JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV
WEST VIRGINIA

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510–4802

April 25, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

I am writing on behalf of my constituent, Mr. Frederick "Fred" Mayer, who is one of the unsung heroes of World War II. His selfless patriotism and unique service to the United States merit the highest recognition, and I hope that your staff will give him all due consideration for an award of presidential commendation. I also hope that you will be willing to write a letter to Mr. Mayer, recognizing him for his heroic service during World War II.

Born to a Jewish family in Germany, Mr. Mayer was forced to flee the rise of Nazism in his home country, and as a young man he immigrated to the United States with his family. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Mr. Mayer enlisted in the U.S. Army. There, his talents were quickly recognized, and Mr. Mayer was soon recruited into the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) – a predecessor to the CIA. Once in the OSS, Mr. Mayer was presented with an unimaginably dangerous mission - to be clandestinely sent back into Nazi territory to collect critical military intelligence from behind enemy lines.

Mr. Mayer accepted his mission with full knowledge that as a Jewish-American spy he would almost surely be killed if he was captured. Having escaped Nazi Germany only years earlier, he also accepted this mission with a unique appreciation for the injustices that were being done by Nazi forces, and with a deep sense of duty to help his new home country – the United States – put an end to those injustices.

What happened next is perhaps best told in the words of Mr. Mayer's commanding officer in a May 31, 1945, written assessment of Mr. Mayer's performance:

> Technical Sergeant Mayer parachuted into enemy occupied territory and remained there for three months, gathering secret intelligence and rallying Austrian resistance elements. During this period Technical Sergeant Mayer exhibited not only the highest degree of courage under constant risk of his life, but remarkable qualities of leadership and organization which made it possible for him to contact and win the support of anti-Nazi elements of all classes and walks of life, and eventually to arrange the surrender of Innsbruck to American troops.

In the three months he spent behind enemy lines, Mr. Mayer often wore a German officer's uniform and used forged papers to move openly without capture. In that guise Mr. Mayer covertly organized a network of anti-Nazi Austrians and clandestinely collected vital

intelligence that was then relayed by his radio operator to OSS headquarters in Italy. According to now unclassified documents, Mr. Mayer collected and relayed information on a wide array of critical subjects - important Nazi war factories, schedules relating to the movement of Nazi troops and material to and from the battlefront, the status of Nazi defenses at key tunnels, bridges, and highway bottlenecks, and the whereabouts of Mussolini, Daladier and Hitler.

In one case, intelligence gathered by Mr. Mayer about the assembly and schedules of 26 military trains that were being sent to the Italian front led to the trains' destruction and blocked the Brenner Pass completely until well after the war ended.

After months of successful operations, Mr. Mayer was betrayed by one of his contacts. He was then arrested and brutally tortured while in captivity. Nevertheless, throughout the harsh interrogations, Mr. Mayer refused to give up the location of his radio operator.

As a prisoner, Mr. Mayer was able to use his language skills and quick thinking to convince his captors to grant him a meeting with senior Nazi officers, and as American troops approached, he helped persuade the Nazi commanders to surrender Innsbruck – likely preventing a final battle with U.S. forces that would have resulted in even greater casualties.

In the end, Mr. Mayer led what is now regarded as one of the most successful OSS covert operations of World War II – Operation GREENUP. His bravery, remarkable in any context, is even more noteworthy given his willingness to selflessly return to enemy territory, not far from the childhood home he was forced to flee. He did this to help win the war, and he did this in service to the United States.

Mr. Mayer is now 92 years old, and is a very humble man who does not brag about his wartime accomplishments. Thankfully, that deep humility has not meant that his story has been lost, and I am currently planning an event to recognize Mr. Mayer.

Again, I hope that your office will be able to honor Mr. Mayer in a special way, and that you will also be willing to write a letter recognizing his heroic service during World War II. A letter from you, as the President of the United States, would make the event very memorable.

For your reference I am including several excerpts from Mr. Mayer's official and now unclassified records, which detail his tremendous service to this country. Thank you in advance for your consideration of Mr. Frederick Mayer.

Sincerely,

John D. Rockefeller IV