of merit. He rose from the rank of private to become a company commander in 30 months of combat duty with the veteran third division.

Official Narrative For Medal of Honor Recipient

MURPHY, AUDIE L.

CITATION: 2ND Lt. Murphy commanded Company B, which was attacked by 6 tanks and waves of infantry. 2ND Lt. Murphy ordered his men to withdraw to prepared positions in a woods, while he remained forward at his command post and continued to give fire directions to the artillery



by telephone. Behind him, to his right, 1 of our tank destroyers received a direct hit and began to burn. Its crew withdrew to the woods. 2ND Lt. Murphy continued to direct artillery fire which killed large numbers of the advancing enemy infantry. With the enemy tanks abreast of his position, 2ND Lt. Murphy climbed on the burning tank destroyer, which was in danger of blowing up at any moment, and employed its .50 caliber machine gun against the enemy. He was alone and exposed to German fire from 3 sides, but his deadly fire killed dozens of Germans and caused their infantry attack to waver. The enemy tanks, losing infantry support, began to fall back. For an hour the Germans tried every available weapon to eliminate 2ND Lt. Murphy, but he continued to hold his position and wiped out a squad which was trying to creep up unnoticed on his right flank. Germans reached as close as 10 yards, only to be mowed down by his fire. He received a leg wound, but ignored it and continued the single-handed fight until his ammunition was exhausted. He then made his way to his company, refused medical attention, and organized the company in a counterattack which forced the Germans to withdraw. His directing of artillery fire wiped out many of the enemy; he killed or wounded about 50. 2ND Lt. Murphy's indomitable courage and his refusal to give an inch of ground saved his company from possible encirclement and destruction, and enabled it to hold the woods which had been the enemy's objective.



Audie Murphy was a successful movie star earning his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame



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The Nation's Highest Military Award

The Medal of Honor

The Bravest of the Brave

**Vietnam War Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient
Major Bernard Francis Fisher, USAF**



Major Bernard Fisher was awarded the Medal of Honor, the first airman in the Vietnam War to receive it. It was presented by President Lyndon Baines Johnson at the White House, Jan. 19, 1967.



**MAJOR BERNARD FRANCIS FISHER
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**

for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk
of his life above and beyond the call of duty in :



Rank and organization: Major, U.S. Air Force, 1st Air Commandos.

Place and date: Bien Hoa and Pleiku, Vietnam, 10 March 1966.

Entered service at: Kuna, Idaho.

Born: 11 January 1927, San Bernardino, Calif.

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. On that date, the special forces camp at A Shau was under attack by 2,000 North Vietnamese Army regulars. Hostile troops had positioned themselves between the airstrip and the camp. Other hostile troops had surrounded the camp and were continuously raking it with automatic weapons fire from the surrounding hills. The tops of the 1,500-foot hills were obscured by an 800 foot ceiling, limiting aircraft maneuverability and forcing pilots to operate within range of hostile gun positions, which often were able to fire down on the attacking aircraft. During the battle, Maj. Fisher observed a fellow airman crash land on the battle-torn airstrip. In the belief that the downed pilot was seriously injured and in imminent danger of capture, Maj. Fisher announced his intention to land on the airstrip to effect a rescue. Although aware of the extreme danger and likely failure of such an attempt, he elected to continue. Directing his own air cover, he landed his aircraft and taxied almost the full length of the runway, which was littered with battle debris and parts of an exploded aircraft. While effecting a successful rescue of the downed pilot, heavy ground fire was observed, with 19 bullets striking his aircraft. In the face of the withering ground fire, he applied power and gained enough speed to lift-off at the overrun of the airstrip. Maj. Fisher's profound concern for his fellow airman, and at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of his country.

☒ Vietnam War Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Major
Bernard Francis Fisher, USAF



Medal of Honor recipient Colonel Bernard Fisher (USAF, Ret.) and USAF Chief of Staff General Mike Ryan share a moment during a ceremony which took place at the Pentagon on March 9, 1999.

If Bernie Fisher went into the airstrip at A Shau, his chances of coming out again would not be good...

Into the Valley of Fire

U.S. Constitution



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The Nation's Highest Military Award

The Medal of Honor

The Bravest of the Brave

**World War I Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient
Sgt. Alvin C. York, US Army**



Alvin C. York Wearing Congressional Medal - March 4, 1961
Famed World War I hero, Sgt. Alvin C. York, (left) was "mighty grateful" when he learned that the Internal Revenue Bureau had agreed on March 18th, to settle his \$25,000 tax debt. The Revenue Bureau's announcement followed a national drive started by House Speaker Sam Rayburn, who donated \$1,000 himself, to raise the money for Sgt. York's income tax debt. In this March photo, York's coveted Congressional Medal of Honor is admired by his grandson Larry Jackson York, (right). Pall Mall, Tennessee

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MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Iraq



***SMITH, PAUL R.**

Rank and Organization: Sergeant First Class, United States Army

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty: Sergeant First Class Paul R. Smith distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with an armed enemy near Baghdad International Airport, Baghdad, Iraq on 4 April 2003. On that day, Sergeant First Class Smith was engaged in the construction of a prisoner of war holding area when his Task Force was violently attacked by a company-sized enemy force. Realizing the vulnerability of over 100 fellow soldiers, Sergeant First Class Smith quickly organized a hasty defense consisting of two platoons of soldiers, one Bradley Fighting Vehicle and three armored personnel carriers. As the fight developed, Sergeant First Class Smith braved hostile enemy fire to personally engage the enemy with hand grenades and anti-tank weapons, and organized the evacuation of three wounded soldiers from an armored personnel carrier struck by a rocket propelled grenade and a 60mm mortar round. Fearing the enemy would overrun their defenses, Sergeant First Class Smith moved under withering enemy fire to man a .50 caliber machine gun mounted on a damaged armored personnel carrier. In total disregard for his own life, he maintained his exposed position in order to engage the attacking enemy force. During this action, he was mortally wounded. His courageous actions helped defeat the enemy attack, and resulted in as many as 50 enemy soldiers killed, while allowing the safe withdrawal of numerous wounded soldiers. Sergeant First Class Smith's extraordinary heroism and uncommon valor are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the Third Infantry Division "Rock of the Marne," and the United States Army.



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Last updated 4 April 2005



Medal of Honor Breakdown

(By War and Service -- As of May 2003)

War	Totals	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Force	Coast Guard	Posthumous
Civil War	1522	1198	307	17	0	0	32
Indian Campaigns	426	426	0	0	0	0	13
Korea 1871	15	0	9	6	0	0	0
Spanish American	110	31	64	15	0	0	1
Samoa	4	0	1	3	0	0	0
Philippine Insurrection	80	69	5	6	0	0	4
Philippine Outlaws	6	1	5	0	0	0	0
Boxer Rebellion	59	4	22	33	0	0	1
Mexican Campaign	56	1	46	9	0	0	0
Haiti	6	0	0	6	0	0	0
Dominican Republic	3	0	0	3	0	0	0
World War I	124	95	21	8	0	0	33
Haiti 1919-1920	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
Nicaraguan Campaign	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
World War II	464	324	57	82	0	1	266
Korean War	131	78	7	42	4	0	94
Vietnam	245	159	16	57	13	0	154
Somalia	2	2	0	0	0	0	2
Non-Combat	193	3	185	5	0	0	5
Unknowns	9	9	0	0	0	0	9
GRAND TOTALS	3459	2400	745	296	17	1	614

These totals reflect the total number of Medals of Honor awarded. Nineteen (19) men received a second award; fourteen of these men received two separate Medals for two separate actions; five received both the Navy and the Army Medals of Honor for the same action. The total number of Medal of Honor recipients is 3,408.

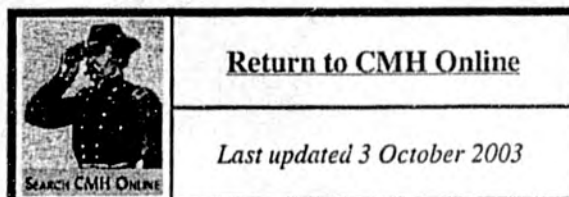
Total Medals of Honor awarded: 3,459

Total number of Medals of Honor recipients: 3,440

Total number of double recipients: 19

As of 13 April 2003, there are 137 living Medal of Honor recipients.

Source: **Congressional Medal of Honor Society**, 40 Patriots Point Rd, Mt Pleasant
SC 29464





The Nation's Highest Military Award

The Medal of Honor

The Bravest of the Brave

Vietnam War Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Staff Sgt. Drew Dix

DREW DIX IS A LIFE
MEMBER OF AMERICAN
LEGION POST 3 IN
KETCHIKAN, A FORMER
RESIDENT OF ALASKA,
HE NOW LIVES IN COLO.



Drew Dix was a staff sergeant in the Army, attached to IV Corps, the Military Assistance Command, when he received the Medal of Honor for service in Chau Doc Province, Vietnam, on January 31 and February 1, 1968.

