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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4303

November 3, 2017

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Collin County Commissioners Court
Collin County Administrations Building
2300 Bloomdale Rd., Ste. 4192
McKinney, Texas 75071

Dear Judge Self and Commissioners:

It is my great honor to support the naming of the Collin County Courthouse in honor of 1st Lt. Russell Steindam; a Collin County Medal of Honor recipient known for his heroic and lifesaving efforts during the Vietnam War.

1st Lt. Steindam was the son of a WWII pilot who spent 11 months in captivity as a Prisoner of War in Germany. It can be assumed that Russell did not take lightly the responsibility of joining the military along with the risks associated with his service. Following his 1964 graduation from Plano High School, Russell went on to complete Army Ranger School and would eventually be assigned as a Platoon Commander in Vietnam. In 1970, during a nighttime ambush, Steindam would make the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our Nation. After a grenade was thrown into a shallow bomb crater where his fifteen-man unit had taken cover, he would use his own body as a defensive shield against the explosive – absorbing the blast and saving the lives of his men. Tragically, Russell would leave behind his beloved wife and the son he would never have the opportunity to meet.

As you may be aware, the Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor in combat which can be given for an individual serving in our United States Armed Forces. Due to his selfless efforts, 1st Lt. Steindam is one of only two Collin County recipients who have received this distinction.

We often speak of courage, service, and sacrifice, but rarely do we see one so willingly make the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our Nation. Much like Lady Justice, blind in her impartiality of the law, outside factors such as politics and fame should not influence the naming of this facility. By naming the Collin County Courthouse for 1st Lt. Russell Steindam, we remind our future generations of the values of freedom, sacrifice, and justice which stand in part as the cornerstone of our democracy.

In closing, I respectfully ask that you consider 1st Lt. Steindam for this distinct honor and thank you for your kind consideration. Should you have any questions, I welcome you to reach out to Gabriella Pate, my Deputy Chief of Staff, at (469) 304-0382.

Sincerely,



SAM JOHNSON
Member of Congress

SJ/GP