

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3927

To grant the congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 26, 2009

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida (for herself, Mr. FILNER, Mr. BUYER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. JONES, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. PAYNE, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SNYDER, and Mr. MICHAUD) 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 the congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines.

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) On June 25, 1941, President Franklin D.
6 Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802 estab-
7 lishing the Fair Employment Practices Commission

1 and opening the doors for the very first African-
2 Americans to enlist in the United States Marine
3 Corps.

4 (2) The first Black Marine recruits were
5 trained at Camp Montford Point, near the New
6 River in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

7 (3) On August 26, 1942, Howard P. Perry of
8 Charlotte, North Carolina, was the first Black pri-
9 vate to set foot on Montford Point.

10 (4) During April 1943 the first African-Amer-
11 ican Marine Drill Instructors took over as the senior
12 Drill Instructors of the eight platoons then in train-
13 ing; the 16th Platoon (Edgar R. Huff), 17th (Thom-
14 as Brokaw), 18th (Charles E. Allen), 19th (Gilbert
15 H. Johnson), 20th (Arnold R. Bostic), 21st
16 (Mortimer A. Cox), 22nd (Edgar R. Davis, Jr.), and
17 23rd (George A. Jackson).

18 (5) Black Marines of the 8th Ammunition Com-
19 pany and the 36th Depot Company landed on the is-
20 land of Iwo Jima on D-day, February 19, 1945.

21 (6) The largest number of Black Marines to
22 serve in combat during World War II took part in
23 the seizure of Okinawa in the Ryuku Islands with
24 some 2,000 Black Marines seeing action during the
25 campaign.

1 (7) On November 10, 1945, the first African-
2 American Marine, Frederick C. Branch, was com-
3 missioned as a second lieutenant at the Marine
4 Corps Base in Quantico, Virginia.

5 (8) Overall 19,168 Blacks served in the Marine
6 Corps in World War II.

7 (9) An enterprising group of men, including
8 original Montford Pointer Master Sergeant Brooks
9 E. Gray, planned a reunion of the Men of Montford
10 Point, and on September 15, 1965, approximately
11 400 Montford Point Marines gathered at the
12 Adelphi Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to lay
13 the foundation for the Montford Point Marine Asso-
14 ciation Inc., 16 years after the closure of Montford
15 Point as a training facility for Black recruits.

16 (10) Organized as a non-military, nonprofit en-
17 tity, the Montford Point Marine Association's main
18 mission is to preserve the legacy of the first Black
19 Marines.

20 (11) Today the Montford Point Marine Associa-
21 tion has 36 chapters throughout the United States.

22 (12) Many of these first Black Marines stayed
23 in the Marine Corps like Sergeant Major Edgar R.
24 Huff.

1 (13) Sergeant Major Huff was one of the very
2 first recruits aboard Montford Point.

3 (14) Sergeant Major Huff was also the first Af-
4 rican-American Sergeant Major and the first Afri-
5 can-American Marine to retire with 30 years of serv-
6 ice which included combat in three major wars,
7 World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam
8 War.

9 (15) During the Tet Offensive, Sergeant Major
10 Huff was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with com-
11 bat “V” for valor for saving the life of his radio op-
12 erator.

13 (16) Another original Montford Pointer who
14 saw extensive combat action in both the Korean War
15 and the Vietnam War was Sergeant Major Louis
16 Roundtree.

17 (17) Sergeant Major Roundtree was awarded
18 the Silver Star Medal, four Bronze Star Medals,
19 three Purple Hearts, and numerous other personal
20 and unit awards for his service during these con-
21 flicts.

22 (18) On April 19, 1974, Montford Point was
23 renamed Camp Johnson after legendary Montford
24 Pointer Sergeant Major Gilbert “Hashmark” John-
25 son.

1 (19) The Montford Point Marine Association
2 has several memorials in place to perpetuate the
3 memory of the first African-American Marines and
4 their accomplishments, including—

5 (A) the Montford Point Marine Association
6 Edgar R. Huff Memorial Scholarship which is
7 offered annually through the Marine Corps
8 Scholarship Foundation;

9 (B) the Montford Point Museum located
10 aboard Camp Johnson (Montford Point) in
11 Jacksonville, North Carolina;

12 (C) the Brooks Elbert Gray, Jr. Consoli-
13 dated Academic Instruction Facility named in
14 honor of original Montford Pointer and the
15 Montford Point Marine Corps Association
16 founder Master Gunnery Sergeant Gray. This
17 facility was dedicated on 15 April 2005 aboard
18 Camp Johnson, North Carolina; and

19 (D) during July of 1997 Branch Hall, a
20 building within the Officers Candidate School in
21 Quantico, Virginia, was named in honor of Cap-
22 tain Frederick Branch.

23 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

24 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
25 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore

1 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
2 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal
3 of appropriate design in honor of the Montford Point Ma-
4 rines, collectively, in recognition of their personal sacrifice
5 and service to their country.

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

12 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
14 gold medal in honor of the Montford Point Marines
15 under subsection (a), the gold medal shall be given
16 to the Smithsonian Institution, where it will be dis-
17 played as appropriate and made available for re-
18 search.

19 (2) SENSE.—It is the sense of the Congress
20 that the Smithsonian Institution should make the
21 gold medal received under paragraph (1) available
22 for display elsewhere, particularly at other appro-
23 priate locations associated with the Montford Point
24 Marines.

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

2 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
3 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
4 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2, at a price
5 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
6 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

7 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

8 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are National med-
9 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
10 Code.

11 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; PROCEEDS**
12 **OF SALE.**

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

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

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