

United States Senate

September 18, 2023

The Honorable Frank Kendall
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Kendall:

I write to you today to request that, under the provisions of 10 U.S. Code 1563, you award an honorary promotion to Colonel for Lieutenant Colonel Sean Michael Judge, who passed away in 2012 from a rare form of cancer before he could be promoted to the next rank. Sean had an exemplary career as an airman and a scholar. Recognizing his service and commitment to the Air Force by posthumously awarding him an honorary promotion to Colonel would be in keeping with the traditions of the Air Force and the intent of the law.

Lieutenant Colonel Sean M. Judge, Ph.D. began his military career at the United States Air Force Academy in the summer of 1989, after receiving a nomination from the New Hampshire Congressional Delegation. Sean knew that he wanted to attend the Air Force Academy at the age of six, hoping to become a pilot and study military history. After graduating in 1993, Sean earned his pilot wings in 1994 and flew C-130s, earning his status as a Command Pilot upon accumulating more than 3,000 flight hours. He served in the Bosnian conflict as well as Operation Enduring Freedom, among multiple other domestic and international deployments. Sean also was an instructor pilot on the T-34 aircraft in a joint venture with the U.S. Navy.

In 2006, Sean was selected to attend the Air Command and Staff College, where he obtained a master's degree in military history and received the Dean's Research Award for his thesis, *Slovakia, The Forgotten Uprising*. He was then chosen to continue on with another master's degree, this time in Air Power Art & Science, where he again received an award for his thesis. In 2008, Sean was afforded the opportunity to obtain his Ph.D. in military history at The Ohio State University, which he completed in three years, finishing with a dissertation examining the role of strategic initiative in turning the tide for Allied forces in the Pacific theater of World War II.

In 2011, Sean was diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer shortly before he and his family were scheduled to move to Germany, where he had been selected to serve as a military advisor to a four-star general. Unfortunately, Sean lost his battle with cancer and passed away on July 14, 2012, having served almost 20 years in the Air Force. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery and is survived by his parents Mary Conant and Daniel Judge, his wife Carmen, and their three children, Ryan, Seth, and Amelia, along with many other relatives and friends.

During his military career, Sean received numerous awards, including the Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Air Medal, the Aerial Achievement Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Navy & Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with valor and two oak leaf clusters.

In light of Sean's exemplary service record, I ask you to consider awarding Sean an honorary promotion to the rank of Colonel. I make this request pursuant to the provisions in Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1563, which states that "[u]pon request of a Member of Congress, the Secretary concerned shall review a proposal for the honorary promotion (whether or not posthumous) of a former member or retired member of the armed forces that is not otherwise authorized by law."

I therefore ask you to review Lieutenant Colonel Sean Judge's record of honorable and dedicated military service, in consideration of a posthumous promotion to Colonel. To assist you in this review, I am enclosing Sean's Record of Performance, which his mother shared with my office. Should you have any questions or need any more information on this request, please reach out to my policy advisor, Melissa Reilly-Diakun, at melissa_reilly-diakun@hassan.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maggie Hassan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator