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2D SESSION

S. 1757

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 9, 2020

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

AN ACT

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II in recognition of their extraordinary service during World War II.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “United States Army
3 Rangers Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold
4 Medal Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

6 In this Act—

7 (1) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
8 of the Treasury; and

9 (2) the term “United States Army Rangers
10 Veteran of World War II” means any individual
11 who—

12 (A) served in the Armed Forces—

13 (i) honorably;

14 (ii) in an active duty status; and

15 (iii) at any time during the period be-
16 ginning on June 19, 1942, and ending on
17 September 2, 1945; and

18 (B) was assigned to a Ranger Battalion of
19 the Army at any time during the period de-
20 scribed in subparagraph (A)(iii).

21 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

22 Congress finds the following:

23 (1) In World War II, the Army formed 6 Rang-
24 er Battalions and 1 provisional battalion. All mem-
25 bers of the Ranger Battalions were volunteers. The
26 initial concept of Ranger units drew from the British

1 method of using highly trained “commando” units
2 and the military tradition of the United States of
3 utilizing light infantry for scouting and raiding oper-
4 ations.

5 (2) The Ranger Battalions of World War II
6 consisted of—

7 (A) the 1st Ranger Infantry Battalion,
8 which was activated on June 19, 1942, in
9 Northern Ireland;

10 (B) the 2d Ranger Infantry Battalion,
11 which was activated on April 1, 1943, at Camp
12 Forrest, Tennessee;

13 (C) the 3d Ranger Infantry Battalion,
14 which was—

15 (i) activated as provisional on May 21,
16 1943, in North Africa; and

17 (ii) constituted on July 21, 1943, and
18 concurrently consolidated with the provi-
19 sional unit described in clause (i);

20 (D) the 4th Ranger Infantry Battalion,
21 which was—

22 (i) activated as provisional on May 29,
23 1943, in North Africa; and

1 (ii) constituted on July 21, 1943, and
2 concurrently consolidated with the provi-
3 sional unit described in clause (i);

4 (E) the 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion,
5 which was activated on September 1, 1943, at
6 Camp Forrest, Tennessee;

7 (F) the 6th Ranger Infantry Battalion,
8 which was—

9 (i) originally activated on January 20,
10 1941, at Fort Lewis, Washington, as the
11 98th Field Artillery Battalion; and

12 (ii) converted and redesignated on
13 September 26, 1944, as the 6th Ranger
14 Infantry Battalion; and

15 (G) the 29th Ranger Infantry Battalion, a
16 provisional Army National Guard unit that
17 was—

18 (i) activated on December 20, 1942,
19 at Tidworth Barracks, England; and

20 (ii) disbanded on October 18, 1943.

21 (3) The first combat operations of Army Rang-
22 ers occurred on August 19, 1942, when 50 Rangers
23 took part in the British-Canadian raid on the
24 French coastal town of Dieppe.

1 (4) The 1st Ranger Battalion, under the leader-
2 ship of Major William O. Darby, was used in full
3 strength during the landings at Arsew, Algeria, dur-
4 ing the North African campaign. Due to the success
5 of the Rangers in several difficult battles, particu-
6 larly at El Guettar in March and April of 1943, 2
7 additional Ranger Battalions were organized in
8 North Africa.

9 (5) During the North African campaign, the 1st
10 Ranger Battalion was awarded battle honors for its
11 actions in Tunisia. On March 20, 1943, the Bat-
12 talion penetrated enemy lines and captured the posi-
13 tion Djebel el Ank in a nighttime attack, taking
14 more than 200 prisoners. Three days later, the bat-
15 talion was attacked by the 10th Panzer division of
16 the German Afrika Korps and, despite heavy losses,
17 defended its position and inflicted considerable losses
18 on the enemy. This engagement constituted what
19 General Omar Bradley labeled “the first solid, indis-
20 putable defeat we inflicted on the German army in
21 the war”. These actions demonstrated the ability of
22 the Rangers to fight in difficult terrain and the
23 courage to endure despite being outnumbered and
24 exposed to heavy enemy fire.

1 (6) The 29th provisional Ranger Battalion was
2 formed from volunteers drawn from the 29th Infan-
3 try Division stationed in England in the fall of 1942.
4 The Battalion was activated on December 20, 1942,
5 and accompanied British commandos on 3 small-
6 scale raids in Norway. Nineteen members of the
7 29th Ranger Battalion conducted a raid on a Ger-
8 man radar site in France on the night of September
9 3, 1943. After that raid, the 29th Ranger Battalion
10 was disbanded because new Ranger units, the 2d
11 and 5th Battalions, were being formed.

