

SENATE RESOLUTION
8714

By Senator O'Ban

WHEREAS, For selfless acts and going above and beyond the call of duty, Sergeant Leroy Arthur Petry was awarded the Medal of Honor in 2011; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Leroy Arthur Petry enlisted in the United States Army in 1999 and remains on active duty. During his time in the military, he has won such prestigious honors as a Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal with four Good Conduct Loops, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and many others for his noble service; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Leroy Arthur Petry was educated in the military at the Basic Airborne Course, Combat Lifesaver Course, Warrior Leader Course, Jumpmaster Course, Advanced Leader Course, Senior Leader Course, and Combative Level One Course. During his training, Sergeant Petry displayed commitment, loyalty, and expertise in defending the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Petry was stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord where he was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, and then undertook eight deployments - two in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom and six in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. His positions in the battle included grenadier, squad automatic rifleman, fire-team leader, squad leader, operations sergeant, and weapons squad leader. In total, he spent more than two years deployed in both Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, On May 26, 2008, then Staff Sergeant Petry and his unit were in the Paktia Province of Afghanistan on a mission to capture a target from the Taliban. Sergeant Petry's mission was to serve as a senior noncommissioned officer at that site for the rest of the mission, but after landing at the site, Sergeant Petry's unit came under fire and he was forced to use his instincts and combat skills to fight against members of the Taliban; and

WHEREAS, Despite nearly insurmountable obstacles, Sergeant Petry remained quick on his feet, moving strategically to help clear the courtyard of the building he and his team had been assigned to enter. He and Private First Class Lucas Robinson bravely fought with members of the Taliban and Sergeant Petry was wounded in the legs while Robinson was targeted and fired upon from the side; and

WHEREAS, Continuing to think quickly and displaying acts of courage and heroism, Sergeant Petry helped move PFC Robinson away from the site of the attack until they were joined by Sergeant Daniel Higgins who helped treat their wounds; and

WHEREAS, While Sergeant Petry and the rest of his unit resisted the continued attacks against them, a Taliban fighter threw a grenade at them which detonated just 10 meters from their unit. Sergeant Higgins and PFC Robinson suffered additional wounds from the explosion. Sensing the danger to their fellow soldiers, Staff Sergeant James Roberts and Specialist Christopher Gathercole moved in to assist the members of their unit; and

WHEREAS, As Sergeant Petry's unit attempted to strategize their next move, members of the Taliban seized the opportunity to throw another grenade in their direction. With little regard for his own safety, the courageous and heroic Sergeant Petry moved in, picked up the grenade, and attempted to throw it out of the area where he and his fellow fighters had sought refuge. As Sergeant Petry picked up the grenade, it exploded in his hand; and

WHEREAS, As a result of his acts of valor and heroism and courageously risking his life, Sergeant Petry helped shield his fellow soldiers, saving the lives of his team. His efforts also provided his team with the opportunity to return fire at the enemy fighters while safely withdrawing from the combat area; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Petry was treated for his wounds at an Army hospital in Germany and later transferred to the Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center in Fort Hood, Texas. Despite receiving a prosthetic limb to replace his right hand, Sergeant Petry then redeployed to Afghanistan. As a result of his bravery, Sergeant Petry was recommended for the Medal of Honor and later promoted to the rank of Sergeant First Class; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Petry received the Medal of Honor on July 12, 2011, from President Obama. The following year a statue was built of Sergeant Petry in Pojaque, New Mexico, honoring his sacrifices. Sergeant Petry still has the names of his fallen comrades engraved on his prosthetic hand to honor and remember their dedication and bravery; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Petry currently resides in Washington State, where he is stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord and serves as a liaison officer for United States Special Operations Command's Care Coalition Northwest Region. He works with sick and injured Army Rangers and their families. Sergeant Petry and Staff Sergeant Ty Carter are the only Medal of Honor Recipients still on active duty;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate gratefully pay tribute to Sergeant Petry for his service and sacrifice to the United States of America. He and his fellow soldiers continue to display acts of kindness, bravery, and valor on a daily basis. With sincere thanks and humility, we offer recognition of his fifteen years of service to the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to United States Army Sergeant Leroy Arthur Petry.