

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
84R27593 JGH-D

S.C.R. 43
By: Campbell
Veteran Affairs & Military Installations
5/8/2015
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Legislative Medal of Honor was established to recognize gallant and intrepid service by a member of the state or federal military forces. Sergeant Matthew Mendoza has proven himself a deserving recipient. Contingent upon the passage of S.B. 1824 as instructed by the committee on the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor, S.C.R. 43 instructs the governor to grant this award to Sergeant Mendoza.

The Texas Legislative Medal of Honor was established to recognize gallant and intrepid service by a member of the state or federal military forces, and U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Matthew E. Mendoza proved himself a deserving recipient of this prestigious honor.

Born on April 22, 1984, Matthew Mendoza grew up playing football and became a popular athlete at Highlands High School, where he was a linebacker and running back for the football team; he also enjoyed coaching in the local Pop Warner league.

In 2004, Mr. Mendoza answered his nation's call to duty during time of war and became the third generation of his family to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps; he completed two tours of duty in Iraq before shipping out to Afghanistan in 2008 with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, out of Twentynine Palms, California, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Appointed squad leader for 1st Platoon, Company E, on April 8, 2008, Sergeant Mendoza led more than 40 combat patrols in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand Province, one of the most dangerous regions in Afghanistan; as the leader of his unit's advance party, he dedicated countless hours to evaluating the platoon's area of operations, to ensure that his fellow marines would understand the battlefield.

On June 19, 2008, Sergeant Mendoza and his squad were conducting a mounted patrol along Highway 1 when they came under small arms fire; he and his men left their vehicle and engaged the enemy, eliminating the threat and preventing any casualties among the coalition forces and the surrounding civilian population.

The following day, Sergeant Mendoza ordered some of his squad to remain behind in the staging area while he, his Afghan interpreter, and three other men advanced on foot through difficult terrain that would not accommodate their vehicle; a few moments later, the sergeant and his interpreter were killed by a suicide bomber, and the other three men were injured; by putting himself in the lead, he once again prevented the enemy from killing more American soldiers.

Admired by his men for always leading from the front, Matthew Mendoza repeatedly risked his life to protect the lives of his fellow marines; for his actions on June 19, he was posthumously awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Throughout his military career, Matthew Mendoza embodied the highest traditions of the Marine Corps with his initiative, perseverance, and devotion to duty, and for his conspicuous bravery and his final sacrifice, he is truly deserving of this state's supreme military award.

RESOLVED

That the 84th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby direct the governor of the State of Texas to posthumously award the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor to Matthew E. Mendoza in recognition of his valiant service during Operation Enduring Freedom.