

# THE SOUTH CAROLINA



Presented by Senator Jim DeMint

in partnership with the Library of Congress

Dear Friend,

I'd like to personally thank you for your interest in participating in The South Carolina Veterans History Project. I am proud to partner with the Library of Congress to capture the stories and experiences of the men and women of South Carolina who have served in our armed forces during our Nation's hours of greatest need.

Congress created the Veterans History Project in 2000. Since then, this project has chronicled the experiences of America's heroes from World War I to the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. As our history has taught us, and the many monuments that have been raised illustrate, every generation must answer the call to defend freedom at home and abroad. It is a costly vigilance, but one from which Americans have never shirked.



Though the conflicts America has fought have often been long and costly, the work of our military forces should be a source of enormous pride and gratitude for every citizen. Each soldier, serving our Nation, is a pen-stroke on the pages of our history books; through this Project, we can make those lives and stories come alive for future generations.

I look forward to partnering with you as we record and preserve the stories of South Carolina's veterans. In extraordinary times, there are no ordinary lives. We are honored to tell the stories of these "ordinary" citizens who accomplished extraordinary things in defense of freedom and democracy around the world.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim DeMint".

Jim DeMint  
United States Senator

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## Conducting the Interview

### Preparation

1. Complete the Biographical Data Form with the veteran to identify possible interview questions.
2. Prepare questions before the interview; write them down. Sample questions are included in this packet.
  - ü Conduct a *pre-interview* with the veteran or civilian, if possible.
3. Use the highest quality video or audio recorder and microphone(s) you can.
  - ü Digital and Hi-8 video recordings are preferred
  - ü Use external microphones
  - ü Do not use extended time speeds on recorders
  - ü Do not use microcassettes
4. Become familiar with your recording equipment and test it before you begin the interview.
5. Interview in a quiet, well-lit room and avoid noise from:
  - ü Fluorescent lights
  - ü chiming clocks
  - ü heating and cooling systems
  - ü telephones and televisions

6. Be sure the questions and answers are recorded.
7. On video interviews:
  - ü Mount the camera on a tripod
  - ü Position the camera a few feet from your interviewee
  - ü Focus on the interviewee's face, upper body, and hands
  - ü Avoid using the zoom feature
8. On audio interviews:
  - ü Use an external microphone
  - ü Position the microphone 9 inches from the interviewee.
  - ü Use a microphone stand
  - ü Be sure the tape has started recording before you start speaking!
9. Complete all four (4) required release forms and the recording log.

## The Interview

1. State at the beginning of the interview:
  - ü Date and place of the interview
  - ü Name of the person being interviewed
  - ü Interviewee's birth date
  - ü Names of the people attending the interview (including the interviewer and camera operators)
  - ü The organization you're working with, if any

If interviewing a veteran:

- ü What war and branch of service he or she served in
- ü What his or her rank was
- ü Where he or she served

If interviewing a civilian:

- ü What type of work he or she performed
- ü Where he or she served
- ü What war he or she served during

For example: *Today is Friday, June 7, 2003 and we are interviewing John Smith at his home. Mr. Smith is 78 years old, having been born on November 23, 1923. My name is Jane Doe and I'll be the interviewer. John Smith is my uncle. He is my mother's brother. Uncle John, could you state for the recording what war and branch of service you served in? [pause for answer] What was your rank? [pause for answer] Where did you serve? [pause for answer]*

## 2. Other tips for a great interview:

- ü Keep the tape recorder or video camera running throughout the interview, unless you are asked to turn it off by the interviewee. Never record secretly.
- ü Keep your questions short. Avoid complicated, multipart questions (*see list of suggested questions*).
- ü Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." Ask "how, when, and why" questions instead.
- ü Keep your opinions out of the interview, and don't ask leading questions that suggest answers.
- ü Encourage the interviewee with nods of the head rather than audible responses such as "yes" or "uh huh" that will be recorded.
- ü Don't begin the interview with questions about painful or controversial topics.
- ü Be patient and give the veteran time to reflect before going on to a new question. Many people take short reflective breaks in the course of answering one question.
- ü Use follow-up questions to elicit more details from the interviewee. Examples include: When did that happen? Did that happen to you? What did you think about that? What are the steps in doing that?
- ü Consider asking the interviewee to show you photographs, commendations, and personal letters as a way of enhancing the interview. Such documents often encourage memories and provoke interesting stories.
- ü Be yourself. Don't pretend to know more about a subject than you do.

