

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2441

To award a Congressional gold medal, collectively, to the 1st American Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force, also known as the AVG Flying Tigers, in recognition of their service to the nation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 19, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri 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 award a Congressional gold medal, collectively, to the 1st American Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force, also known as the AVG Flying Tigers, in recognition of their service 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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “AVG Flying Tigers
5 Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) In April 1937, Claire L. Chennault, a re-
2 tired Army Air Corps Captain was working as a
3 military advisor to Chinese General Chiang Kai-shek
4 during the Sino-Japanese War.

5 (2) After President Roosevelt approved of
6 Chennault's request for a special air unit, Chennault
7 spent the winter of 1940–41 overseeing the purchase
8 of P-40 fighters and the recruitment of pilots and
9 ground crew that would constitute the 1st American
10 Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force, also
11 known as the AVG Flying Tigers.

12 (3) Of these pilots, 60 came from the Navy and
13 Marine Corps, and 40 from the Army, and they were
14 discharged from the armed services to be trained
15 and instructed for the mission.

16 (4) By 1942, after being organized and in part
17 directed out of the White House, the AVG Flying
18 Tigers had effectively been brought into the U.S.
19 Army chain of command.

20 (5) The AVG Flying Tigers successfully kept
21 the port of Rangoon and the Burma Road open for
22 a crucial stretch of time to allow Allied forces to re-
23 inforce the Pacific theater, which was dominated by
24 the Imperial Japanese Army Air Force.

1 (6) The AVG Flying Tigers' kill ratio was far
2 superior to that of Allied air groups in the Pacific
3 theater.

4 (7) The AVG Flying Tigers' success is remark-
5 able considering they were far outnumbered by Jap-
6 anese fighters in almost all their engagements.

7 (8) During their service, 33 AVG Flying Tigers
8 pilots and three ground crew received the Order of
9 the Cloud and Banner.

10 (9) Many AVG Flying Tigers pilots received the
11 Chinese Air Force Medal.

12 (10) Each AVG Flying Tigers ace and double
13 ace was awarded the Five Star or Ten Star Wing
14 Medal.

15 (11) President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated
16 that the AVG Flying Tigers' "outstanding gallantry
17 and conspicuous daring . . . is a source of tremen-
18 dous pride throughout the whole of America".

19 (12) The AVG Flying Tigers were disbanded on
20 July 4, 1942.

21 **SEC. 3. 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 to the 1st American Volunteer
2 Group of the Chinese Air Force, also known as the AVG
3 Flying Tigers, collectively in recognition of their service
4 to the nation.

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

11 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
13 gold medal in honor of the AVG Flying Tigers under
14 subsection (a), the gold medal shall be given to the
15 Smithsonian Institution, where it will be displayed
16 as appropriate and made available for research.

17 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
18 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
19 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
20 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
21 appropriate locations associated with the AVG Fly-
22 ing Tigers.

23 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

24 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
25 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in

1 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price
2 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
3 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

4 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

5 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck pursuant to
6 this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51
7 of title 31, United States Code.

8 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section
9 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck
10 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

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