

M. President,

I rise today to honor and pay my respects to a great American hero and friend who we recently lost.

Hiroshi “Hershey” Miyamura was born on October 6, 1925 to Yaichi [Ya-E-Shee] and Tori Miyamura in Gallup, New Mexico. Growing up in a household with seven children, Hershey’s parents left their homeland of Japan to settle in New Mexico in the hopes of creating a better life for their children.

While he never thought of himself as the serious student Mom and Dad hoped he would be, as a child, Hershey’s mind was otherwise occupied by tales of Hopalong Cassidy, riding on his steed...the ‘larger-than-life’ hero who saves the day.

He later remarked in life that he always liked “the good guys” on and off the big screen. This is why it did not surprise anyone when Hershey’s determined perseverance to join the U.S. Army finally became a reality. This dream became possible when the federal government created a battalion of mostly Japanese-Americans during the second World War.

In a time when prejudice towards Japanese-Americans was at an all time high, Hershey remained firm in his conviction that he would serve under the flag and country his parents worked so hard to make their home—refusing to let intolerance extinguish his desire to serve our nation at the highest level.

Hershey joined the Army shortly before Japan's surrender in World War II, training as a machine gunner, a job he excelled at. When the Korean War began, he was recalled to service. As a Corporal he was entrusted as a squad leader in the 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division.

Even in the fog of war, Hershey was focused and selfless. He never lost sight of the friends he served alongside with. His fellow Americans were at the heart of everything he did.

Fighting with the bayonet secured at the end of his rifle during a night-time ambush by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Hershey ordered his squadron back to safer grounds, providing first-aid treatment when he could.

Staying behind to cover their withdrawal, Corporal Miyamura fought off over 50 enemy troops before he was badly wounded and captured.

For the next 28 months, he was a Prisoner of War—all the while, his wife, Terry, did not know if her husband was dead or alive. Hershey suffered tremendously during this time. It's an agony that's almost impossible to imagine, and the strength Hershey and Terry showed represents the very best of us.

On the day of his release from the POW camp, Hershey would recall that day with pristine detail, the first sight of the star-spangled banner blowing in the breeze, knowing that he was almost home.

Returning to Gallup, New Mexico, Hershey was greeted by a beaming crowd of family and friends, and military fly-overs welcomed home their lost but never forgotten son.

Hershey would go on to be awarded the Medal of Honor, our nation's highest military decoration for valor, by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a revered figure Hershey looked up to as a tested and admired World War II General.

After the war, he worked hard in Gallup as an auto mechanic and small business owner, doing what he could to send his three kids off to college.

He lived out the last days of his life just as he lived the first days of his life; as a source of joy and light.

A soft-spoken and honest man, Hershey Miyamura witnessed the deepest evil, and yet, still chose joy. He chose to be a source of light to all who knew and loved him.

Hershey continued to tell and retell his story to future generations, with humility and that ever-present smile beaming from ear to ear.

I want to remark on the clarity and sharpness he had, seemingly unfazed by the years that aged him. Talking with him and learning about his legacy of service was like being taken back to the dirt roads of South Korea alongside him. Hershey's experiences never left him.

As for all the Western cowboys and the Hollywood "good-guys" he dreamt of as a child, I think it's fair to say Hershey far-surpassed them—and turned himself into a larger-than-life, real American War hero.

Hershey passed away 2 weeks ago. He was the second-to-last living Korean War Medal of Honor recipient.

His legacy and impenetrable faith will live on through those who loved him and who have the honor of continuing to share his story.

Hershey is survived by his sons, **Mike** and **Pat**, his daughter, **Kelly**, his granddaughters, **Megan**, **Marisa**, and **Madison**, his grandson **Ian**, his **5 great-grandchildren**, and his sisters **Michiko [muh·chee·kow]**, **Suzi** and **Shige [she·jay]**

M. President, I ask for unanimous consent to have Corporal Hiroshi Miyamura's story entered into the Congressional Record.

God watch over and bless his family. Thank you.

I yield back the floor.