



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**18-5431

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**Agenda Item Number:** 16.

**Agenda Date:** 10/4/2018

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Government and Public Affairs, Office of Military and Veteran Affairs

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Jeff Coyle, Director, Government and Public Affairs; Juan G. Ayala, Director, Office of Military and Veteran Affairs

**COUNCIL DISTRICT(S) IMPACTED:** City Wide

### **SUBJECT:**

Resolution supporting the award of a Congressional Gold Medal honoring all Chinese American World War II veterans.

### **SUMMARY:**

This item is to request the City Council's support of legislation awarding a Congressional Gold Medal in honor of the Chinese American veterans of World War II.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Chinese Americans have served the United States in every war since the Civil War, and distinguished themselves in World War II where they served in every theater of battle and in every branch of the armed forces. They earned citations for heroism and honorable service, up to and including the Medal of Honor. As many as twenty-thousand Chinese Americans served in the armed forces in World War II, of whom approximately 40% were not United States citizens due to laws that denied citizenship to persons of Chinese descent.

While their numbers were small, they made significant contributions to the effort, notably serving in the China-Burma Theater, and were widely acknowledged for their role in the 14<sup>th</sup> Air Force - 23<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Group known as the Flying Tigers. In the Pacific Theater, they performed in ground, air, and naval combat and support roles in places such as New Guinea, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, the Philippines, and the Mariana and Aleutian Islands. In the European Theaters, they served honorably in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and the Normandy D-Day invasion which helped liberate Western Europe.

Earning Combat Infantry Badges, Purple Hearts, Bronze Stars, Silver Stars, Distinguished Service Medals and Distinguished Flying Medals, Chinese Americans demonstrated a high sense of patriotism and honor. In recognition of these accomplishments and their dedicated service to our nation, we ask for City Council consideration of a Resolution supporting federal legislation to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese-American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

The City Council Intergovernmental Relation Committee approved supporting the resolution in their meeting on September 12, 2018.

#### **ISSUE:**

In the past, City Council has approved other resolution honoring the brave men and women who have served our country in uniform throughout the nation's history. Legislation has been filed in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese American veterans of World War II.

#### **ALTERNATIVE:**

City Council could decide to not support the filed legislation and honor Chinese American WWII Veterans in a different manner.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the resolution by City Council