

United States Senate

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March 15, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing in support of posthumously awarding the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Mr. Fred Ross, Sr.

Mr. Ross made many meritorious contributions to public endeavor in the United States and has left an indelible mark on American culture. Like you, Mr. Ross was a community organizer. As a community organizer, Mr. Ross fought tirelessly on behalf of the marginalized to improve workers' rights and foster civic engagement. During his life Mr. Ross planted seeds of hope throughout America by training thousands of organizers and community leaders. Now, some twenty years after his death, Mr. Ross's legacy of social justice lives on. His legacy can be seen in all that has blossomed from his labor, including Hispanic voter registration and the desegregation of public schools. As you know, Mr. Ross's work in Orange County, California, led to the 1947 landmark decision in Mendez versus Westminster School District, the first case in which segregation in education was successfully challenged in federal court. Mr. Ross also trained Cesar Chavez and Dolores Hureta, who later founded and led the United Farm Workers Union. These are but a few of the many examples of Mr. Ross's contributions to the culture of America.

Mr. Ross left an enduring legacy that has made America a better place. Posthumously awarding the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Mr. Fred Ross, Sr., would not only recognize an unsung hero worthy of the Medal, but would also provide a beacon of hope for the next generation of community organizers for justice.

In advance, thank you for considering Mr. Fred Ross, Sr., as you select recipients for the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Most sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator

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