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The Honorable Jeff Miller of the First District of Florida
Washington, Wednesday, November 12, 2014

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION AND HONORABLE SERVICE OF COLONEL JUSTIN MCCARTHY "MAC" MILLER, USMC (RET.)

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a member of the Greatest Generation, Colonel Justin McCarthy "Mac" Miller, United States Marine Corps Retired, upon the occasion of his 100th birthday. Colonel Miller has dedicated his life to service to his community, his family, and to our great Nation, and I am humbled to honor him and his remarkable achievements today.

Born in 1914, aviation has always been a stronghold in Colonel Miller's life. As a young man, he admired the pursuit pilots, or fighter pilots, of the Allied Forces. From his early encounters with comic books and magazine covers depicting the Lafayette Escadrille, to his application to the United States Naval Academy, Colonel Miller knew his life's destiny was to become a fighter pilot.

While at the Naval Academy, he resigned as a midshipman and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps as an aviation cadet in 1940 before receiving his wings in 1941. His first assignment was as an Instructor Pilot in Pensacola, Florida, where he would return later in life. He then was assigned to Staff and Command school at United States Marine Corps Base, Quantico. Though these two assignments were perhaps not the most ideal for someone just pinning on wings eager to enter theater, shortly after the beginning of World War II, not only would Colonel Miller be presented with the opportunity to fly in combat, but he would be assigned as the Commanding Officer and take on the role of Executive Officer of the newly-established fighter squadron VMF 217, training in the F4F Wildcat. In 1943, the squadron embarked on the USS BARNES (CVE-20) deployed to the

South Pacific, transitioned aircraft to the F4U Corsair, and flew combat missions over the Solomon Islands. In 1944, the squad embarked on the USS SANTEE (CVE-29) and deployed to Guam, where they commenced strikes against the island of Rota. In October 1944, Colonel Miller took Command of VMF-321 until 1945, when the squadron returned to the United States. Throughout his tour in the Pacific Theater, Colonel Miller commanded two fighter squadrons. He then joined the Reserves in 1948 after the end of the war, where he continued his career in flight while also proving to be a successful businessman, as evidenced by his ownership of many radio stations, including WCOA Pensacola.

Amongst his vast array of accolades and contributions lay a century's worth of anecdotes, including being taught to fly his favorite aircraft, the F4U Corsair, by the legendary Charles Lindbergh himself. Amazingly, throughout his remarkable career, Colonel Miller flew 140 combat missions in 31 different aircraft, and received three Distinguished Flying Crosses, 11 Air Medals, and four Battle Stars, amidst an interminable list of decorations, honors, and awards for his distinguished service in World War II.

Mr. Speaker, Colonel Justin McCarthy "Mac" Miller is a valued member of our community and national history. He is a true "American Patriot" and an inspiration to all who have had the privilege of being a part of his exemplary life. My wife Vicki and I wish him a happy birthday as he turns 100 years young, and we wish him and his entire family all the best in their future endeavors.