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March 20, 2018

The Honorable Mark T. Esper
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0101

Dear Secretary Esper:

I write regarding Army Sergeant First Class Alwyn Crendall Cashe, who was born and raised in my congressional district. Sergeant First Class Cashe was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for saving his fellow soldiers from their burning vehicle after it struck an improvised explosive device in Iraq on October 17, 2005. Sergeant First Class Cashe performed these deeds while he was on fire and exposed to enemy gunfire. Upon reading SFC's Cashe Silver Star citation, one can only marvel at the caliber, courage and character of this soldier. His actions were so extraordinary that they nearly defy description.

Over the past years, there has been an effort to have Sergeant First Class Cashe's Silver Star upgraded to the Medal of Honor. Notably, this effort has been led by the battalion commander who nominated Sergeant First Class Cashe for the Silver Star. This individual—now a two-star general—came to believe that Sergeant First Class Cashe deserves the highest award for valor that our nation bestows.

I strongly agree with this conclusion, and simply wish to memorialize that view for the record, since I understand that the Department of Defense is currently reviewing Sergeant First Class Cashe's award to assess whether an upgrade is appropriate and justified based on the available evidence.

I recognize and respect the military's interest in ensuring that the Medal of Honor is awarded to the truly deserving and in preserving the integrity of the award process. The Medal of Honor is—as it should be—awarded only to service members whose conduct in combat demonstrated “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his or her life above and beyond the call of duty.” I believe that Sergeant First Class Cashe's conduct meets this rigorous standard.

I recently filed legislation to designate a U.S. post office in Oviedo after Sergeant First Class Cashe. I have enclosed my floor statement regarding Sergeant First Class Cashe's life and legacy.

Thank you very much for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Murphy', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress