

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. J. RES. 51

Authorizing special awards to veterans of service as United States Navy
Armed Guards during World War I or World War II.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 6, 2000

Mrs. MURRAY introduced the following joint resolution; which was read twice
and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

JOINT RESOLUTION

Authorizing special awards to veterans of service as United
States Navy Armed Guards during World War I or
World War II.

Whereas the naval officers, gunners, radiomen, medics, and
radarmen in the crews of the American cargo ships of
World War II comprised the United States Navy Armed
Guard for those ships;

Whereas the various United States Navy Armed Guard de-
tachments comprised the United States Navy Armed
Guard Special Force, which grew during World War II
to a force of 144,970 personnel by the end of that war;

Whereas of the 6,236 merchant ships (including the 2,710 fa-
mous Liberty Ships) on which the United States Navy
Armed Guards served during World War I, 720 ships (in-

cluding 216 Liberty Ships) were sunk, and many more were damaged by enemy action;

Whereas of the members of the United States Navy Armed Guard Special Force serving during World War II, approximately 1,810 died and many more were wounded in the service of their country, a casualty rate that grimly rivals the casualty rate of any other defined force of the Armed Forces during World War II;

Whereas on April 4, 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a proclamation, “with each Commander in Chief to follow doing the same”, designating May 22, 1945, as National Maritime Day in honor of those who sailed the oceans and seas transporting supplies of every sort to peaceful nations and war-torn nations of the world;

Whereas the United States Navy Armed Guards sailed the oceans and seas on merchant ships to protect important cargo from capture or destruction by the enemy, many times while under heavy fire, and many times staying on their ships to continue to fight, as they were given orders to do, by firing their guns even until the decks of their ships were awash and sinking beneath the ocean waves;

Whereas great nations of the world that now are free because, at least in part, of the sacrifices of the United States Navy Armed Guards, and many of those nations have awarded special medals in recognition of the heroic actions of the members of the United States Navy Armed Guard Special Force;

Whereas the United States Government has failed to follow the lead of those great nations in recognizing the former members of the United States Navy Armed Guard Spe-

cial Force with a special medal that honors them as the American heroes that they are;

Whereas the United States Government has recognized the military character of the service of the United States Navy Armed Guards by awarding each of them at least one of the three World War II campaign medals for service in the American Theater, the Asiatic-Pacific Theater, and the Europe-Africa-Middle-East Theater;

Whereas the mariners who served as the United States Navy Armed Guards for United States cargo ships during World War I were equally dedicated, intrepid, and heroic, and are equally deserving of recognition with a special medal; and

Whereas the United States has not heretofore adequately recognized the heroism and sacrifices of the members of the United States Navy Armed Guard Special Force during either World War I or World War II: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. AWARDS FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED**
4 **STATES NAVY ARMED GUARD.**

5 The President is authorized and urged to award—

6 (1) to each person who served at sea as a mem-
7 ber of the United States Navy Armed Guard Special
8 Force during World War I or World War II a spe-
9 cial medal of a design appropriate for recognizing
10 service to the United States as a United States
11 Navy Armed Guard as being service in a special

1 force of the United States Navy, together with ac-
2 companying ribbons and appurtenances and a Presi-
3 dential Unit Citation; and

4 (2) to each person who served exclusively on
5 shore duty as a member of the United States Navy
6 Armed Guard Special Force during World War I or
7 World War II a special pin or badge of a design ap-
8 propriate for recognizing service in the United
9 States Navy Armed Guards Special Force as service
10 in a military organization of the United States
11 Navy.

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