

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2992

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the U.S. Merchant Marine of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 9, 2015

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself and Ms. HAHN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the U.S. Merchant Marine of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Merchant Marine of
5 World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the Al-
2 lied victory in World War II and the restoration of
3 peacetime across the European and Pacific theaters.

4 (2) The United States Merchant Marine was in-
5 tegral in providing the link between domestic pro-
6 duction and the fighting forces overseas, providing
7 combat equipment, fuel, food, commodities, and raw
8 materials to troops stationed overseas.

9 (3) Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King acknowledged
10 the indispensability of the Merchant Marine to the
11 victory in a 1945 letter stating that without their
12 support, “the Navy could not have accomplished its
13 mission”.

14 (4) President and former Supreme Commander
15 of the Allied Forces, Dwight D. Eisenhower, ac-
16 knowledged that “through the prompt delivery of
17 supplies and equipment to our armed forces over-
18 seas, and of cargoes representing economic and mili-
19 tary aid to friendly nations, the American Merchant
20 Marine has effectively helped to strengthen the
21 forces of freedom throughout the world”.

22 (5) Military missions and war planning were
23 contingent upon the availability of resources and
24 that the United States Merchant Marine played a
25 vital role in this regard, ensuring the efficient and

1 reliable transoceanic transport of military equipment
2 as well as both military and civilian personnel.

3 (6) The United States Merchant Marine pro-
4 vided for the successful transport of resources and
5 personnel despite consistent and ongoing exposure to
6 enemy combatants from both the air and the sea,
7 such as enemy bomber squadrons, submarines, and
8 mines.

9 (7) The efforts of the United States Merchant
10 Marine were not without sacrifices as they bore a
11 higher per capita casualty rate than any other
12 branch of the military during the war.

13 (8) The United States Merchant Marine proved
14 to be an instrumental asset on untold occasions, par-
15 ticipating in every landing operation by the United
16 States Marine Corps from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima
17 as well as providing, for instance, the bulk tonnage
18 of material necessary for the invasion of Normandy
19 which “would not have been possible without the
20 Merchant Marine”, as a 1944 New York Times arti-
21 cle observed.

22 (9) In also assessing their performance, General
23 Dwight D. Eisenhower stated, “every man in this
24 Allied command is quick to express his admiration
25 for the loyalty, courage, and fortitude of the officers

1 and men of the Merchant Marine. We count upon
2 their efficiency and their utter devotion to duty as
3 we do our own; they have never failed us”.

4 (10) During a September 1944 speech, Presi-
5 dent Franklin D. Roosevelt stated, the Merchant
6 Marine has “delivered the goods when and where
7 needed in every theater of operations and across
8 every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult, and
9 dangerous transportation job ever undertaken. As
10 time goes on, there will be greater public under-
11 standing of our merchant fleet’s record during this
12 war.”.

13 (11) The feats and accomplishments of the
14 Merchant Marine are deserving of broader public
15 recognition.

16 (12) The United States will be forever grateful
17 and indebted to the U.S. Merchant Marine for their
18 effective, reliable, and courageous transport of goods
19 and resources in enemy territory throughout thea-
20 ters of every variety in World War II; that these
21 goods and resources saved thousands of lives and en-
22 abled the Allied Powers to claim victory in World
23 War II.

24 (13) The Congressional Gold Medal will be an
25 appropriate way to shed further light on the service

1 of the Merchant Marine in World War II and the in-
2 strumental role they played in winning World War
3 II.

4 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

5 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
6 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
7 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
8 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal
9 of appropriate design to the U.S. Merchant Marine of
10 World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital
11 service during World War II.

12 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
13 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
14 Treasury (hereafter referred to as the “Secretary”) shall
15 strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and
16 inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

17 (c) AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE MUSEUM.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
19 gold medal in honor of the U.S. Merchant Marine,
20 the gold medal shall be given to the American Mer-
21 chant Marine Museum, where it will be available for
22 display as appropriate and available for research.

23 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

24 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
25 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in

1 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price
2 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
3 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

4 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

5 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck pursuant to
6 this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51
7 of title 31, United States Code.

8 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section
9 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck
10 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

○