## Return Completed Interview Materials To

The South Carolina Veterans History Project  
c/o U.S. Senator Jim DeMint  
105 N. Spring Street, Suite 109  
Greenville, SC 29601

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## Veteran's Release Form 1 (REQUIRED) - The Library of Congress

TO BE COMPLETED BY VETERAN OR CIVILIAN

(In cases of deceased veterans, to be completed by the donor of the material.)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am a participant in the Veterans History Project (hereinafter "VHP") of the Library of Congress American Folklife Center. I understand that the purpose of the VHP is to collect audio- and video-recorded oral histories of America's war veterans and of those who served in support of them, as well as selected related documentary materials such as photographs and manuscripts, for inclusion in the permanent collections of the Library of Congress. These oral histories and related materials serve as a record of American veterans' wartime experiences and as a scholarly and educational resource for Congress and the general public.

I understand that the American Folklife Center plans to retain the product of my participation in the VHP, including but not limited to my interview, presentation, video, photographs, statements, name, images or likeness, voice, and written materials ("My Collection") as part of its permanent collections.

I hereby grant to the Library of Congress ownership of the physical property comprising My Collection. Additionally, I hereby grant to the Library of Congress, at no cost, the perpetual, nonexclusive, transferable, worldwide right to use, reproduce, transmit, display, perform, prepare derivative works from, distribute, and authorize the redistribution of the materials in My Collection in any medium. By giving this permission, I understand that I retain any copyright and related rights that I may hold.

I hereby release the Library of Congress, and its assignees and designees, from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of My Collection, including but not limited to any claims for copyright infringement, defamation, invasion of privacy, or right of publicity.

Should any part of My Collection be found to include materials that the Library of Congress deems inappropriate for retention with the collection or for transfer to other collections in the Library, the Library may dispose of such materials in accordance with its procedures for disposition of materials not needed for the Library's collections.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

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## Interviewer's Release Form 1 (REQUIRED) - The Library of Congress

TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWERS, RECORDING OPERATORS, AND PHOTOGRAPHERS (Please circle appropriate category.)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am a participant in the Veterans History Project (hereinafter "VHP") of the Library of Congress American Folklife Center. I understand that the purpose of the VHP is to collect audio-and video-recorded oral histories of America's war veterans and of those who served in support of them, as well as selected related documentary materials such as photographs and manuscripts, for inclusion in the permanent collections of the Library of Congress. These oral histories and related materials serve as a record of American veterans' wartime experiences and as a scholarly and educational resource for Congress and the general public.

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### ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if interviewer is a minor) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) - \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Veteran \_\_\_\_\_ Partner Organization \_\_\_\_\_

# THE SOUTH CAROLINA



Presented by **Senator Jim DeMint**

in partnership with the Library of Congress

## Veteran's Release Form 2 (REQUIRED) - Senator Jim DeMint

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am a participant in the Veterans History Project (hereinafter "VHP") of U.S. Senator Jim DeMint and the Library of Congress American Folklife Center.

I understand that U.S. Senator Jim DeMint reserves the right to and display all or selected portions of the product of my participation in the VHP, including but not limited to my interview, presentation, video, photographs, statements, name, images or likeness, voice, and written materials ("My Collection") as part of his official public website.

I hereby grant to U.S. Senator Jim DeMint, at no cost, the perpetual, nonexclusive, transferable, worldwide right to use, reproduce, transmit, display, perform, prepare derivative works from, distribute, and authorize the redistribution of the materials in My Collection in any medium. By giving this permission, I understand I retain any copyright and related rights I may hold.

