To award a Congressional Gold Medal to honor the contributions of all of those whose efforts led to the successful development of life saving vaccines to combat the novel coronavirus.

__IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES__

JUNE 10, 2021

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. BLUNT) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

__A BILL__

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to honor the contributions of all of those whose efforts led to the successful development of life saving vaccines to combat the novel coronavirus.

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 “COVID–19 Vaccine Developers Gold Medal Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:
(1) Researchers, scientists, doctors, epidemiologists, and others around the world have worked tirelessly and collaboratively to develop lifesaving vaccines to combat the coronavirus by reducing the likelihood of transmission, building immune resiliency, avoiding hospitalizations, and reducing the likelihood of death.

(2) Through the academic, research and analytic expertise of universities and their faculty, researchers, and students, their efforts contributed to providing valuable information to the public on the severity of the coronavirus worldwide and, in some cases, contributed to vaccine development.

(3) Several of the resulting vaccines represent historic breakthroughs in biopharmaceutical technology, which are predicated on years of leading research conducted in laboratories and hospitals that benefit from the significant financial investment of United States taxpayers through the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, including the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority.

(4) These professionals worked under record timelines to develop safe, effective vaccines dem-
onstrated in trials and granted emergency use au-

thorization by the Food and Drug Administration,
outpacing the typical vaccine development timeframe
of 5 to 10 years and beating the previous record by 3 years.

(5) These remarkable achievements in medical
science will have positive implications for future vac-
cine development, helping to combat new viruses,
leading to improvements in health and well-being.

(6) The tremendous efforts in vaccine develop-
ment can be celebrated and attributed to building di-
verse teams, including the notable efforts of many
individuals across the planet.

(7) Vaccines authorized for emergency use in
the United States benefitted greatly from global co-
operation, strategic partnerships, and collaboration
with publicly funded agencies and research capabili-
ties of the academic community.

(8) As a result of the collaborative efforts, peo-
ple around the world are benefitting from the ad-
ministration of vaccines, although work remains to
support governments around the world in ensuring
vaccines are equitably distributed.

(9) The United States, including through co-
operation with bilateral and multilateral partner-
ships, can help scale up manufacturing and distribution to all corners of the globe.

(10) The vaccines developed are contributing to the safety of people of the United States, rebuilding the United States economy, and the reunion of families.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDALS.

(a) Presentation Authorized.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design in recognition of all those whose efforts led to the successful development of vaccines that received emergency use authorizations to respond to the coronavirus.

(b) Design and Striking.—For the purpose of the awards under subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”) shall strike a gold medal described in that subsection with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) Smithsonian Institution.—

(1) In general.—After the award of the gold medal under subsection (a), the medal shall be given
to the Smithsonian Institution where the medal shall be—

(A) available for display, as appropriate;

and

(B) made available for research.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should make the gold medal received under paragraph (1) available for—

(A) the purpose of education, research, and the encouragement of science, technology, engineering, and math professions through the Smithsonian Science Education Center; and

(B) on display at a physical Smithsonian museum or on loan, as appropriate, so that the medal may be displayed elsewhere.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

Under regulations that the Secretary may promulgate, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3 at a price sufficient to cover the cost of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.
SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) National Medals.—The medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) Numismatic Items.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) Authority to Use Fund Amounts.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such sums as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medal authorized under section 3.

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