

Submitter: Jeromy Turner
On Behalf Of: Specialist Ken Leisten
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: SCR213

Good Afternoon, Senate Committee On Rules,

Thank you for time and consideration to hear our testimonies in support of honoring our fellow Oregonian, Specialist Ken Leisten, who volunteered to stand in a time of war and paid the ultimate sacrifice combating an existential threat to our Homeland and way of life.

I am Major (Retired) Jeromy Turner. I am an Oregonian, veteran U.S. Army Ranger, and Purple Heart Recipient. I served 10 years in the Oregon Army National Guard, and 16 years in the Regular Army. In my 26 years of service leading Service Members in conventional and special operations units, with six combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, Specialist Ken Leisten was one of the best Soldiers I served with and had the honor to lead in combat.

To join Oregon's 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment and deploy to Iraq, Specialist Leisten volunteered to change his military occupation from combat service support to join the front lines as an infantryman without reservation, fully knowing the hazards of the infantry profession. In the Fall of 2003, Specialist Leisten transferred to B Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, located in Corvallis, Oregon and joined my team. Specialist Leisten quickly assimilated into our infantry culture and embodied the very soul of a Soldier. In our six-month pre-combat deployment training in Fort Hood, Texas and Fort Polk, Louisiana, Specialist Leisten quickly proved to be the most accurate and deadly grenadier in our company of 100 Soldiers, he was the utmost professional, tactically and technically proficient, always took a pause to help a fellow Soldier in need, and he was respected by his peers and superiors alike.

In combat, Specialist Leisten embodied the Warrior Ethos and represented the great State of Oregon and our Nation with unparalleled honor and professionalism. During an enemy ambush on our patrol in Iraq, I witnessed first-hand, Specialist Leisten's heroic and valorous actions that enabled our patrol to effectively engage the enemy and fight through the ambush, resulting in no team casualties that day. His heroic actions in combat that day earned him the Army Commendation Medal for Valor and his actions were in keeping with his extraordinary commitment to the unit, mission, and his fellow Soldiers.

Later that summer, on July 28th, 2004, Specialist Leisten was killed in action. He died of wounds sustained during an enemy ambush while on patrol. We lost a true

American hero and one of the greatest Oregon Soldiers I ever had the privilege and honor to serve with.

Specialist Leisten exemplified the Army Values, embodied the Warrior Ethos, served Oregon with distinction and honor during the most treacherous years of combat known to our generation, and he paid the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our way of life.

As you listen to our testimonies here today, many drafted under very short notice, I am confident you will come to recognize why Specialist Ken Leisten must be honored and never forgotten by our fellow Oregonians and all that come to visit Oregon.

Rangers Lead The Way!

Jeromy T. Turner
Major, United States Army
Retired