12 (7) During the summer and fall of 1943, the
13 1st, 3d, and 4th Ranger Battalions were heavily in-
14 volved in the campaign in Sicily and the landings in
15 Italy. The 1st and 4th Ranger Battalions conducted
16 a night amphibious landing in Sicily and secured the
17 landing beaches for the main force. The 3d Bat-
18 talion landed separately at Licata, Sicily, and was
19 able to silence gun positions on an 82-foot cliff over-
20 looking the invasion beaches.

21 (8) During the invasion of Italy, the 1st, 3d,
22 and 4th Ranger Battalions landed at Maiori with the
23 mission of seizing the high ground and protecting
24 the flank of the remainder of the main landing by
25 the United States. Despite suffering from low am-

1 munition and inadequate provisions and water, the
2 Rangers fended off numerous enemy counterattacks
3 against the mountain passes and via radio directed
4 naval gunfire on the enemy forces approaching the
5 beaches below.

6 (9) After the invasion of Italy, Rangers contin-
7 ued to be used, often in night attacks, to seize key
8 terrain ahead of the advancing Allied forces. At the
9 Anzio beachhead, the majority of the 1st, 3d, and
10 4th Ranger Battalions sustained heavy casualties
11 after being cut off behind German lines. The Rang-
12 ers had planned to infiltrate German positions under
13 the cover of darkness and make a dawn attack on
14 a critical road junction but were pinned down by
15 enemy tanks and an elite German paratrooper unit.
16 After 12 hours of desperate fighting and a failed re-
17 lief attempt, the majority of the Ranger force was
18 killed, wounded, or captured. Only 6 Rangers from
19 the 1st and 3d Battalions, out of more than 767
20 men, returned to friendly lines. The 4th Battalion,
21 which had been in reserve, also suffered 60 killed
22 and 120 wounded out of 550 men. These 3 battal-
23 ions were inactivated and the survivors were trans-
24 ferred to other units.

1 (10) In the United States, and later in Scot-
2 land, the 2d and 5th Ranger Battalions were formed
3 to undertake operations in Western Europe. Those
4 Battalions were engaged on D-Day, assaulting Ger-
5 man positions at the Pointe du Hoc coastal battery,
6 and remained in combat through September of
7 1944. Specifically, Rangers in the 2d Battalion,
8 under the command of Lieutenant Colonel James E.
9 Rudder—

10 (A) overcame mines, machine gun fire, and
11 enemy artillery while scaling the 100-foot high
12 cliffs at Pointe du Hoc;

13 (B) held against intense German efforts to
14 retake the position; and

15 (C) after reaching the top of the cliffs,
16 moved inland roughly 1 mile and sustained
17 heavy casualties while searching for, and ulti-
18 mately destroying, a German heavy artillery
19 battery.

20 (11) During June, July, and August of 1944,
21 the 2d and 5th Ranger Battalions were engaged in
22 the campaign in Brest, which included close-range
23 fighting in hedgerows and numerous villages. Later,
24 in operations in Western Germany, the Battalions
25 were frequently used to attack in darkness and gain

1 vital positions to pave the way for the main Army
2 attacks.

3 (12) During the final drive into Germany in
4 late February and early March 1945, the 5th Rang-
5 er Battalion was cited for battle honors for out-
6 standing performance. Under the cover of darkness
7 the unit drove into German lines and secured the ob-
8 jective area blocking the main German supply route.
9 The Germans attacked the position of the Rangers
10 from both sides, resulting in heavy Ranger casualties
11 during 5 days of fighting. As a result of the actions
12 of the Rangers, the main Army attack was able to
13 overcome German defenses more easily, occupy the
14 vital city of Trier, and reach the Rhine River.

15 (13) The 6th Ranger Battalion operated in the
16 Pacific. In the most notable exploit of the 6th Rang-
17 er Battalion, in January and February of 1945, the
18 Battalion formed the nucleus of a rescue force that
19 liberated more than 500 Allied prisoners, including
20 prisoners from the United States, from the Caba-
21 natuan prisoner of war camp in the Philippines.
22 With the help of local Filipino guerillas, the Rang-
23 ers, led by Lieutenant Colonel Henry A. Mucci, dem-
24 onstrated extraordinary heroism by infiltrating Jap-
25 anese-held territory to reach the prisoners of war

1 and prevent them from being killed by the Japanese.
2 After a 25-mile march at night through the jungle,
3 the unit killed all Japanese sentries with no loss of
4 life of the prisoners of war. The unit successfully re-
5 turned to American lines having lost only 2 soldiers
6 killed and having another 2 wounded.

