

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5627

To award the congressional gold medal to Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, in recognition of his courageous and unwavering commitment to democracy and human rights in Cuba.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 13, 2008

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida (for himself, Mr. SIRES, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To award the congressional gold medal to Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, in recognition of his courageous and unwavering commitment to democracy and human rights in Cuba.

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 The Congress finds as follows:

5 (1) Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet was born on July
6 20, 1961 in Havana, Cuba.

7 (2) Dr. Biscet is married to fellow pro-democ-
8 racy leader, Elsa Morejón Hernandez.

1 (3) Dr. Biscet is currently serving a 25-year
2 prison sentence for allegedly committing crimes
3 against the Cuban regime.

4 (4) In 1997, Dr. Biscet founded the Lawton
5 Foundation for Human Rights to promote the study
6 and defense of human rights and to denounce
7 human rights violations inside Cuba and wherever
8 else they are violated.

9 (5) Dr. Biscet denounced the double standards
10 and discrimination against the Cuban people of the
11 Cuban National Health Care System, and as a re-
12 sult he was forbidden from practicing medicine.

13 (6) On November 3, 1999, Dr. Biscet was im-
14 prisoned for 3 years for organizing a peaceful pro-
15 democracy protest.

16 (7) Once released in 2002, and unable to prac-
17 tice medicine, Dr. Biscet organized seminars on the
18 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

19 (8) On December 6, 2002, on his way to one
20 such meeting, he and several of the seminar's par-
21 ticipants were beaten and arrested.

22 (9) On April 7, 2003, Dr. Biscet was sentenced
23 to 25 years in prison and sent to the Kilo Cinco y
24 Medio prison, in Pinar Del Rio province, and he has

1 subsequently been incarcerated in multiple prisons of
2 the Cuban dictatorship.

3 (10) Dr. Biscet has declared himself a
4 “plantado”, a political prisoner who refuses to un-
5 dertake ideological “reeducation” or wear a common
6 prisoner’s uniform, and he remains in Cuba’s polit-
7 ical gulag.

8 (11) On November 5, 2007, President Bush
9 recognized Dr. Biscet, presenting him (in absentia)
10 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, stating that
11 “Dr. Biscet is a champion in the fight against tyr-
12 anny and oppression. Despite being persecuted and
13 imprisoned for his beliefs, he continues to advocate
14 for a free Cuba in which the rights of all people are
15 respected.”.

16 (12) Dr. Biscet is a follower of the teachings of
17 Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. and
18 continues to work each day from his jail cell to bring
19 democracy and the rule of law to Cuba.

20 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

21 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
22 the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem-
23 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
24 for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold
25 medal of appropriate design, to Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet in

1 recognition of his courageous and unwavering commitment
2 to democracy and human rights in Cuba.

3 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the
4 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
5 of the Treasury (hereafter referred to in this Act as the
6 “Secretary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable em-
7 blems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the
8 Secretary.

9 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

10 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
11 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 2
12 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at
13 a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,
14 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses,
15 and the cost of the gold medal.

16 **SEC. 4. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

17 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-
18 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter
19 51 of title 31, United States Code.

20 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections
21 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals
22 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic
23 items.

1 **SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
2 **SALE.**

3 (a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**—There is
4 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
5 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
6 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck pursuant
7 to this Act.

8 (b) **PROCEEDS OF SALE.**—Amounts received from the
9 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section
10 3 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public
11 Enterprise Fund.

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