



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART**

Commander – Joseph M. Belardo, Sr.

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**Robert Turkavage
Chairman
Marco Polo Smigliani
Co-Chairman
Friends of Bernie Friedenberg
219 North Roosevelt Boulevard
Brigantine, NJ 08203**

June 17, 2019

Dear Messrs. Turkavage and Smigliani:

It gives me great pleasure to support the creation of a bronze statue to honor the memory of Staff Sergeant Bernard I. Friedenberg and all other Americans who proudly served their country in World War II.

Staff Sergeant Friedenberg served as a medic in the Medical Detachment of the 1st U.S. Infantry Division during World War II. In carrying out his duties, Friedenberg repeatedly distinguished himself with his courage and his ability to make medical decisions under the most difficult of circumstances. Medics, such as Friedenberg, had the responsibility of retrieving the wounded from the front lines to secure locations where medics could tend to their wounds. I am told Friedenberg also supervised other soldiers in the retrieval of the wounded. These retrievals were often made under heavy enemy fire. At the aid station, it was not uncommon for multiple wounded soldiers to arrive at the same time. Here, Friedenberg would triage the wounded and provide initial medical care to stabilize them, before they were transported for additional medical care.

Staff Sergeant Friedenberg's courage and decision-making ability were perhaps best displayed by his conduct on Omaha Beach in Normandy on June 6, 1944. On this day, as he passed a mine field, Friedenberg heard moans from inside the field of soldiers lying in the field. Crawling into the mine field, Friedenberg carried five men out, one after the other. As he attempted to retrieve a sixth soldier, an antipersonnel mine exploded killing the soldier. Friedenberg could have waited for mine sweepers to clear a path to the wounded, but given the chaos of the day, and the life-threatening nature of the wounded, Friedenberg, at risk to his own personal safety, chose to act and not wait for help that may not have come in time. Friedenberg was awarded his first Silver Star for his actions on this fateful day.

I have been informed that Friedenberg was awarded a second Silver Star for his actions in Germany in September 1944; two Bronze Stars for valor, and that he was the recipient of two Purple Hearts for injuries he sustained in combat. I have also been informed that Friedenberg likely treated himself for other wounds sustained in combat which went unreported to the military.

Staff Sergeant Friedenberg's concern and care for his fellow soldiers, often in the face of imminent danger, is indeed worthy of remembrance. The statue which is proposed will also serve as a poignant reminder for future generations that the price of freedoms we enjoy were paid for with the suffering and sacrifices of many soldiers who preceded us.

Accordingly, I reiterate my support for the creation of the above statue, and erecting it in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Friedenberg's boyhood home.

Yours in Patriotism,

Joseph M. Belardo, Sr.

New Jersey Commander