



CITY COUNCIL

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COUNCILMEMBER DJOU: CITY COUNCIL ASKS PRESIDENT OBAMA TO RECONSIDER RECOGNITION OF KANEOHE MARINE

Yesterday, the City Council approved Resolution 09-05, introduced by Councilmember Charles K. Djou (Waikiki, East Honolulu), asking President Barack Obama to reconsider the decision not to award Kaneohe Marine Rafael Peralta the Medal of Honor.

"I believe the evidence shows Kaneohe Marine Sgt. Rafael Peralta made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation and his actions reflect uncommon valor above and beyond the call of duty. After my office spoke with representatives of the Peralta family and fellow Kaneohe Marines who served with Sgt. Peralta in Iraq, I am convinced Sgt. Peralta's case deserves a careful re-examination and I hope the new Obama administration give this matter a second look," stated Councilmember Djou. "Sgt. Rafael Peralta is an American hero and I am honored that Hawaii was his last home before his death in service of our country."

Sgt. Rafael Peralta died in 2004 during intense fighting in the battle of Fallujah during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sgt. Peralta died after holding a grenade in his stomach, saving the lives of his fellow Marine squad members. Sgt. Peralta was awarded the Navy Cross, the second highest honor for valor, after a board concluded that Sgt. Peralta had been shot prior to pulling the grenade to his body and thus may not have "consciously" sacrificed his life for his fellow Marines. The federal government has reconsidered valor commendations before, including upgrading the Distinguished Service Cross to the Medal of Honor for Daniel K. Inouye.

Councilmember Djou is a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve and the only elected official in the City and County of Honolulu to have served in the military.

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