Two heavily armed Viet Cong battalions attacked the provincial capital, Chau Phu. Dix, with a patrol of Vietnamese soldiers, was recalled to assist in the defense of the city. He organized relief forces, who, under heavy fire, rescued a nurse and other civilians trapped in the city. The following day Dix assembled a 20-man force and braved intense enemy fire to clear the Viet Cong out of a hotel, theater and other adjacent buildings in the city. Vietnamese soldiers were so inspired by his heroism that they rallied and resumed fighting the Viet Cong. Dix captured 20 prisoners, including a high-ranking Viet Cong official. He liberated the home of the deputy province chief and rescued his family.

Dix is the first enlisted man in Special Forces to have been awarded the Medal of Honor. He

received a direct commission to first lieutenant and retired with the rank of major after serving 20 years in the Army, many of those in unconventional warfare assignments.

Following retirement from the Army, Dix continued to work in support of government-sponsored programs, and he owned and operated an air service in the Alaskan interior. He has worked as a consultant in both the private and public sectors in the areas of security and special operations.

His 2000 autobiography, "The Rescue of River City," is the story of Dix's medal-winning experience as a counterterrorism expert in the Army. In September 2002, as Alaska's deputy commissioner for homeland security, he was chosen to head the state's Task Force on Homeland Security.



CITATION:

DIX, DREW DENNIS

Rank and Organization: Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, U.S. Senior Advisor Group, IV Corps, Military Assistance Command. Place and date: Chau Doc Province, Republic of Vietnam, 31 January and 1 February 1968. Entered service at: Denver, Colo. Born: 14 December 1944, West Point, N.Y. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. S/Sgt. Dix distinguished himself by exceptional heroism while serving as a unit adviser. Two heavily armed Viet Cong battalions attacked the Province capital city of Chau Phu resulting in the complete breakdown and fragmentation of the defenses of the city. S/Sgt. Dix, with a patrol of Vietnamese soldiers, was recalled to assist in the defense of Chau Phu. Learning that a nurse was trapped in a house near the center of the city, S/Sgt. Dix organized a relief force, successfully rescued the nurse, and returned her to the safety of the Tactical Operations Center. Being informed of other trapped civilians within the city, S/Sgt. Dix voluntarily led another force to rescue 8 civilian employees located in a building which was under heavy mortar and small-arms fire. S/Sgt. Dix then returned to the center of the city. Upon approaching a building, he was subjected to intense automatic rifle and machine gun fire from an unknown number of Viet Cong. He personally assaulted the building, killing 6 Viet Cong, and rescuing 2 Filipinos. The following day S/Sgt. Dix, still on his own volition, assembled a 20-man force and though under intense enemy fire cleared the Viet Cong out of the hotel, theater, and other adjacent buildings within the city. During this portion of the attack, Army Republic of Vietnam soldiers inspired by the heroism and success of S/Sgt. Dix, rallied and commenced firing upon the Viet Cong. S/Sgt. Dix captured 20 prisoners, including a high ranking Viet Cong official. He then attacked enemy troops who had entered the residence of the Deputy Province Chief and was successful in rescuing the official's wife and children. S/Sgt. Dix's personal heroic actions resulted in 14 confirmed Viet Cong killed in action and possibly 25 more, the capture of 20 prisoners, 15 weapons, and the rescue of the 14 United States and free world civilians.

The heroism of S/Sgt. Dix was in the highest tradition and reflects great credit upon the U.S. Army.



Rex Johnson, Drew Dix (Medal of Honor recipient) and Harry Humphries (left to right) take a break after having just made contact with a small enemy force while operating in the An Phu district just north of Chau Phu, Vietnam. Courtesy S/Sgt. Drew Dix, USA (Ret.)

U.S. Constitution



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LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH REPORT

APRIL 13, 2005



REPORT NUMBER 05.252

VEHICLE REGISTRATION AND LICENSE PLATE PROVISIONS FOR CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS AND PRISONERS OF WAR

PREPARED FOR REPRESENTATIVE BOB LYNN

BY PATRICIA YOUNG, MANAGER

You wished to know the number of states that offer free vehicle registration or license plates to recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor. You also wished to know the number of states that provide similarly for current prisoners of war or their spouses.

The attached table shows the results of our search of state laws on LEXIS. As you will see, we identified 31 states that offer special license plates to Medal of Honor recipients. Of these, all but one waive registration fees and provide such plates without charge or at a reduced rate. Four also specify that a recipient's surviving spouse is eligible for the plates.

We identified 40 states, including Alaska, that offer special license plates to former prisoners of war. All but seven waive registration fees and provide the plates without charge or at a reduced rate. Twenty-nine specify that a prisoner's surviving spouse is also eligible.

Although some address persons missing in action, *none of the state laws we identified address current prisoners of war or their spouses.*¹

I hope you find this information to be useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need additional information.

