

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2598

To grant a congressional gold medal to American military personnel who fought in defense of Bataan/Corregidor/Luzon between December 7, 1941 and May 6, 1942.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2009

Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. MASSA, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. REYES, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. TEAGUE, Ms. KOSMAS, Mr. HARE, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. HONDA, Mr. CONAWAY, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, 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 grant a congressional gold medal to American military personnel who fought in defense of Bataan/Corregidor/Luzon between December 7, 1941 and May 6, 1942.

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 makes the following findings:

1 (1) On December 7, 1941, Japanese forces at-
2 tacked Clark Field, Luzon, Philippines Islands.

3 (2) By May 6, 1942, military personnel from
4 the United States and the Philippines had bravely
5 and staunchly fought off enemy attacks for more
6 than 5 months under strenuous conditions that re-
7 sulted in starvation and disease.

8 (3) By maintaining their position and engaging
9 the enemy for as long as they did, the soldiers at
10 Bataan were able to redefine the momentum of the
11 war and provide other United States and Allied
12 forces throughout the Pacific with time to plan and
13 prepare for subsequent crucial battles.

14 (4) On April 9, 1942, then-Brigadier General
15 Edward King surrendered the combined forces of
16 the United States and the Philippines on the Bataan
17 Peninsula into enemy hands.

18 (5) Over the next week, the soldiers from the
19 United States and the Philippines were taken pris-
20 oner and forced to march 65 miles without any food,
21 water, or medical care in what came to be know as
22 the Bataan Death March.

23 (6) During this forced march, thousands of sol-
24 diers died, either from starvation, lack of medical
25 care, sheer exhaustion, or abuse by their captors.

1 (7) Within the first 40 days at Camp
2 O'Donnell, 1,600 more prisoners from the United
3 States died.

4 (8) On May 6, 1942, then-Lieutenant General
5 Jonathan M. Wainwright surrendered the island for-
6 tress of Corregidor and its fortified islands into
7 enemy hands.

8 (9) Over the next 10 days, prisoners from Cor-
9 regidor were held in the open, exposed to the ele-
10 ments with little or no food or water.

11 (10) They were subsequently transported to the
12 old Bilibid Prison in Manila and held several more
13 days until they were loaded into cattle rail cars for
14 transport, followed by a forced march of over 20
15 miles to Cabanatuan.

16 (11) The conditions at the camp were sub-
17 standard, leading to increased disease and malnutri-
18 tion among the prisoners.

19 (12) On June 6, 1942, United States prisoners
20 were transferred from Camp O'Donnell to Caba-
21 natuan.

22 (13) In July 1942, all Filipino prisoners were
23 paroled.

1 (14) The prisoners who remained in the camps
2 suffered from continued mistreatment, malnutrition,
3 lack of medical care, and horrific conditions.

4 (15) In 1945, all prisoners were liberated.

5 (16) Over the subsequent decades, these pris-
6 oners formed support groups, were honored in local
7 and State memorials, and told their story to all peo-
8 ple of the United States.

9 (17) Many of these soldiers have now passed
10 away, and those who remain continue to tell their
11 story.

12 (18) The people of the United States are for-
13 ever indebted to these men for—

14 (A) the courage they demonstrated during
15 the first 5 months of World War II in fighting
16 against enemy soldiers; and

17 (B) the perseverance they demonstrated
18 during 3 1/2 years of capture, imprisonment,
19 and atrocious conditions, while maintaining dig-
20 nity, honor, patriotism, and loyalty.

21 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

22 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
23 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
24 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
25 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal

1 of appropriate design in honor of the soldiers from the
2 United States who were prisoners of war at Bataan/Cor-
3 regidor/Luzon, collectively, in recognition of their personal
4 sacrifice and service to their country.

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

10 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
12 gold medal in honor of the prisoners of war at Ba-
13 taan/Corregidor/Luzon under subsection (a), the
14 gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Insti-
15 tution, where it shall be displayed as appropriate
16 and made available for research.

17 (2) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.—It is the sense
18 of the Congress that the Smithsonian Institution
19 should make the gold medal received under para-
20 graph (1) available for display at other locations,
21 particularly such locations as are associated with
22 those who fought in defense of Bataan/Corregidor/
23 Luzon and the prisoners of war.

1 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

2 (a) STRIKING OF DUPLICATES.—Under such regula-
3 tions as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may
4 strike duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under
5 section 2.

6 (b) SELLING OF DUPLICATES.—The Secretary may
7 sell such duplicates under subsection (a) at a price suffi-
8 cient to cover the costs of such duplicates, including labor,
9 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

10 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

11 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are National med-
12 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
13 Code.

14 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; PROCEEDS**
15 **OF SALE.**

16 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
17 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
18 Public Enterprise Fund, an amount not to exceed \$30,000
19 to pay for the cost of the medal authorized under section
20 2.

21 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
22 sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be
23 deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise
24 Fund.

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