I hereby release U.S. Senator Jim DeMint, and his assignees and designees, from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of My Collection, including but not limited to any claims for copyright infringement, defamation, invasion of privacy, or right of publicity.

Should any part of My Collection be found to include materials that U.S. Senator Jim DeMint deems inappropriate for uploading electronically to his official public website, he and his office may dispose of such materials in accordance with procedures for disposition of such materials.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Interviewer's** Release Form 2 (REQUIRED) - Senator Jim DeMint

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ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if interviewer is a minor) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Veteran \_\_\_\_\_ Partner Organization \_\_\_\_\_







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## Suggested Interview Questions

### For the Record (*REQUIRED*)

State at the beginning of the interview:

- o Date and place of the interview
- o Name of the person being interviewed
- o Interviewee's birth date
- o Names of the people attending the interview (including the interviewer and camera operators)
- o The organization you're working with, if any

If interviewing a veteran:

- o War and branch of service
- o What his or her rank was
- o Where he or she served

If interviewing a civilian:

- o What type of work he or she performed
- o Where he or she served
- o What war he or she served during

## Possible Questions *(select several in advance of the interview)*

### South Carolina:

Do you have a South Carolina-specific memory from your time in the service?  
How did being from South Carolina shape your military experience? *(if from SC)*  
What is one thing you would like to pass on to future generations of South Carolinians who serve in our Armed Forces?

### Jogging Memory:

Were you drafted or did you enlist?  
Where were you living at the time?  
Why did you join?  
Why did you pick the service branch you joined?  
Do you recall your first days in service?  
What did it feel like?  
Tell me about your boot camp/training experience(s).  
Do you remember your instructors?  
How did you get through it?

### Experiences:

Which war(s) did you serve in (WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf)?  
Where exactly did you go?  
Do you remember arriving and what it was like?  
What was your job/assignment?  
Did you see combat?  
Were there many casualties in your unit?  
Tell me about a couple of your most memorable experiences.  
Were you a prisoner of war?  
Tell me about your experiences in captivity and when freed.  
Were you awarded any medals or citations?  
How did you get them?  
Higher ranks may be asked about battle planning. Those who sustained injuries may be asked about the circumstances.

### Life: *Ask questions about life in the service and/or at the front or under fire.*

How did you stay in touch with your family?  
What was the food like?  
Did you have plenty of supplies?  
Did you feel pressure or stress?  
Was there something special you did for "good luck"?

How did people entertain themselves?  
Were there entertainers?  
What did you do when on leave?  
Where did you travel while in the service?  
Do you recall any particularly humorous or unusual event?  
What were some of the pranks that you or others would pull?  
Do you have photographs?  
Who are the people in the photographs?  
What did you think of officers or fellow soldiers?  
Did you keep a personal diary?

After Service: *Appropriateness of questions will vary if the veteran had a military career.*

Do you recall the day your service ended?  
Where were you?  
What did you do in the days and weeks afterward?  
Did you work or go back to school?  
Was your education supported by the G.I. Bill?  
Did you make any close friendships while in the service?  
Did you continue any of those relationships? For how long?  
Did you join a veteran's organization?

Later Years and Closing: *Ask questions about how the veteran's service change the way they viewed themselves, their country, and the values we have fought to protect as a nation (freedom, liberty, democracy, etc).*

What did you go on to do as a career after the war?  
Did your military experience influence your thinking about war or about the military in general?  
If in a veteran's organization, what kinds of activities does your post or association have?  
Do you attend reunions?  
How did your service and experiences affect your life?  
Is there anything you would like to add that we have not covered in this interview?

Suggested Questions from Senator DeMint:

What is your greatest concern for America?  
What is your greatest hope for America?  
After serving in our Armed Forces, what does the idea of Freedom/America mean to you?  
What is the story you would most like following generations to know and remember?  
Why?  
What advice would you give to families of soldiers/marines currently serving in harms way?