7 (14) The 1st Ranger Infantry Battalion—

8 (A) participated in the campaigns of—

9 (i) Algeria-French Morocco (with ar-
10 rowhead);

11 (ii) Tunisia;

12 (iii) Sicily (with arrowhead);

13 (iv) Naples-Foggia (with arrowhead);

14 (v) Anzio (with arrowhead); and

15 (vi) Rome-Arno; and

16 (B) for its contributions, received—

17 (i) the Presidential Unit Citation
18 (Army) and streamer embroidered with
19 “EL GUETTAR”; and

20 (ii) the Presidential Unit Citation
21 (Army) and streamer embroidered with
22 “SALERNO”.

23 (15) The 2d Ranger Infantry Battalion—

24 (A) participated in the campaigns of—

25 (i) Normandy (with arrowhead);

- 1 (ii) Northern France;
- 2 (iii) Rhineland;
- 3 (iv) Ardennes-Alsace; and
- 4 (v) Central Europe; and

5 (B) for its contributions, received—

- 6 (i) the Presidential Unit Citation
- 7 (Army) and streamer embroidered with
- 8 “POINTE DU HOE”; and

- 9 (ii) the French Croix de Guerre with
- 10 Silver-Gilt Star, World War II, and
- 11 streamer embroidered with “POINTE DU
- 12 HOE”.

13 (16) The 3d Ranger Infantry Battalion—

14 (A) participated in the campaigns of—

- 15 (i) Sicily (with arrowhead);
- 16 (ii) Naples-Foggia (with arrowhead);
- 17 (iii) Anzio (with arrowhead); and
- 18 (iv) Rome-Arno; and

19 (B) for its contributions, received the Pres-
20 idential Unit Citation (Army) and streamer em-
21 broidered with “SALERNO”.

22 (17) The 4th Ranger Infantry Battalion—

23 (A) participated in the campaigns of—

- 24 (i) Sicily (with arrowhead);
- 25 (ii) Naples-Foggia (with arrowhead);

1 (iii) Anzio (with arrowhead); and

2 (iv) Rome-Arno; and

3 (B) for its contributions, received the Pres-
4 idential Unit Citation (Army) and streamer em-
5 broidered with “SALERNO”.

6 (18) The 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion—

7 (A) participated in the campaigns of—

8 (i) Normandy (with arrowhead);

9 (ii) Northern France;

10 (iii) Rhineland;

11 (iv) Ardennes-Alsace; and

12 (v) Central Europe; and

13 (B) for its contributions, received—

14 (i) the Presidential Unit Citation
15 (Army) and streamer embroidered with
16 “NORMANDY BEACHHEAD”;

17 (ii) the Presidential Unit Citation
18 (Army) and streamer embroidered with
19 “SAAR RIVER AREA”; and

20 (iii) the French Croix de Guerre with
21 Silver-Gilt Star, World War II, and
22 streamer embroidered with “NOR-
23 MANDY”.

24 (19) The 6th Ranger Infantry Battalion—

25 (A) participated in the campaigns of—

1 (i) New Guinea;

2 (ii) Leyte (with arrowhead); and

3 (iii) Luzon; and

4 (B) for its contributions, received—

5 (i) the Presidential Unit Citation

6 (Army) and streamer embroidered with

7 “CABU, LUZON”; and

8 (ii) the Philippine Presidential Unit

9 Citation and streamer embroidered with

10 “17 OCTOBER 1944 TO 4 JULY 1945”.

11 (20) The United States will be forever indebted

12 to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of

13 World War II, whose bravery and sacrifice in com-

14 bat contributed greatly to the military success of the

15 United States and the allies of the United States.

16 **SEC. 4. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

17 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The President pro tem-

18 pore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Rep-

19 resentatives shall make appropriate arrangements for the

20 award, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of

21 appropriate design to the United States Army Rangers

22 Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedi-

23 cated service during World War II.

24 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the

25 award described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall

1 strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and
2 inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

3 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
5 gold medal in honor of the United States Army
6 Rangers Veterans of World War II, the gold medal
7 shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution, where
8 the medal shall be—

9 (A) available for display, as appropriate;

10 and

11 (B) made available for research.

12 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
13 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
14 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
15 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
16 locations associated with—

17 (A) the United States Army Rangers Vet-
18 erans of World War II; or

19 (B) World War II.

20 (d) DUPLICATE MEDALS.—Under regulations that
21 the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may strike and
22 sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under
23 this section, at a price sufficient to cover the cost of the
24 medals, including the cost of labor, materials, dies, use
25 of machinery, and overhead expenses.

1 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDAL.**

2 (a) NATIONAL MEDAL.—The gold medal struck
3 under section 4 shall be a national medal for the purposes
4 of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

5 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For the purposes of sec-
6 tion 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals
7 struck under section 4 shall be considered to be numis-
8 matic items.

Passed the Senate March 5, 2020.

Attest:

JULIE E. ADAMS,
Secretary.