



**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000**

31 MAY 2006

DOD 1.2271.0-1

To: Richard D. McClanahan, [REDACTED]

**[REDACTED]
Amarillo, Texas 79109-0000**

Dear Richard McClanahan,

After a comprehensive review of your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) and sworn statements of the soldiers assigned to 1st Special Forces Group D-K, you have been recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor and meritorious promotion to Master Sergeant (E-8). This decision has been based on many factors outlined by you Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel Mike J. Gawkins and Command Sergeants Major Terry A. Long.

You were awarded your third Silver Star and third Purple Heart in December of 2004 for your actions while taken Prisoner of War (POW) during operations conducted in Iraq. Those actions are specifically under review. The lives of fourteen Army Rangers and seven Special Forces Soldiers assigned to you were saved. This speaks volumes to your character and ability to sacrifice yourself for the greater good of your fellow Soldiers. We here at the Pentagon as well as that of President Bush share our deepest gratitude for your service to your country.

An entry into your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) has been made reflecting your promotion to Master Sergeant and will be effective 01 June 2006. While the proceedings in both the United States House of Representatives and Senate can take a substantial amount of time, I want you to understand that you are to be commended on such a recommendation. Should you have any question, please call me personally at 703-692-7100.

With Sincere Appreciation,

Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON DC

Office of the President of the United States

13 March 2007

To: **Richard D. McClanahan**

[REDACTED]
Amarillo, Texas 79109-1819

Dear Mr. McClanahan,

It is with great pleasure that I write you this letter. Your service to our country is absolutely remarkable and has gone without the proper recognition that you deserve.

I have spoken to the Secretary of Defense Robert Gates as well as other persons of interest. I have decided that your commander's recommendation for the *Congressional Medal of Honor* deserves a second look by the secretary and by congress. Colonel Mike Gawkins and Command Sergeants Major Terry Long have been instrumental in this process and I enjoyed our visits together.

"MSG McClanahan distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as a Special Forces medical sergeant with Detachment Kilo, 1st Special Forces Group. In the evening his unit was called to rescue a downed U.S. helicopter, under heavy direct enemy fire in northern Iraq, MSG McClanahan left the relative safety of his own position, seized a nearby machine gun nest and, with complete disregard for his safety, charged 180 meters up a slope towards the enemy's entrenched position and effectively silenced it, killing 12 occupants and momentarily clearing the area for rescue of his fallen comrades. Suddenly, intense machine gun and rocket propelled grenade fire erupted from an unseen position. Realizing the danger to his fellow soldiers, MSG McClanahan disregarded the barrage of hostile fire directed at him and daringly returned to the American position. After being taken Prisoner of War as a result of overwhelming enemy forces, MSG McClanahan developed and executed a plan that freed him and nine other members of his Special Forces team, killing eight captors by himself. MSG McClanahan's bravery and extraordinary heroism at the cost of his health and safety are in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army." – General Thomas Thurman

The Silver Star Medal you received for valor in combat, in addition to the Prisoner of War Medal, will not be rescinded. Your promotion orders to Master Sergeant will also remain in your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF). The lives of those fourteen Army Rangers and seven Special Forces soldiers were saved by your valiant and honorable actions. They have all spoken so highly of you and stand behind you through this process. This speaks volumes to your character and your ability to sacrifice yourself for the greater good of your nation and the lives of your comrades. The proceedings in the Department of Defense and Congress will take some time. Laura and I are praying for you and your family. I know you will be successful in these processes and look forward to meeting you and your family very soon.

With Great Appreciation,

George H. W. Bush