

Thursday March 3, 2011

*Washington, D.C. – Congressman Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico’s Third District spoke today on the House floor in honor of Joe Silversmith, who passed away on Monday. Below are his remarks as delivered.*

“Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Marine Corporal Joe Silversmith who passed away earlier this week at the age of 86.

“As a Navajo Code Talker, Corporal Silversmith earned the Silver Congressional Medal of Honor for his service during World War II when he answered the call of duty and served his country in the South Pacific from 1943 to 1946. Corporal Silversmith was part of an invaluable group of Navajo men who transmitted secret communications during the war that contributed to victory for the Allied forces.”

“As we take this moment to remember the contributions of Corporal Silversmith we are reminded of the brave service of all Navajo Code Talkers. Corporal Silversmith and his brothers in arms were nothing short of heroes for their efforts during the war.

“Joe Silversmith went on to become a minister after returning home from the war and a well-respected member of the community, always supporting those he ministered to. He will be missed.

“As we mourn the passing of Joe Silversmith and celebrate his life, my thoughts and prayers are with his wife Ramona and their two daughters during this sad time.”

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