

*August 27, 2010*

Stockton, CA – Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-11) today presented two military service medals to Captain Bill Behrns, a WWII veteran, Stockton resident and an Ace pilot of P-38 fighter planes. Capt. Behrns served as an Army pilot stationed in the China-Burma-India area and flew P-38 fighter planes. He flew over 100 missions and is one of the few pilots assigned to his squadron to have survived.

“I’m proud to present Captain Bill Behrns with the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Army Good Conduct Medal,” said Rep. McNerney. “Capt. Behrns, who flew over 100 missions, has earned our gratitude and recognition. He is a true American hero. I’m honored to have helped secure these medals for Captain Behrns and thank him for brave service to our country.”

Capt. Behrns today received replacement awards for the Distinguished Flying Cross with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster and the Army Good Conduct Medal. Capt. Behrns first received these awards over six decades ago, but over the years they became tarnished with age. He requested assistance from Congressman McNerney with obtaining replacements. Today, the Congressman presented the medals to Capt. Behrns.

“I want to thank Congressman McNerney,” said Capt. Behrns. “I deeply appreciate his hard work to secure my medals. Over 65 years ago, I was first awarded these medals but over the years they became tarnished with age. I’m grateful to receive replacements and have them presented personally by the Congressman. Congressman McNerney got the job done for me and he’s always stood up for all our community’s veterans.”

The Distinguished Flying Cross was created in 1926 and is awarded to a pilot for extraordinary achievement in aerial flight. Capt. Behrns was awarded a total of three Distinguished Flying Cross medals for his service as part of a special squadron of pilots assigned to protect India’s border against attack during WWII. Capt. Behrns flew 104 missions, including one in which his plane was shot down. He also flew 6 weather missions to determine conditions for the rest of the squadron.

The Army Good Conduct Medal is awarded for exceptional behavior, efficiency and fidelity.

Capt. Behrns was awarded an Army Good Conduct Medal for his years of service and bravery as a pilot of P-38 planes.

In addition to three Distinguished Flying Cross awards, three Air Medals for exceptional service as an Army P-38 pilot and the Army Good Conduct Medal, Capt. Behrns also previously received a Presidential Unit Citation.