

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1889

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the members of Escuadrón 201.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 2019

Ms. SÁNCHEZ (for herself, Mr. SOTO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mrs. TORRES of California, Ms. ESCOBAR, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the members of
Escuadrón 201.

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 “Escuadrón 201 Con-
5 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Escuadrón 201, or the 201st Squadron, of
2 the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force fought along-
3 side United States forces in the South Pacific during
4 World War II.

5 (2) Nicknamed the Aztec Eagles, Escuadrón
6 201 integrated with United States forces including
7 the U.S. 5th Air Force and the 58th Fighter Group
8 to provide close air support for American and Phil-
9 ippine ground forces as well as long range strikes
10 using Republic P-47D Thunderbolt fighter aircraft.

11 (3) Following Mexico's declaration of war on
12 Japan, Germany, and Italy on May 28, 1942, Mex-
13 ico entered into agreements with the United States
14 to collaborate through the reciprocal use of airfields
15 and facilities and the training of Mexican personnel
16 by the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF).

17 (4) With the assistance of USAAF, Mexican
18 Expeditionary Air Force pilots were trained in Gua-
19 dalajara, Mexico and later moved to USAAF schools
20 in the United States for additional individual and
21 unit training.

22 (5) In July 1944, 36 pilots and 264 support
23 personnel formed Escuadrón 201, Mexico's first
24 squadron that would be deployed overseas to fight
25 alongside United States forces.

1 (6) In February 1945, Escuadrón 201 and the
2 headquarters of the Mexican Expeditionary Air
3 Force moved to the Philippine Islands and began
4 combat operations with the 58th Fighter Group in
5 Porac, Luzon.

6 (7) Deployed to Okinawa in July 1945,
7 Escuadrón 201 provided close in ground support for
8 the U.S. 25th “Tropic Lightning” Division and Phil-
9 ippine Army units as well as long-range strikes into
10 Japanese-held territory in Taiwan.

11 (8) Mexico was prepared to send additional
12 squadrons to fight with Allied forces had Japan not
13 offered its unconditional surrender following the at-
14 tacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

15 (9) Seven Escuadrón 201 pilots lost their lives
16 fighting Axis forces.

17 (10) During its 795 combat sorties and 2,000
18 hours of combat flying, Escuadrón 201 exemplified
19 valor and was indispensable to the war effort and an
20 Allied victory.

21 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

22 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
23 the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem-
24 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
25 for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a single

1 gold medal of appropriate design to the members of
2 Escuadrón 201.

3 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the
4 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
5 of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Sec-
6 retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems,
7 devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Sec-
8 retary.

9 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
11 gold medal in honor of Escuadrón 201, the gold
12 medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution,
13 where it shall be available for display as appropriate
14 and available for research.

15 (2) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.—It is the sense
16 of the Congress that the Smithsonian Institution
17 should make the gold medal awarded pursuant to
18 this Act available for display elsewhere, particularly
19 at appropriate locations associated with Escuadrón
20 201, and that preference should be given to locations
21 affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution.

22 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

23 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
24 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
25 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price

1 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
2 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

3 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

4 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-
5 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter
6 51 of title 31, United States Code.

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

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