¹ Some states define "prisoner of war" narrowly: Georgia law, for example, defines the term as a veteran who was held by enemy forces while serving in the U.S. military in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War. In a number of states, however, the term is defined more broadly. Alabama law, for example defines the term as a person who, as a member of the U.S. armed forces, or while serving with a formal U.S. ally force, or as a U.S. civilian, was held . . . during "any armed conflict by forces hostile to the United States." Provisions for current prisoners would likely require a similarly broad definition.

**Vehicle Registration and License Plate Provisions for Congressional
Medal of Honor Recipients and Former Prisoners of War**

State	Medal of Honor Recipient	Prisoners of War
Alabama	no charge	no charge
Alaska		no charge
Arkansas	no charge	\$1 per year; surviving spouse at regular fees
California	no charge	no charge (also surviving spouse)
Colorado	no charge	no charge
Connecticut	no charge (also for surviving spouse)	no charge (also surviving spouse)
Delaware	regular charges + \$10 admin fee	regular fees + \$10 admin fee
Florida	no charge	no charge (also unmarried surviving spouse)
Georgia	no charge	no charge (also unmarried surviving spouse)
Idaho	no charge	regular fees, POW and unmarried surviving spouse
Illinois	no charge	no charge (or to unmarried surviving spouse)
Indiana		no charge (also surviving spouse)
Iowa	annual \$15 fee (also for surviving spouse)	annual \$15 fee, POW and surviving spouse
Kansas	no charge	no charge (also surviving spouse)
Kentucky	no charge	no charge; surviving spouse, \$17 fee
Louisiana	no charge	no charge (also surviving spouse)
Massachusetts	no charge; surviving spouse at regular fee + \$20	no charge (also surviving spouse)
Michigan	no charge	\$5 service fee, POW or surviving spouse
Minnesota	no charge	no charge (also surviving spouse)
Mississippi	no charge (also for unmarried surviving spouse)	no charge (also unmarried surviving spouse)
Missouri	special plates; (unclear as to charge)	no charge (also surviving spouse)
Montana		no charge (also surviving spouse)
Nebraska		regular fees + \$5
Nevada	no charge for registration; regular fee for specialty plates	regular fees, but parking privileges (no fees or fines)
New Jersey	no charge	regular fees, but no charge for specialty plates, POW and surviving spouse
New York	no charge	no charge (also surviving spouse)
North Carolina	no charge	no charge
North Dakota		\$5 fee for plates, POW or unmarried surviving spouse
Ohio	no charge	no charge (also unmarried surviving spouse)
Oklahoma	no charge	fee for specialty plates only, POW and unmarried surviving spouse
Oregon		regular fees, POW or surviving spouse
Pennsylvania	no charge except \$10 processing fee	no charge
Rhode Island		no charge (also unmarried surviving spouse)
South Carolina	no charge and parking privileges (no fees or fines)	no charge (also surviving spouse)
South Dakota	no charge	regular charge + \$10 fee, POW
Tennessee	no charge	no charge (also unmarried surviving spouse)
Vermont		no charge (also surviving spouse)
Washington	no charge	no charge (also unmarried surviving spouse)
West Virginia	no charge	no charge
Wyoming		no charge
Totals	31	40

NOTES: All of the states we identified as addressing prisoners of war refer specifically to *former* prisoners of war; none address current prisoners of war or their spouses.
SOURCES: State Statutes on LEXIS

- HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred to Committee: April 1, 2005

FURTHER REFERRALS: Finance

Date of Committee Action: 4-14-05

The HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS considered: HB 245

HOUSE BILL NO. 245

VETERANS' & POW'S VEHICLE FEES/TAXES

"An Act relating to registration and license plate fees for Purple Heart recipients, prisoners of war, Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, and spouses of current prisoners of war."

Recommends it be replaced with ☐ HCS or ☒ CS for HB245 ()

For Senate Bills with new title: ☐ Technical Title ☐ New Title: HCR_____ ☒ Same Title ☐ New Title

- ☐ attach amendments
☐ add new referral to _____ Committee
☐ Letter of Intent _____ Committee

*List of
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for
Depts.:*
ADM
CED
COR
CRT
EED
DEC
DFG
GOV
HSS
LEG
LAW
LWF
MVA
DNR
DPS
REV
DOT
UA

[illegible][illegible]

Signing with recommendations	Printed Last Name	DP	DNP	NR	AM
<i>[Signature]</i>	ELKINS	✓			
<i>[Signature]</i>	Thomas	✓			
<i>[Signature]</i>	Braden	—			
<i>[Signature]</i>	Dahlstrom	X			
<i>[Signature]</i>	CISNA	✓			
Chair: <i>[Signature]</i>	LYNN	X			
Chair:					