



President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
October 20, 2009

Dear Mr. President,

Nine months ago, you challenged a nation that seemed poised to be challenged. In your inaugural address, you spoke of a "spirit of service that must inhabit us all," of "a new era of responsibility," and of the fact that "there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character than giving our all to a difficult task."

You inspired me with those words, Mr. President, and today I stand ready to do my small part to address that spirit, to accept that responsibility, and to give my all to a difficult task. In doing so, and perhaps with an assist in the form of an acknowledgement of this effort by you, I hope to remind others of your challenge and of that spirit that – although sometimes buried or ignored – is indeed within us all.

My task is an effort to raise money for the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund (www.fallenheroesfund.org), which as you may know provides millions of dollars in support for United States military personnel and their families – for those who have been lost, and those with catastrophic injuries suffered in the performance of their duty. My method for doing that is one which I know is close to your heart, basketball, specifically by soliciting pledges on the way to my goal of making 1 million foul shots.

It is called "Hoops For Heroes," and I plan to begin the effort on Veterans Day, at a local gym, documenting my progress daily on a blog and a website currently under construction – hoopsforheroes.com. With a young family and a full-time job, I'm estimating this will take approximately two years (making an average of 1,370 shots per day), to conclude on Veterans Day 2011, and in a perfect world with you in attendance.

If it takes off in the way I believe it can, it could raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for a cause that is critical, both in terms of the long-term financial burden and, maybe more importantly, our national morale. That is the direct impact. More indirect is my hope that it will awaken, in other regular Americans like me, that spirit of service that

you so eloquently defined on your first day in office. That challenge of yours, after all, is what has brought me to this point, to this effort, to this letter to you.

My wildest dreams, Mr. President, would include a token donation to Hoops For Heroes, although I understand how that is probably unrealistic in terms of the precedent it might set. For you to be with me for my first shot is another wild dream (Crazy, maybe, but imagine the momentum it would spur!).

Setting those notions aside, my official request is this: Would you be willing to have a short letter of endorsement drafted so as to show your support for this effort. Throughout this journey, my plan is to speak as much of my source of inspiration – your words and their call to action – as the cause itself, and a note from you would profoundly help my ability to reach out.

Thank you, Mr. President, for anything you might do to help, and in general for leading this nation toward a new hope.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Cummings". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

Dave Cummings
Founder, Hoops For Heroes
Epsom, NH