

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 299

To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the birth of Thomas Alva Edison, to redesign the half dollar circulating coin for 1997 to commemorate Thomas Edison, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 11, 1997

Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. COVERDELL, and Mr. ABRAHAM) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

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## A BILL

To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the birth of Thomas Alva Edison, to redesign the half dollar circulating coin for 1997 to commemorate Thomas Edison, and for other purposes.

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 “Thomas Alva Edison  
5       Sesquicentennial Commemorative Coin Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds that—

3 (1) Thomas Alva Edison, one of America’s  
4 greatest inventors, was born on February 11, 1847,  
5 in Milan, Ohio;

6 (2) the inexhaustible energy and genius of  
7 Thomas A. Edison produced more than 1,300 inven-  
8 tions in his lifetime, including the incandescent light  
9 bulb and the phonograph;

10 (3) in 1928, Thomas A. Edison received the  
11 Congressional gold medal “for development and ap-  
12 plication of inventions that have revolutionized civili-  
13 zation in the last century”; and

14 (4) 1997 will mark the sesquicentennial of the  
15 birth of Thomas A. Edison.

16 **TITLE I—COMMEMORATIVE**  
17 **COINS**

18 **SEC. 101. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.**

19 (a) DENOMINATIONS.—In commemoration of the ses-  
20 quicentennial of the birth of Thomas A. Edison, the Sec-  
21 retary of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to  
22 as the “Secretary”) shall mint and issue—

23 (1) not more than 350,000 \$1 coins, each of  
24 which shall—

25 (A) weigh 26.73 grams;

26 (B) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and

1 (C) contain 90 percent silver and 10 per-  
 2 cent copper; and

3 (2) not more than 350,000 half dollar coins,  
 4 each of which shall—

5 (A) weigh 12.50 grams;

6 (B) have a diameter of 1.205 inches; and

7 (C) contain 90 percent silver and 10 per-  
 8 cent copper.

9 (b) **LEGAL TENDER.**—The coins minted under this  
 10 title shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of  
 11 title 31, United States Code.

12 (c) **NUMISMATIC ITEMS.**—For purposes of section  
 13 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted  
 14 under this title shall be considered to be numismatic items.

15 **SEC. 102. SOURCES OF BULLION.**

16 The Secretary shall obtain silver for minting coins  
 17 under this title only from stockpiles established under the  
 18 Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act.

19 **SEC. 103. DESIGN OF COINS.**

20 (a) **DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.**—

21 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The design of the coins  
 22 minted under this title shall be emblematic of the  
 23 many inventions made by Thomas A. Edison  
 24 throughout his prolific life.

1           (2) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On  
2           each coin minted under this title there shall be—

3                   (A) a designation of the value of the coin;

4                   (B) an inscription of the years “1847–  
5           1997”; and

6                   (C) inscriptions of the words “Liberty”,  
7           “In God We Trust”, “United States of Amer-  
8           ica”, and “E Pluribus Unum”.

9           (3) OBVERSE OF COIN.—The obverse of each  
10          coin minted under this title shall bear the likeness  
11          of Thomas A. Edison.

12          (b) DESIGN COMPETITION.—Before the end of the 3-  
13          month period beginning on the date of enactment of this  
14          Act, the Secretary shall conduct an open design competi-  
15          tion for the design of the obverse and the reverse of the  
16          coins minted under this title.

17          (c) SELECTION.—The design for the coins minted  
18          under this title shall be—

19                   (1) selected by the Secretary after consultation  
20                  with the Commission of Fine Arts; and

21                   (2) reviewed by the Citizens Commemorative  
22                  Coin Advisory Committee.

23   **SEC. 104. ISSUANCE OF COINS.**

24          (a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this  
25          title shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

1 (b) MINT FACILITY.—Only 1 facility of the United  
2 States Mint may be used to strike any particular quality  
3 of the coins minted under this title.

4 (c) COMMENCEMENT OF ISSUANCE.—The Secretary  
5 may issue coins minted under this title beginning on and  
6 after the date of enactment of this Act.

7 (d) TERMINATION OF MINTING AUTHORITY.—No  
8 coins may be minted under this title after July 31, 1998.

9 **SEC. 105. SALE OF COINS.**

10 (a) SALE PRICE.—The coins issued under this title  
11 shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum  
12 of—

13 (1) the face value of the coins;

14 (2) the surcharge provided in subsection (d)  
15 with respect to such coins; and

16 (3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins  
17 (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery,  
18 overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

19 (b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk  
20 sales of the coins issued under this title at a reasonable  
21 discount.

22 (c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept  
24 prepaid orders for the coins minted under this title  
25 before the issuance of such coins.

1           (2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to pre-  
 2       paid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a rea-  
 3       sonable discount.

4           (d) SURCHARGES.—All sales of coins minted under  
 5       this title shall include a surcharge of—

6           (1) \$14 per coin for the \$1 coin; and

7           (2) \$7 per coin for the half dollar coin.

8       **SEC. 106. GENERAL WAIVER OF PROCUREMENT**  
 9                               **REGULATIONS.**

10       (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection  
 11       (b), no provision of law governing procurement or public  
 12       contracts shall be applicable to the procurement of goods  
 13       and services necessary for carrying out this title.

14       (b) EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY.—Sub-  
 15       section (a) shall not relieve any person entering into a con-  
 16       tract under the authority of this title from complying with  
 17       any law relating to equal employment opportunity.

18       **SEC. 107. DISTRIBUTION OF SURCHARGES.**

19       (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 5134(f) of title  
 20       31, United States Code, the first \$7,000,000 of the sur-  
 21       charges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins  
 22       issued under this title shall be promptly paid by the Sec-  
 23       retary as follows:

24           (1) MUSEUM OF ARTS AND HISTORY.—Up to  $\frac{1}{7}$   
 25       to the Museum of Arts and History, in the city of

1 Port Huron, Michigan, for the endowment and con-  
 2 struction of a special museum on the life of Thomas  
 3 A. Edison in Port Huron.

4 (2) EDISON BIRTHPLACE ASSOCIATION.—Up to  
 5  $\frac{1}{7}$  to the Edison Birthplace Association, Incor-  
 6 porated, in Milan, Ohio, to assist in the efforts of  
 7 the association to raise an endowment as a perma-  
 8 nent source of support for the repair and mainte-  
 9 nance of the Thomas A. Edison birthplace, a na-  
 10 tional historic landmark.

11 (3) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.—Up to  $\frac{1}{7}$  to the  
 12 National Park Service, for use in protecting, restor-  
 13 ing, and cataloguing historic documents and objects  
 14 at the “invention factory” of Thomas A. Edison in  
 15 West Orange, New Jersey.

16 (4) EDISON PLAZA MUSEUM.—Up to  $\frac{1}{7}$  to the  
 17 Edison Plaza Museum in Beaumont, Texas, for ex-  
 18 panding educational programs on Thomas A. Edison  
 19 and for the repair and maintenance of the museum.

20 (5) EDISON WINTER HOME AND MUSEUM.—Up  
 21 to  $\frac{1}{7}$  to the Edison Winter Home and Museum in  
 22 Fort Myers, Florida, for historic preservation, res-  
 23 toration, and maintenance of the historic home and  
 24 chemical laboratory of Thomas A. Edison.

1           (6) EDISON INSTITUTE.—Up to  $\frac{1}{7}$  to the Edi-  
 2       son Institute, otherwise known as “Greenfield Vil-  
 3       lage”, in Dearborn, Michigan, for use in maintaining  
 4       and expanding displays and educational programs  
 5       associated with Thomas A. Edison.

6           (7) EDISON MEMORIAL TOWER.—Up to  $\frac{1}{7}$  to  
 7       the Edison Memorial Tower in Edison, New Jersey,  
 8       for the preservation, restoration, and expansion of  
 9       the tower and museum.

10       (b) EXCESS PAYABLE TO THE NATIONAL NUMIS-  
 11       MATIC COLLECTION.—After payment of the amounts re-  
 12       quired under subsection (a), the Secretary shall pay the  
 13       remaining surcharges to the National Museum of Amer-  
 14       ican History in Washington, D.C., for the support of the  
 15       National Numismatic Collection at the museum.

16       (c) AUDITS.—Each organization that receives any  
 17       payment from the Secretary under this section shall be  
 18       subject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of  
 19       title 31, United States Code.

20       **SEC. 108. FINANCIAL ASSURANCES.**

21       (a) NO NET COST TO THE GOVERNMENT.—The Sec-  
 22       retary shall take such actions as may be necessary to en-  
 23       sure that minting and issuing coins under this title will  
 24       not result in any net cost to the United States  
 25       Government.



1 (b) PAYMENT FOR COINS.—A coin shall not be issued  
 2 under this title unless the Secretary has received—

3 (1) full payment for the coin;

4 (2) security satisfactory to the Secretary to in-  
 5 demnify the United States for full payment; or

6 (3) a guarantee of full payment satisfactory to  
 7 the Secretary from a depository institution whose  
 8 deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insur-  
 9 ance Corporation or the National Credit Union Ad-  
 10 ministration Board.

## 11 **TITLE II—CIRCULATING COINS**

### 12 **SEC. 201. AUTHORITY TO REDESIGN HALF DOLLAR CIR-** 13 **CULATING COINS.**

14 Section 5112(d) of title 31, United States Code, is  
 15 amended by inserting after the 6th sentence the following:  
 16 “At the discretion of the Secretary, half dollar coins mint-  
 17 ed after December 31, 1996, and before July 31, 1998,  
 18 may bear the same design as the commemorative coins  
 19 minted under title I of the Thomas Alva Edison Sesqui-  
 20 centennial Commemorative Coin Act, as established under  
 21 section 103 of that Act.”.

