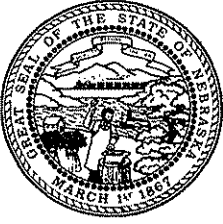


# STATE OF NEBRASKA



Dave Heineman  
Governor

**MILITARY DEPARTMENT**  
**Roger P. Lempke**  
*Director*  
1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090  
Phone: (402) 309-7210

July 17, 2007

Mr. Michael J. Smith  
Director/CEO, Nebraska State Historical Society  
Secretary, Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission  
1500 R Street, P.O. Box 82554  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68501-2554

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse Andrew Jackson Higgins for inclusion in the Nebraska Hall of Fame. No other native Nebraskan contributed more to defeating Nazism than Andrew Higgins while never forgetting the state roots that formed the solid foundation for his future successes.

From his birth in Columbus in 1886 and through his service in the Nebraska Army National Guard Higgins distinguished himself at an early age by innovations to amphibious operations that were first demonstrated with crossings over the Platte River. He would earn the rank of Captain; but more significantly, his experiences in across-water operations would lead to a vital role the World War II allied victory in Europe.

Andrew Higgins proclaimed his Nebraska work ethic proudly after embarking on a success career in lumber and shallow draft water craft. Through determination and skill he developed a fast and inexpensive way to manufacture landing craft for the invasion into Normandy on June 6, 1944. Higgins Industries would build over 20,000 landing craft (known as the "Higgins Boat") consistently shattering production records by using innovative management methods and paying its diverse workforce according to skill level.

President and Supreme Allied Commander Dwight Eisenhower gave Higgins the ultimate compliment by saying that he "was the man who won the war for us...if he had not built those landing craft, the whole strategy of the war would have been different".

Higgins always credited his Nebraska upbringing for his success. Visiting Omaha in 1943 he said: "If it had not been for the Missouri River at Omaha there would have been no Higgins Industries of New Orleans, turning out ships, planes, engines, and guns and what have you for the Army and Navy." Despite fame and fortune Andrew Higgins promoted his Nebraska roots until his death in 1952.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger P. Lempke".

ROGER P. LEMPKE  
Adjutant General  
Nebraska National Guard