

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2900

To authorize the President to posthumously award a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Elizabeth Wanamaker Peratrovich and Roy Peratrovich in recognition of their outstanding and enduring contributions to the civil rights and dignity of the Native peoples of Alaska and the Nation.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 6, 2004

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. INOUE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the President to posthumously award a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Elizabeth Wanamaker Peratrovich and Roy Peratrovich in recognition of their outstanding and enduring contributions to the civil rights and dignity of the Native peoples of Alaska and the Nation.

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. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) Elizabeth Wanamaker, a Tlingit Indian,
6 was born on July 4, 1911, in Petersburg, Alaska.

1 (2) Elizabeth married Roy Peratrovich, a
2 Tlingit Indian from Klawock Alaska, on December
3 15, 1931.

4 (3) In 1941, the couple moved to Juneau, Alas-
5 ka.

6 (4) Roy and Elizabeth Peratrovich discovered
7 that they could not purchase a home in the section
8 of Juneau in which they desired to live due to dis-
9 crimination against Alaska Natives.

10 (5) In the early 1940s, there were reports that
11 some businesses in Southeast Alaska posted signs
12 reading “No Natives Allowed”.

13 (6) Roy, as Grand President of the Alaska Na-
14 tive Brotherhood and Elizabeth, as Grand President
15 of the Alaska Native Sisterhood, petitioned the Ter-
16 ritorial Governor and the Territorial Legislature to
17 enact a law prohibiting discrimination against Alas-
18 ka Natives in public accommodations.

19 (7) Rebuffed by the Territorial Legislature in
20 1943, they again sought passage of an antidiscrimi-
21 nation law in 1945.

22 (8) On February 8, 1945, as the Alaska Terri-
23 torial Senate debated the anti-discrimination law,
24 Elizabeth, who was sitting in the visitor’s gallery of

1 the Senate, was recognized to present her views on
2 the measure.

3 (9) The eloquent and dignified testimony given
4 by Elizabeth that day is widely credited for passage
5 of the antidiscrimination law.

6 (10) On February 16, 1945, Territorial Gov-
7 ernor Ernest Gruening signed into law an act pro-
8 hibiting discrimination against all citizens within the
9 jurisdiction of the Territory of Alaska in access to
10 public accommodations and imposing a penalty on
11 any person who shall display any printed or written
12 sign indicating discrimination on racial grounds of
13 such full and equal enjoyment.

14 (11) Nineteen years before Congress enacted
15 the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and 18 years before
16 the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered
17 his “I have a Dream” speech, one of America’s first
18 antidiscrimination laws was enacted in the Territory
19 of Alaska, thanks to the efforts of Elizabeth and
20 Roy Peratrovich.

21 (12) Since 1989, the State of Alaska has ob-
22 served Elizabeth Peratrovich Day on February 16 of
23 each year and a visitor’s gallery of the Alaska House
24 of Representatives in the Alaska State Capitol has
25 been named for Elizabeth Peratrovich.

1 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

2 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The President is
3 authorized, on behalf of the Congress, to posthumously
4 award a gold medal of appropriate design to Elizabeth
5 Wanamaker Peratrovich and Roy Peratrovich, in recogni-
6 tion of their outstanding and enduring contributions to the
7 civil rights and dignity of the Native peoples of Alaska
8 and the Nation.

9 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purpose of the
10 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
11 of the Treasury (in this Act referred to as the “Sec-
12 retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems,
13 devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-
14 retary.

15 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

16 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
17 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 2
18 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe,
19 and at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, includ-
20 ing labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead
21 expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

22 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

23 The medals struck under this Act are national medals
24 for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

1 **SEC. 5. FUNDING.**

2 (a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**—There is
3 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
4 Public Enterprise Fund such sum as may be appropriated
5 to pay for the cost of the medals authorized by this Act.

6 (b) **PROCEEDS OF SALE.**—Amounts received from the
7 sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be
8 deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise
9 Fund.

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