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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov)/[Michawn Rich](mailto:michawn_rich@heller.senate.gov) | | June 2, 2015 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller Legislation Comes to Fruition at Today’s**  **Medal of Honor Ceremony**  **(Washington, DC)**– Today, U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) issued the following statement after the Medal of Honor Ceremonies for Army Sergeant William Shemin and Army Private Henry Johnson. These two soldiers served during World War I as injustices plagued both the Jewish and African American communities during their times of service.  **“Sgt. Shemin and Pvt. Johnson courageously served our country, and I am pleased they were awarded appropriately today. Their heroic acts place them among our nation’s greatest, and we remember them with pride and gratitude,”** said Senator Dean Heller.  In 2011, Senator Heller, introduced the [*William Shemin World War I Veterans Act* (S. 1727)](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=aa25ff8c-916b-425f-83e9-376540e66106). The legislation required a review of Jewish World War I veterans’ military records to see if any qualify for the Medal of Honor. Heller worked with conferees to successfully secure the inclusion of the legislation in the [*National Defense Authorization Act of 2012* (H.R. 1540)](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=fcb7b19a-1fb6-494b-964b-1b84ff7b4a8a).  Heller continued, **“Countless Jewish service members have served our country heroically and deserve to be adequately recognized for their service – not discriminated against. I was proud to introduce the William Shemin Jewish World War I Veterans Act, along with several of my colleagues in 2011, to ensure heroes like Sgt. Shemin receive recognition for their extraordinary acts of military service.”**  **Background:** Congress has previously required reviews of veterans who may have been overlooked.  In 2001, Congress passed the *Leonard Kravitz Jewish War Veterans Act*, which gave Jewish soldiers the opportunity to receive the Medal of Honor for their service in World War II.  Additionally, the 1997 Defense Authorization Act waived restrictions and limitations so that Asian American, American Pacific Islander, and African American veterans’ files could be reviewed to determine if they should be awarded the Medal of Honor.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Sgt. William Shemin** | **Pvt. Henry Johnson** | | **C:\Users\mrich\Desktop\william_shemin.jpg** | C:\Users\mrich\Desktop\henry_johnson.jpg | | The Army’s official biography for Sgt. Shemin can be found [HERE](http://1.usa.gov/1SA6Ib7). | The Army’s official biography for Pvt. Johnson can be found [HERE](http://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/johnson/?from=hp_hottopic). |   ###  [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |