

111TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 304

To award a congressional gold medal to Joseph Barnett Kirsner, M.D.,  
Ph.D., in recognition of his many outstanding contributions to the Nation.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 8, 2009

Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. CAPUANO) introduced the following bill; which  
was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

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## A BILL

To award a congressional gold medal to Joseph Barnett  
Kirsner, M.D., Ph.D., in recognition of his many out-  
standing contributions to 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       The Congress finds as follows:

5               (1) Dr. Joseph B. Kirsner was born in Boston  
6       in 1909 to poor Ukrainian immigrants.

7               (2) Dr. Kirsner earned his medical degree from  
8       Tufts University, graduating near the top of his  
9       class, in 1933.

1           (3) In 1935, Dr. Kirsner joined the staff of the  
2           first academic gastroenterology unit in the United  
3           States at the University of Chicago.

4           (4) Dr. Kirsner earned his Ph.D. in gastro-  
5           enterology from the University of Chicago in 1942.

6           (5) Dr. Kirsner conducted invaluable research  
7           on peptic ulcers, inflammatory bowel disease, colitis  
8           and Crohn's disease, making numerous break-  
9           throughs in the field on patient management and  
10          cancer risk.

11          (6) In more than 60 years of teaching, Dr.  
12          Kirsner trained more than 200 of the field's leading  
13          specialists, including more than 41 full professors  
14          and 14 department chairs.

15          (7) Dr. Kirsner authored nearly 700 publica-  
16          tions and 15 textbooks which are the leading teach-  
17          ing materials on gastroenterology.

18          (8) Dr. Kirsner helped found several profes-  
19          sional societies, including the American Society for  
20          Gastrointestinal Endoscopy and the American Asso-  
21          ciation for the Study of Liver Diseases.

22          (9) Dr. Kirsner was unrelenting in raising  
23          funds for gastrointestinal programs around the  
24          country, leading to creation of the General Medicine

1 Study Section of the National Institutes of Arthritis,  
2 Metabolic, and Digestive Diseases.

3 (10) In 1962, a group of Dr. Kirsner's patients  
4 established the Gastro-Intestinal Research Founda-  
5 tion, which provided immense support for research  
6 at the University of Chicago.

7 (11) In 1984, the Gastro-Intestinal Research  
8 Foundation raised more than \$2,000,000 to con-  
9 struct the 17,000 square-foot Joseph B. Kirsner  
10 Center for the Study of Digestive Diseases.

11 (12) Dr. Kirsner received every major award  
12 the field of gastroenterology has to offer, except the  
13 one he was not eligible to win: American Digestive  
14 Health Foundation's top prize for excellence in clin-  
15 ical research, the Joseph B. Kirsner Award.

16 (13) Aside from his military service in World  
17 War II, Dr. Kirsner has practiced medicine, con-  
18 ducted research, and educated young doctors for  
19 more than 70 years straight.

20 (14) To this day, Dr. Kirsner remains active in  
21 medicine, still seeing the patients he cares so much  
22 for.

23 (15) The Congress has awarded similar medals  
24 to other doctors for their outstanding contributions  
25 to the medical field, including Major Walter Reed

1       and his associates in 1928, Dr. Thomas Anthony  
2       Dooley III in 1961, Dr. Jonas E. Salk in 1977, and  
3       Dr. Ellis DeBakey in 2007.

4   **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

5       (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of  
6   the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem-  
7   pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements  
8   for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold  
9   medal of appropriate design, to Joseph Barnett Kirsner,  
10  M.D., Ph.D., in recognition of his many outstanding con-  
11  tributions to the Nation.

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

18  **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

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

1 **SEC. 4. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

2 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-  
3 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter  
4 51 of title 31, United States Code.

5 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections  
6 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals  
7 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic  
8 items.

9 **SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**  
10 **SALE.**

11 (a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is  
12 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint  
13 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-  
14 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck pursuant  
15 to this Act.

16 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the  
17 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section  
18 3 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public  
19 Enterprise Fund.

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