

February 1, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Baseball is America's game. The crack of the bat, strategy of the game, and pageantry of the ballpark are ingrained in our national culture. A critical part of the game's story, and thus of our nation's story, are the heroes who have captured the hearts of baseball fans with their skill, grace, competitive spirit, and unimaginable accomplishments. Few stand out like St. Louis Cardinal great, Stan "The Man" Musial. As a lifelong baseball fan and a proud Missourian, I am writing to urge you to honor Stan Musial by bestowing upon him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2010.

As you know, the current-day Presidential Medal of Freedom derives from the Medal of Freedom that was established by another Missourian, President Harry S. Truman, during World War II to honor civilian service. The medal was resurrected by President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Stan Musial shared many links with both of these great Presidents, appearing with each of them during their races for President or when they toured Missouri.

Stan Musial embodies the qualities that the Medal of Freedom was designed to celebrate: "especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors." I urge you to review closely the supporting documentation provided by the St. Louis Cardinals. It provides, in much greater detail than I can list here, a compelling case for awarding the medal to Stan Musial based upon an overwhelming volume of great deeds, meritorious service, and successes both on and off the field.

Whether it is his service to the community as a board member for the USO, Boy Scouts, Senior Olympics, President's Council on Physical Fitness, Crippled Children's Society of St. Louis, and Shelter for Children, or the way he led by example with his "gentleman-sportsman" demeanor; whether it is his contributions to world peace as an unofficial emissary to the people of Poland during the Cold War or his international recognition as a recipient of the Cavalier Cross of the Order of Merit, the Polish government's highest civilian honor; whether it is his numerous unmatched records in baseball or his service in the U.S. Navy, one thing about Stan Musial is clear: he is an American hero.

St. Louisans are among the best baseball fans in the world – they appreciate a player who gives his all, who is a hero on and off the field, who represents the Cardinals, the city and state with dignity and respect, and who brings the same intensity to improving the lives of his fellow man that he brings to playing the game of baseball. Stan Musial has excelled at all of these feats, and while his humility and geographical location may not have allowed him the opportunity to be as widely hailed as his East Coast brethren Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams (both Presidential Medal of Freedom honorees), his deeds and accomplishments are just as great.

It is time that Stan Musial is recognized by the White House for the contributions he has made to our country, and I urge you to take this opportunity to honor Stan “The Man.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claire McCaskill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "M".

CLAIRE MCCASKILL
United States Senator