S. 991

To authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Andrew Jackson Higgins (posthumously), and to the D-day Museum in recognition of the contributions of Higgins Industries and the more than 30,000 employees of Higgins Industries to the Nation and to world peace during World War II.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 6, 2001

Ms. Landrieu (for herself, Mr. Breaux, Mr. Bingaman, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Feingold, Mr. Hagel, Mr. Murkowski, and Mr. Sessions) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Andrew Jackson Higgins Gold Medal Act”.

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SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) Andrew Jackson Higgins was born on August 28, 1886, in Columbus, Nebraska, moved to New Orleans in 1910, and formed Higgins Industries on September 26, 1930;

(2) Andrew Jackson Higgins designed, engineered, and produced the “Eureka”, a unique shallow draft boat, the design of which evolved during World War II into 2 basic classes of military craft, high speed PT boats, and types of Higgins landing craft (LCPs, LCPLs, LCVPs, LCMs and LCSs);

(3) Andrew Jackson Higgins designed, engineered, and constructed 4 major assembly line plants in New Orleans for mass production of Higgins landing craft, and other vessels vital to the Allied Forces’ conduct of World War II;

(4) Andrew Jackson Higgins bought the entire 1940 Philippine mahogany crop and other material purely at risk without a Government contract, anticipating that America would join World War II and that Higgins Industries would need the wood to build landing craft, and Higgins also bought steel, engines, and other material necessary to construct landing craft;
(5) Andrew Jackson Higgins, through Higgins Industries, employed a fully integrated assembly line work force, black and white, male and female, of up to 30,000 during World War II, with equal pay for equal work;

(6) in 1939, the United States Navy had a total of 18 landing craft in the fleet;

(7) from November 18, 1940, when Higgins Industries was awarded its first contract for Higgins landing craft until the conclusion of the war, the employees of Higgins Industries produced 12,300 Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel (LCVP’s) and nearly 8,000 other landing craft of all types;

(8) during World War II, Higgins Industries employees produced 20,094 boats, including landing craft and Patrol Torpedo boats, and trained 30,000 Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard personnel on the safe operation of landing craft at the Higgins’ Boat Operators School;

(9) on Thanksgiving Day 1944, General Dwight D. Eisenhower stated in an address to the Nation, “Let us thank God for Higgins Industries, management, and labor which has given us the landing boats with which to conduct our campaign.”;
(10) Higgins landing craft, constructed of wood and steel, transported fully armed troops, light tanks, field artillery, and other mechanized equipment essential to amphibious operations;

(11) Higgins landing craft made the amphibious assault on D-day and the landings at Leyte, North Africa, Guadalcanal, Sicily, Iwo Jima, Tarawa, Guam, and thousands of less well-known assaults possible;

(12) Captain R.R.M. Emmett, a commander at the North Africa amphibious landing, and later commandant of the Great Lakes Training Station, wrote during the war, "When the history of this war is finally written by historians, far enough removed from its present turmoil and clamor to be cool and impartial, I predict that they will place Mr. (Andrew Jackson) Higgins very high on the list of those who deserve the commendation and gratitude of all citizens."; and

(13) in 1964, President Dwight D. Eisenhower told historian Steven Ambrose, "He (Higgins) is the man who won the war for us. If Higgins had not developed and produced those landing craft, we never could have gone in over an open beach. We would have had to change the entire strategy of the war."
SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized, on behalf of Congress, to award a gold medal of appropriate design to—

(A) the family of Andrew Jackson Higgins, honoring Andrew Jackson Higgins (posthumously) for his contributions to the Nation and world peace; and

(B) the D-day Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, for public display, honoring Andrew Jackson Higgins (posthumously) and the employees of Higgins Industries for their contributions to the Nation and world peace.

(2) MODALITIES.—The modalities of presentation of the medals under this Act shall be determined by the President, after consultation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall strike 2 gold medals with suitable emblems,
devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medals struck under this Act, under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, and at a price sufficient to cover the costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

SEC. 5. STATUS AS NATIONAL MEDALS.

The medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund an amount not to exceed $60,000 to pay for the cost of the medals authorized by this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 4 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.