

Proclamation



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, in the early morning hours of April 17, 1961, a group of approximately fifteen hundred valiant Cuban exiles, trained and armed by the United States of America, landed on Cuban shores at the Bay of Pigs and attempted to free their people from the yoke of communist totalitarianism, and for the next three days these courageous young men engaged overwhelming forces that outnumbered them nearly fifty to one; and

WHEREAS, many of the brave men of Brigade 2506, including Manuel Artime, Pepe San Roman, Roberto San Roman, Erneido Oliva, and Alejandro Del Valle, began their training south of the Tampa Bay area on Useppa Island where the dream to free the people of Cuba was forged, and two men in particular, Orlando Rodriguez and Felix Rodriguez stood out for their exceptional contributions to the effort's legacy; and

WHEREAS, when all ammunition was depleted, the brigadiers, and locals that had joined them, were captured in individual groups as they fled to the countryside, unwilling to surrender en masse; and

WHEREAS, after imprisonment and release by the Cuban government, Orlando Rodriguez defended the United States of America by serving in the United States Army, 1st Cavalry, 81st Airborne, and as a proud member of the Green Berets within the United States Special Forces, earning many medals for his service including the Silver Star, with valor, two Bronze Stars, Purple Heart, four Distinguished Air Medals, two Department of Defense Medals, Pentagon Medal, Combat Medals, Foreign Government Medals of Valor, and Official Recognition of the President of the United States for distinguished service; and

WHEREAS, since his retirement to Tampa, Florida, Colonel Orlando Rodriguez has demonstrated his devotion to family, community and country, and contributes to civil institutions, humanitarian projects and the Cuban Cultural Center, and continues his commitment to the struggle for freedom in Cuba and the defense of America's system of justice and democracy; and

WHEREAS, in honor of the sacrifices and determination of the courageous men of Brigade 2506, it's President Felix Rodriguez, known as "Shadow Warrior," and Colonel Orlando Rodriguez, it is appropriate to acknowledge the commitment they made in the name of freedom.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim April 17, 2012 as

"BRIGADE 2506 AND COLONEL ORLANDO RODRIGUEZ DAY"

in the City of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to join me in saluting the men of Brigade 2506 for their unselfishness and tremendous courage in the face of insurmountable odds, and in expressing appreciation for their contributions to freedom and justice.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 11th day of April, 2012.



Bob Buckhorn

Mayor

