

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4586

To provide for the issuance of a congressional gold medal to persons who, while members of the Armed Forces, participated in an activity resulting in risk of exposure to nuclear radiation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 16, 1998

Mr. REDMOND introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on National Security, 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 provide for the issuance of a congressional gold medal to persons who, while members of the Armed Forces, participated in an activity resulting in risk of exposure to nuclear radiation.

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 “Nuclear Veterans
5 Decoration Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL FOR VETERANS EXPOSED**
2 **TO NUCLEAR RADIATION WHILE MEMBERS**
3 **OF THE ARMED FORCES.**

4 (a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to
5 commemorate the sacrifices made and service rendered to
6 the United States by those veterans of the Armed Forces
7 of the United States who were exposed to nuclear radi-
8 ation while serving in the Armed Forces.

9 (b) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Speaker of the House of
11 Representatives and the President pro tempore of
12 the Senate are authorized jointly to present, on be-
13 half of the Congress, to persons certified by the Sec-
14 retary of Defense pursuant to subsection (e) a gold
15 medal commemorating the service of those persons
16 to the United States.

17 (2) ACCEPTANCE BY NEXT OF KIN.—The medal
18 may be accepted by the next of kin of any person
19 referred to in paragraph (1), on behalf of such per-
20 son, if the person is no longer living or is otherwise
21 unable to accept the medal.

22 (c) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—The Secretary of the
23 Treasury shall strike the gold medals authorized by sub-
24 section (b) with suitable emblems, devices, and inscrip-
25 tions to be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury.

26 (d) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—A person shall be eligible for
2 a gold medal under this section if the person, as a
3 member of the Armed Forces of the United States,
4 participated in a radiation-risk activity—

5 (A) while serving on active duty; or

6 (B) while performing active duty for train-
7 ing or inactive duty training.

8 (2) RADIATION-RISK ACTIVITY DEFINED.—For
9 purposes of this section, the term “radiation-risk ac-
10 tivity” means any of the following:

11 (A) On-site participation in a test involving
12 the atmospheric detonation of a nuclear device.

13 (B) The occupation by the armed forces of
14 Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, during the pe-
15 riod beginning on August 6, 1945, and ending
16 on July 1, 1946.

17 (C) Internment as a prisoner of war in
18 Japan (or service on active duty in Japan im-
19 mediately following such internment) during
20 World War II that (as determined by the Sec-
21 retary concerned) resulted in an opportunity for
22 exposure to ionizing radiation comparable to
23 that of persons described in subparagraph (B).

24 (D) Any other activity that, as determined
25 by the Secretary concerned, resulted in an op-

1 portunity for exposure to ionizing radiation
2 comparable to that of persons described in sub-
3 paragraph (A) or (B).

4 (3) ESTABLISHMENT OF ELIGIBILITY.—To es-
5 tablish the eligibility required by paragraph (1), a
6 person shall present to the Secretary of Defense an
7 application with such supporting documentation as
8 the person may have to support such person’s eligi-
9 bility or the eligibility of a next of kin.

10 (4) DETERMINATION BY SECRETARY.—The
11 Secretary of Defense shall determine, through the
12 documentation provided and, if necessary, independ-
13 ent investigation whether the person meets the cri-
14 teria prescribed in paragraph (1).

15 (e) CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary of Defense shall,
16 within 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act,
17 certify to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and
18 the President pro tempore of the Senate the names of per-
19 sons eligible to receive the medal.

20 (f) NEXT OF KIN.—If applications for a medal are
21 filed by more than 1 next of kin of a person eligible to
22 receive a medal under this section, the Secretary of De-
23 fense shall determine which next of kin will receive the
24 medal.

1 (g) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-
2 ant to this section are national medals for purposes of
3 chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

4 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
5 authorized to be appropriated such sum as may be nec-
6 essary to carry out this section.

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