



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor

September 25, 2007

President George W. Bush
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

I am writing to recommend that Mr. Liviu Librescu be considered a posthumous recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Professor Librescu, as he was most recently known, was a man of unflinching talent and courage who embodies the idea of freedom in many ways.

Faced with resistance in his early life, Librescu developed a passion for overcoming obstacles. As a young Jewish man in Romania during World War II, immersion in his life's work; reading, research, and understanding science were welcome diversions. Librescu became a highly respected and promising researcher of aeronautical engineering in Romania during a period of brief liberation from the War but when he requested to emigrate to Israel he was denied that opportunity and fired from his workplace.

Mr. Librescu was a survivor that sought liberty and truth during his lifetime; he continued studying until he was granted entry to Israel in 1979, where he taught at a university. In 1985 after a sabbatical leave to the United States, Librescu decided to permanently teach at Virginia Polytechnic Institute's Department of Engineering Science and Mathematics where he gave his life protecting his students from an enraged gunman on April 16, 2007.

Liviu Librescu gravitated towards freedom; freedom from persecution, intolerance, and finally, from oppression. His courage through adversity speaks volumes, as do his publications in scholarly journals. Professor Librescu will be remembered for his humility and his intellect, but more than that, possibly his greatest contribution to society, was his fascination with actively solving problems, a passion that ultimately saved lives. His final problem solved, Liviu Librescu's sacrifice of his own life allowed his students the freedom to live theirs. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy M. Kaine".

Timothy M. Kaine