

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4885

To posthumously award a historic Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20, 1619, to December 6, 1865.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 5, 2025

Mr. GREEN of Texas introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and the Budget, 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 posthumously award a historic Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20, 1619, to December 6, 1865.

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 “The original legislation
5 awarding a historic Congressional Gold Medal, collectively,
6 to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our
7 country from August 20, 1619, to December 6, 1865”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Human beings were systematically abducted
4 from the continent of Africa and placed against their
5 will onto ships that would cross the Atlantic Ocean.

6 (2) These persons were chained within the
7 holds of ships in horrendous conditions for the dura-
8 tion of the transatlantic journey, which lasted up to
9 six months.

10 (3) Upon arrival in North America, they were
11 forced into labor among the English and European
12 colonies that would later become the United States.

13 (4) Their enslavement was concentrated on
14 farms and plantations that produced crops such as
15 cotton, tobacco, and sugar cane.

16 (5) The practice of slavery continued up to and
17 past the eventual American Revolution against Eng-
18 land and the founding of the United States of Amer-
19 ica.

20 (6) In the ensuing decades, slavery persisted
21 primarily in States where the economy was based
22 significantly on farming.

23 (7) The treatment of enslaved people continued
24 to be horrendous in nature, including exploitation,
25 family separation, rape, torture, and degradation,
26 among other cruelties.

1 (8) Slave labor was essential to the functioning
2 of many farms and plantations and therefore was es-
3 sential to the growth of the United States economy
4 as a whole.

5 (9) Slave labor was used to build notable build-
6 ings and monuments in the United States, including
7 the United States Capitol Building, the White
8 House, the Washington Monument, Mount Vernon,
9 which was the home of George Washington, and
10 Monticello, which was the home of Thomas Jeffer-
11 son.

12 (10) The profits from and involvement of slave
13 labor were also essential to the construction of the
14 Smithsonian Institution, Wall Street, Harvard Uni-
15 versity, Georgetown University, and Fort Sumter.

16 (11) It has been estimated that the total eco-
17 nomic value of slave labor is between \$5.9 trillion
18 and \$14.2 trillion in 2009 dollars.

19 (12) The United States became increasingly di-
20 vided between slaveholding and non-slaveholding
21 States and territories, including as to whether slav-
22 ery should be expanded to new States and territories
23 or abolished altogether.

24 (13) The secession of States from the United
25 States began on December 20, 1860, and led to the

1 formation of the Confederate States of America on
2 February 4, 1861.

3 (14) The American Civil War began on April
4 12, 1861, with the attack on Fort Sumter by Con-
5 federate forces.

6 (15) On January 1, 1863, President Abraham
7 Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation de-
8 claring that “all persons held as slaves” in Confed-
9 erate States “henceforward shall be free”.

10 (16) After four years of grueling battle and
11 conflict, the Civil War concluded with the surrender
12 of the commander of the Confederate forces on April
13 9, 1865, although fighting continued until November
14 6, 1865, and the Civil War was proclaimed to be
15 over by President Andrew Johnson on August 20,
16 1866.

17 (17) The 13th Amendment to the United States
18 Constitution abolishing slavery passed the Congress
19 on January 31, 1865, and was ratified by the re-
20 quired number of States on December 6, 1865.

21 (18) The text of the 13th Amendment states
22 that, “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, ex-
23 cept as a punishment for crime whereof the party
24 shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the

1 United States, or any place subject to their jurisdic-
2 tion.”.

3 (19) The use of slave labor over hundreds of
4 years resulted in immense suffering and deprivation
5 among the people who fell victim to these abhorrent
6 practices.

7 (20) At the same time, the extensive, long-term
8 use of unpaid labor advantaged the United States
9 economy immeasurably.

10 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

11 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
12 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
13 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
14 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of ap-
15 propriate design dedicated to the enslaved persons collec-
16 tively in recognition of their service as the greatest con-
17 tributors to the foundation of America’s economic great-
18 ness.

19 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
20 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
21 Treasury shall strike the gold medal with suitable em-
22 blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the
23 Secretary.

24 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—Following the
25 award of the gold medal described in subsection (a), the

1 gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution,
2 where it will be displayed at the National Museum of Afri-
3 can-American History & Culture and made available for
4 research.

5 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may strike and sell
7 duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under sec-
8 tion 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the bronze
9 medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery,
10 and overhead expenses.

11 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALES.—The amounts received
12 from the sale of duplicate medals under subsection (a)
13 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enter-
14 prise Fund.

15 (c) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is
16 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
17 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
18 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under
19 this Act.

20 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

21 The gold medal struck pursuant to this Act is a na-
22 tional medal for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United
23 States Code.

1 **SEC. 6. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

2 The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of
3 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,
4 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement
5 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this
6 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record
7 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-
8 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the
9 vote on passage.

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