



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Johnny Isakson  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Isakson:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

The clearest and most expedient path to expanding the funeral benefits currently afforded these active-duty designees is to amend the law limiting their funeral benefits to VA National Cemeteries, as has been proposed in a number of bills pending before the Congress. The Army will support legislation making active-duty designees, including WASPs and merchant marines, eligible for above-ground inurnment in ANC, but legislation must be drafted narrowly to reduce impacts on the inurnment capacity of ANC that could substantially affect its long-term viability. Because of the capacity limitations at ANC, the Army would recommend that the proposed legislation authorizing above-ground inurnment apply only to those active-duty designees approved "as of the date of enactment of this Act," and exclude those individuals who are already formally interred or inurned. As the pending bills work their way through Congress, the Army, of course, stands ready to provide you with any technical assistance or information required. Maintaining ANC as an active military shrine and cemetery is in our national interest, and the Army will need continued Congressional support to achieve this desired result.

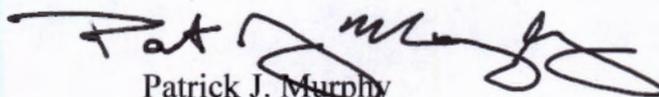
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based on the designee's individual accomplishments. If approved, the individual would be granted above-ground inurnment at ANC.

Lastly, the ANC Advisory Committee is already studying eligibility requirements for ANC, with the goal of ensuring that ANC remains an active national military shrine for as long as possible. The committee's next public meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2016. I will ensure that the Advisory Committee, in its deliberations, specifically considers the eligibility of active-duty designees to include WASPs and merchant marines. Any changes in ANC eligibility policies recommended by the Advisory Committee and adopted by the Secretary of the Army with concurrence of the Secretary of Defense, will proceed immediately to notice and comment rulemaking to amend the current codified rules.

I sincerely appreciate your efforts to recognize the proud service of these active-duty designees, particularly the many brave women who served as WASPs, and look forward to working with you on this and other matters of importance to our Army and the Nation.

Sincerely,

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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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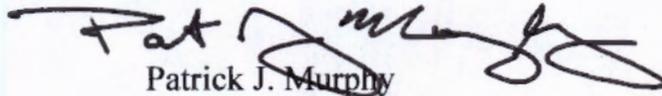
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Moran:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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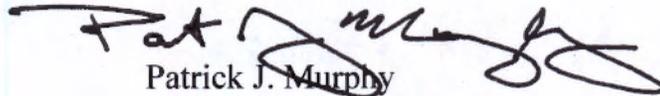
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Sincerely,



Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Sherrod Brown  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Brown:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

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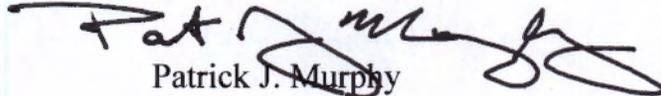
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Sincerely,



Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Dean Heller  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Heller:

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I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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Sincerely,



Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Jon Tester  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Tester:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

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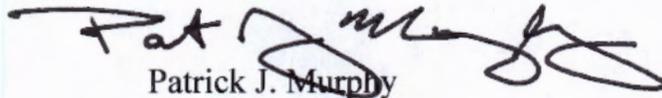
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Thom Tillis  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Tillis:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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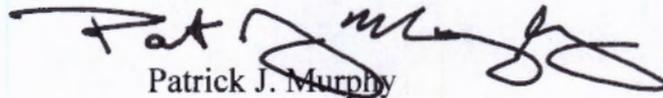
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Joe Manchin III  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Manchin:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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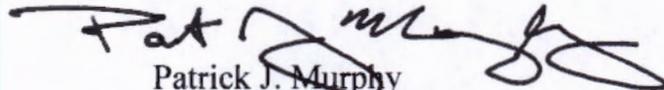
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SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Richard Burr  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Burr:

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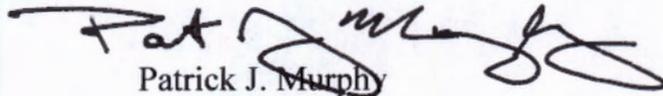
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Patrick J. Murphy  
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SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
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MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Joe Donnelly  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Donnelly:

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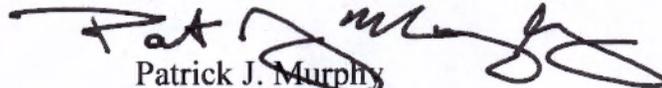
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Lastly, the ANC Advisory Committee is already studying eligibility requirements for ANC, with the goal of ensuring that ANC remains an active national military shrine for as long as possible. The committee's next public meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2016. I will ensure that the Advisory Committee, in its deliberations, specifically considers the eligibility of active-duty designees to include WASPs and merchant marines. Any changes in ANC eligibility policies recommended by the Advisory Committee and adopted by the Secretary of the Army with concurrence of the Secretary of Defense, will proceed immediately to notice and comment rulemaking to amend the current codified rules.

I sincerely appreciate your efforts to recognize the proud service of these active-duty designees, particularly the many brave women who served as WASPs, and look forward to working with you on this and other matters of importance to our Army and the Nation.

Sincerely,

  
Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Steve Daines  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Daines:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

The clearest and most expedient path to expanding the funeral benefits currently afforded these active-duty designees is to amend the law limiting their funeral benefits to VA National Cemeteries, as has been proposed in a number of bills pending before the Congress. The Army will support legislation making active-duty designees, including WASPS and merchant marines, eligible for above-ground inurnment in ANC, but legislation must be drafted narrowly to reduce impacts on the inurnment capacity of ANC that could substantially affect its long-term viability. Because of the capacity limitations at ANC, the Army would recommend that the proposed legislation authorizing above-ground inurnment apply only to those active-duty designees approved "as of the date of enactment of this Act," and exclude those individuals who are already formally interred or inurned. As the pending bills work their way through Congress, the Army, of course, stands ready to provide you with any technical assistance or information required. Maintaining ANC as an active military shrine and cemetery is in our national interest, and the Army will need continued Congressional support to achieve this desired result.

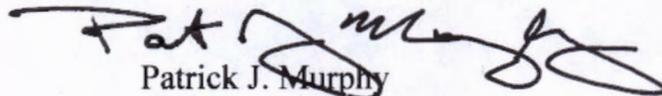
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Sincerely,



Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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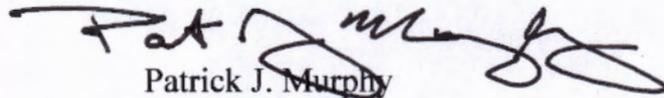
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Jeff Flake  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Flake:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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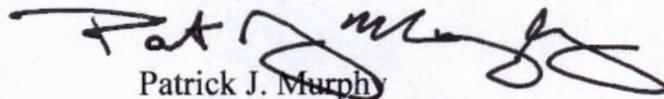
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Sincerely,

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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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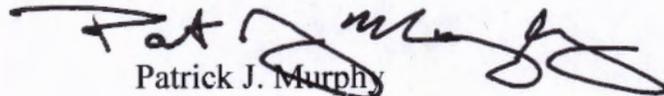
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Sincerely,

  
Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Susan M. Collins  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Collins:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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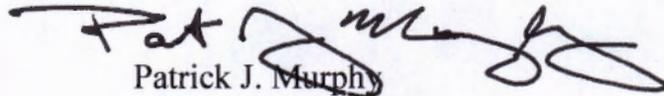
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Sincerely,

  
Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Al Franken  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Franken:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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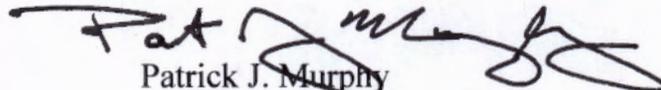
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Sincerely,

  
Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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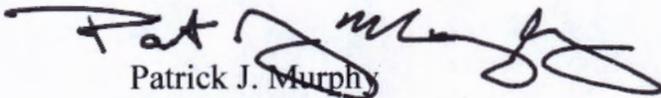
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Robert Menendez  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Menendez:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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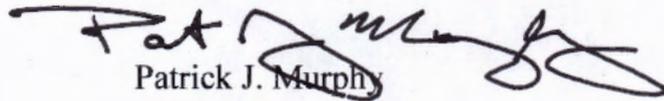
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Mikulski:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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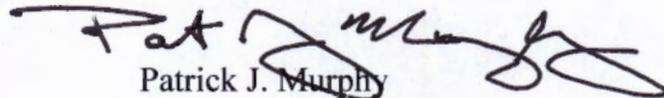
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Sincerely,



Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

The clearest and most expedient path to expanding the funeral benefits currently afforded these active-duty designees is to amend the law limiting their funeral benefits to VA National Cemeteries, as has been proposed in a number of bills pending before the Congress. The Army will support legislation making active-duty designees, including WASPs and merchant marines, eligible for above-ground inurnment in ANC, but legislation must be drafted narrowly to reduce impacts on the inurnment capacity of ANC that could substantially affect its long-term viability. Because of the capacity limitations at ANC, the Army would recommend that the proposed legislation authorizing above-ground inurnment apply only to those active-duty designees approved "as of the date of enactment of this Act," and exclude those individuals who are already formally interred or inurned. As the pending bills work their way through Congress, the Army, of course, stands ready to provide you with any technical assistance or information required. Maintaining ANC as an active military shrine and cemetery is in our national interest, and the Army will need continued Congressional support to achieve this desired result.

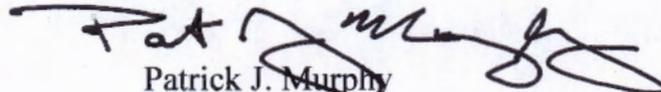
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I sincerely appreciate your efforts to recognize the proud service of these active-duty designees, particularly the many brave women who served as WASPs, and look forward to working with you on this and other matters of importance to our Army and the Nation.

Sincerely,



Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stabenow:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

I share your view that, as a Nation, we must honor the service and sacrifice of these women who broke down barriers and paved the way for future generations. Congress has recognized the exceptional public service provided by the WASPs and others who answered the call to duty in support of the war effort. In 1977, Congress passed a law authorizing the Secretary of Defense to determine whether their service qualified them to be considered active duty for the purposes of Veterans Administration (now Department of Veterans Affairs) (VA) benefits. By granting these individuals the benefits afforded to military Veterans, the 1977 legislation also served to remedy the lack of public recognition of the significant role the WASPs served during World War II. In 2009, Congress awarded the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal.

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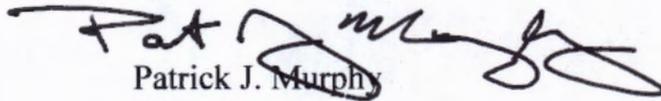
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Christopher Murphy  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murphy:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

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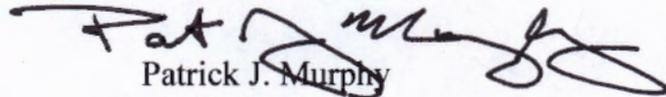
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Patrick J. Murphy  
Acting



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cardin:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

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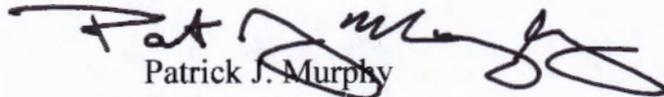
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SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON  
MAR 15 2016

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

Thank you for your February 10, 2016 letter regarding the eligibility of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) for inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

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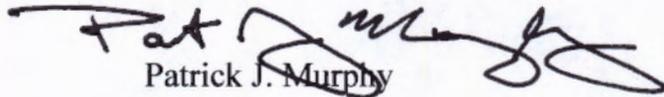
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