

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 10, 2016

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As fellow Californians, we write to express our support for the nomination of the late United States Army Colonel Young Oak Kim for a 2016 Presidential Medal of Freedom. Executive Order 11085, signed by President Kennedy, states that the Presidential Medal of Freedom may be awarded to any person who has made an especially meritorious contribution to cultural or other significant public endeavors. Colonel Kim's life exemplifies this definition.

He was born on January 29, 1919 in Los Angeles to Korean immigrants, and has left an indelible legacy of honor and sacrifice in California and the country. His highly decorated military service in the United States Army, beginning with his service during World War II as the only Korean American in the Japanese American 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion/442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat team, reflects his deep commitment to service to this country.

While serving for over 30 years in the military, including during World War II and the Korean War, he was awarded a number of military honors, including the Distinguished Service Cross, two Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars, three Purple Heart awards, and two Legions of Merit. He has also received honors from the governments of Italy, France, and South Korea.

His accomplishments were not confined to the battlefield. Following his military service, he immersed himself into serving the people of Southern California. He helped establish several organizations – including the Korean Youth and Cultural Center, the Korean Health, Education, Information, and Research Center, and the Korean American Coalition – which continue to serve the community in Southern California and beyond.

His life story has been further chronicled by the Young Oak Kim Center for Korean American Studies at the University of California, Riverside, and we are pleased that the Los Angeles Unified School District, in 2009, named a middle school – the Young Oak Kim Academy – after Colonel Kim.

His service to this nation and California embodies the ideals of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. We urge you to recognize not only his enduring legacy as a military hero and public servant, but also the inspiration he continues to be for future generations of Americans.

We hope you will give his nomination serious consideration. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator