

Mr. SERRANO. I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 6282. This legislation will rename the Morris Heights Post Office in the Bronx, New York, in my district, after a legend. Dr. Roscoe Brown was a giant among men and a revered figure in the Bronx, New York City, and the Nation.

□ 1645

I had the privilege of knowing Dr. Brown for decades and considered him a dear friend. He faced the horrors of segregation early in his life, but he never let that stop him from achieving what he wanted and set out to do.

Dr. Brown was a fearless Tuskegee Airman during World War II, conducting some 68 missions and becoming one of the first fighters to shoot down a German fighter jet. The heroism he displayed paved the way for the desegregation of the Armed Forces and, decades later, earned him and his fellow airmen a Congressional Gold Medal.

After the war, he went on to further his studies at New York University, where he eventually served as a professor and an academic of the highest caliber. For 17 years, Dr. Brown served as president of Bronx Community College, which is located in my district, leading an institution that gave hope of a better life through education to a predominantly minority and nontraditional student population.

Throughout his life, Dr. Brown was a quiet, yet fierce advocate and leader that many turned to during the racial discord that plagued the city of New York in the sixties and seventies. His activism in the civil rights movement led him to start 100 Black Men, a civic organization devoted to improving the treatment of African Americans in New York.

Dr. Brown was also an avid runner and participated in nine New York City Marathons. During his tenure at Bronx Community College, he established the Annual Hall of Fame 5K and 10K races to help benefit the school. His invitation to participate in one of those races inspired me to start running myself, and I have now run that particular race for more than 30 years.

While his accomplishments and contributions are far too numerous to list, it is fair to say that Dr. Brown left the world around him in a much better place than which he found it. He was a unique individual with a great smile, a great sense of humor, and a great sense of history. Above all, he was a coalition builder. No one was too far for him to speak to or to bring close to him.

We will miss him, and I know that he is looking on us today. This is a small but very important tribute for a great man, Dr. Roscoe Brown.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6282.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MERCHANT MARINE OF WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2992) to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the U.S. Merchant Marine of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2992

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Merchant Marine of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the Allied victory in World War II and the restoration of peacetime across the European and Pacific theaters.

(2) The United States Merchant Marine was integral in providing the link between domestic production and the fighting forces overseas, providing combat equipment, fuel, food, commodities, and raw materials to troops stationed overseas.

(3) Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King acknowledged the indispensability of the Merchant Marine to the victory in a 1945 letter stating that without their support, “the Navy could not have accomplished its mission”.

(4) President and former Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, Dwight D. Eisenhower, acknowledged that “through the prompt delivery of supplies and equipment to our armed forces overseas, and of cargoes representing economic and military aid to friendly nations, the American Merchant Marine has effectively helped to strengthen the forces of freedom throughout the world”.

(5) Military missions and war planning were contingent upon the availability of resources and that the United States Merchant Marine played a vital role in this regard, ensuring the efficient and reliable transoceanic transport of military equipment as well as both military and civilian personnel.

(6) The United States Merchant Marine provided for the successful transport of resources and personnel despite consistent and ongoing exposure to enemy combatants from both the air and the sea, such as enemy bomber squadrons, submarines, and mines.

(7) The efforts of the United States Merchant Marine were not without sacrifices as they bore a higher per capita casualty rate than any other branch of the military during the war.

(8) The United States Merchant Marine proved to be an instrumental asset on untold occasions, participating in every landing operation by the United States Marine Corps from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima as well as providing, for instance, the bulk tonnage of material necessary for the invasion of Nor-

mandy which “would not have been possible without the Merchant Marine”, as a 1944 New York Times article observed.

(9) In also assessing their performance, General Dwight D. Eisenhower stated, “every man in this Allied command is quick to express his admiration for the loyalty, courage, and fortitude of the officers and men of the Merchant Marine. We count upon their efficiency and their utter devotion to duty as we do our own; they have never failed us”.

(10) During a September 1944 speech, President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated, the Merchant Marine has “delivered the goods when and where needed in every theater of operations and across every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult, and dangerous transportation job ever undertaken. As time goes on, there will be greater public understanding of our merchant fleet’s record during this war.”.

(11) The feats and accomplishments of the Merchant Marine are deserving of broader public recognition.

(12) The United States will be forever grateful and indebted to the U.S. Merchant Marine for their effective, reliable, and courageous transport of goods and resources in enemy territory throughout theaters of every variety in World War II; that these goods and resources saved thousands of lives and enabled the Allied Powers to claim victory in World War II.

(13) The Congressional Gold Medal will be an appropriate way to shed further light on the service of the Merchant Marine in World War II and the instrumental role they played in winning World War II.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design to the U.S. Merchant Marine of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

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

(c) AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE MUSEUM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in honor of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the gold medal shall be given to the American Merchant Marine Museum, where it will be available for display as appropriate and available for research.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

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

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, merchant mariners act as an auxiliary to the U.S. Navy and are recognized as an integral link between domestic production and forces overseas, delivering combat equipment, food, fuel, raw materials, and commodities to those stationed abroad.

Military success in World War II hinged on the merchant marine delivering these resources and provisions of transport to military and civilian personnel, sailing while exposed to enemy combatants by both air and by sea. During World War II, these merchant mariners suffered the highest per capita casualty rate of any other branch in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is estimated that hundreds of mariner ships and thousands of mariners were lost to enemy combatants as a result of their service during World War II.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, the merchant marine is rarely mentioned when people list the military branches of service during the war. I rise today to help remedy that oversight by supporting H.R. 2992, the Merchant Marine of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act, introduced by our colleague, Representative SUSAN BROOKS. This bill, which has 312 House cosponsors, would award a single Congressional Gold Medal to the American Merchant Marine of World War II in the recognition of their dedicated and vital service. After the medal is awarded, it will be given to the American Merchant Marine Museum, which is housed within the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York.

The Treasury Secretary is authorized to make and offer for sale bronze replicas of the medal at a price that will help defray the design and production costs of the actual medal. A companion bill in the Senate, S. 2989, has been introduced by Senator LISA MURKOWSKI.

Mr. Speaker, the merchant marine has contributed greatly to every war in which this country has been involved, beginning with the Revolutionary War and continuing right up until today. Its efforts during peacetime helped carry millions of tons of cargo and countless passengers, but the merchant marines' efforts in lightly guarded ships on the dangerous waters of the Atlantic and Pacific during the Second World War were invaluable to the overall war effort.

President Franklin Roosevelt summed it up succinctly: they delivered the goods.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is our turn to deliver the goods for those heroes who

have so often gone unnoticed. I urge immediate passage of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2992, legislation to honor the dedicated and unwavering service provided by the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II, a bill that I am proud to co-sponsor. I hope that, upon its passage in the House, the Senate will move quickly to take it up and pass this bill before the 114th Congress adjourns.

While many are familiar with the sacrifices made by those who served in the Armed Forces during World War II, less often do we stop and take time to recognize the members of the U.S. Merchant Marine who played an essential role in supplying our troops overseas with the equipment, food, and materials necessary to sustain the fight against the Axis powers.

Despite the unrelenting threat of attack and the risk to their lives, the U.S. Merchant Marine proved to be an invaluable asset on innumerable occasions, participating in every landing operation by the United States Marine Corps during the war.

In speaking of the brave contributions made by the U.S. Merchant Marine, President Franklin Roosevelt said that the Merchant Marine "delivered the goods when and where needed in every theater of operations and across every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult, and dangerous transportation job ever undertaken." President Roosevelt also said that "as time goes on, there will be greater public understanding of our merchant fleet's record during this war."

In fact, during a recent visit to the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, I was pleased and proud to see the proper and impressive display dedicated to the role of the merchant marine in that war. Indeed, more than 70 years after President Roosevelt spoke those words, the House is taking an important step today to honor and to shed light on the contributions of the merchant marines made during World War II.

To further the public's understanding of the role the merchant marines played in securing the defeat of the Axis powers, the legislation will ensure that the Gold Medal will be given to the American Merchant Marine Museum, where it will be available for viewing by the public.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation before us.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS).

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2992, the Merchant Marine of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act. This measure awards a Congressional Gold

Medal to the merchant mariners who served during World War II in appreciation of their dedicated and vital service to our Nation.

I also want to thank my colleague from across the aisle, Congresswoman JANICE HAHN of California's 44th District, who worked with me and other Members here in the House to secure so many cosponsorships of this bill.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest honor Congress can bestow upon an individual or group, and these brave servicemen deserve such an honor. The merchant marine was the linchpin connecting the fighting forces overseas with the production forces at home. In the face of certain peril, these brave mariners provided efficient and reliable transport of combat equipment, fuel, food, commodities, personnel, and raw materials that were pivotal in the allied victory.

Oftentimes forgotten, merchant mariners took part in every invasion from Normandy to Okinawa. Never before had the maritime power of America been so effectively utilized. The total cargo lift transported by the mariners totaled over 300 million tons. They transported the great majority of the thousands of military personnel and civilians who traveled overseas during the war and those returning to America after triumphant victories.

Risking their lives to provide the needed supplies for the war, merchant ships faced danger from submarines, mines, armed raiders and destroyers, aircraft, kamikaze attacks, and the elements from Mother Nature.

With an estimated 9,300 total casualties, the merchant marines bore a higher per capita casualty rate than any other branch in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. On top of that, about 11,000 mariners were wounded in action and 663 were taken prisoners of war.

Yet, despite these heroic efforts, they were not recognized as veterans until 1988, and they never received the benefits that other World War II veterans received under the GI bill. They came home from the war without recognition for their service and still, to this day, their service is often overlooked.

Today, there are less than 5,000 surviving World War II mariners, and with nearly 500 World War II veterans dying each day, it is more important than ever to recognize these brave achievements today.

Mr. Speaker, the merchant mariners provided the greatest sealift in history and became the difference between victory and defeat. These loyal and brave men put their lives on the line for the cause of freedom and selflessly answered their Nation's call to duty. It is time we give these courageous mariners the recognition they have earned with the Congressional Gold Medal.

I am proud that 312 of my colleagues agreed and are cosponsors of this bill. Now it is time to get it across the finish line, pay respect to these deserving veterans, and recognize the sacrifices

and contributions of this brave group. I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I, too, have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2992.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT OF 2015

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1555) to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1555

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The First Philippine Republic was founded as a result of the Spanish-American War in which Filipino revolutionaries and the United States Armed Forces fought to overthrow Spanish colonial rule. On June 12, 1898, Filipinos declared the Philippines to be an independent and sovereign nation. The Treaty of Paris negotiated between the United States and Spain ignored this declaration of independence, and the United States paid Spain \$20,000,000 to cede control of the Philippines to the United States. Filipino nationalists who sought independence rather than a change in colonial rulers clashed with forces of the United States in the Islands. The Philippine-American War, which officially lasted for 3 years from 1899 to 1902, led to the establishment of the United States civil government in the Philippines.

(2) In 1901, units of Filipino soldiers who fought for the United States against the nationalist insurrection were formally incorporated into the United States Army as the Philippine Scouts.

(3) In 1934, the Philippine Independence Act (Public Law 73-127; 48 Stat. 456) established a timetable for ending colonial rule of the United States. Between 1934 and Philippine independence in 1946, the United States retained sovereignty over Philippine foreign policy and reserved the right to call Filipinos into the service of the United States Armed Forces.

(4) On December 21 1935, President of the Philippine Commonwealth, Manuel Quezon,

signed the National Defense Act, passed by the Philippine Assembly. General Douglas MacArthur set upon the task of creating an independent army in the Philippines, consisting of a small regular force, the Philippine Constabulary, a police force created during the colonial period of the United States, and reservists. By July 1941, the Philippine army had 130,000 reservists and 6,000 officers.

(5) On July 26, 1941, as tensions with Japan rose in the Pacific, President Franklin D. Roosevelt used his authority vested in the Constitution of the United States and the Philippine Independence Act to “call into service of the United States . . . all of the organized military forces of the Government of the Philippines.” On July 27th, 1941, in accordance with a War Department directive received a day earlier, the United States Forces in the Far East (USAFEF) was established, and Manila was designated as the command headquarters. Commander of the USAFFE, General Douglas MacArthur, planned to absorb the entire Philippine army into the USAFFE in phases. The first phase, which began on September 1, 1941, included 25,000 men and 4,000 officers.

(6) Filipinos who served in the USAFFE included—

(A) the Philippine Scouts, who comprised half of the 22,532 soldiers in the Philippine Department, or United States Army garrison stationed in the Islands at the start of the war;

(B) the Philippine Commonwealth Army;

(C) the new Philippine Scouts, or Filipinos who volunteered to serve with the United States Army when the United States Armed Forces returned to the island;

(D) Filipino civilians who volunteered to serve in the United States Armed Forces in 1945 and 1946, and who became “attached” to various units of the United States Army; and

(E) the “Guerrilla Services” who had fought behind enemy lines throughout the war.

(7) Even after hostilities ceased, wartime service of the new Philippine Scouts continued as a matter of law until the end of 1946, and the force gradually disbanded until it was disestablished in 1950.

(8) On December 8th, 1941, not even 24 hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japanese Imperial forces attacked bases of the United States Army in the Philippines.

(9) In the spring of 1942, the Japanese 14th Army overran the Bataan Peninsula, and, after a heroic but futile defense, more than 78,000 members of the United States Armed Forces were captured, specifically 66,000 Filipinos and 12,000 service members from the United States. The Japanese transferred the captured soldiers from Bataan to Camp O’Donnell, in what is now known as the infamous Bataan Death March. Forced to march the 70-mile distance in 1 week, without adequate food, water, or medicine, nearly 700 members of the United States Armed Forces and an estimated 6,000 to 10,000 Filipinos perished during the journey.

(10) After the fall of the Bataan Peninsula, the Japanese Army turned its sights on Corregidor. The estimated forces in defense of Corregidor totaled 13,000, and were comprised of members of the United States Armed Forces and Filipino troops. Of this number, 800 were killed, 1,000 were wounded, and 11,000 were captured and forced to march through the city of Manila, after which the captured troops were distributed to various POW camps. The rest of the captured troops escaped to organize or join an underground guerrilla army.

(11) Even before the fall of Corregidor, Philippine resistance, in the form of guerrilla armies, began to wage warfare on the

Japanese invaders. Guerrilla armies, from Northern Luzon to Mindanao—

(A) raided Japanese camps, stealing weapons and supplies;

(B) sabotaged and ambushed Japanese troops on the move; and

(C) with little weaponry, and severely outnumbered in numbers, began to extract victories.

(12) Japanese intelligence reports reveal that from the time the Japanese invaded until the return of the United States Armed Forces in the summer of 1944, an estimated 300,000 Filipinos continued to fight against Japanese forces. Filipino resistance against the Japanese was so strong that, in 1942, the Imperial Army formed the Morista Butai, a unit designated to suppress guerrillas.

(13) Because Philippine guerrillas worked to restore communication with United States forces in the Pacific, General MacArthur was able to use the guerrillas in advance of a conventional operation and provided the headquarters of General MacArthur with valuable information. Guerrillas captured and transmitted to the headquarters of General MacArthur Japanese naval plans for the Central Pacific, including defense plans for the Mariana Islands. Intelligence derived from guerrillas relating to aircraft, ship, and troop movements allowed for Allied forces to attack Japanese supply lines and guerrillas and even directed United States submarines where to land agents and cargo on the Philippine coast.

(14) On December 20, 1941, President Roosevelt signed the Selective Training and Service Amendments Act (Public Law 77-360; 55 Stat. 844) which, among other things, allowed Filipinos in the United States to enlist in the United States Armed Forces. In February 1942, President Roosevelt issued the Second War Powers Act (Public Law 77-507; 56 Stat. 176), promising a simplified naturalization process for Filipinos who served in the United States Armed Forces. Subsequently, 16,000 Filipinos in California alone decided to enlist.

(15) The mobilization of forces included the activation and assumption of command of the First Filipino Infantry Battalion on April 1, 1942, at Camp San Luis Obispo, California. Orders were issued to activate the First Filipino Infantry Regiment and Band at Salinas, California, effective July 13, 1942. The activation of the Second Filipino Infantry Regiment occurred at Fort Ord, California, on November 21, 1942. Nearly 9,000 Filipinos and Filipino Americans fought in the United States Army 1st and 2nd Filipino Infantry Regiments.

(16) Soldiers of the 1st and 2nd Infantry Regiments participated in the bloody combat and mop-up operations at New Guinea, Leyte, Samar, Luzon, and the Southern Philippines. In 1943, 800 men were selected from the 1st and 2nd Regiments and shipped to Australia to receive training in intelligence gathering, sabotage, and demolition. Reorganized as part of the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, this group was sent to the Philippines to coordinate with major guerrilla armies in the Islands. Members of the 1st Regiment were also attached to the United States 6th Army “Alamo Scouts”, a reconnaissance group that traveled 30 miles behind enemy lines to free Allied prisoners from the Cabanatuan death camp on January 30, 1945. In addition, in 1945, according to the 41st Counter Intelligence Unit of the United States Armed Forces, Philippine guerrillas provided “very important information and sketches of enemy positions and installations” for the liberation of the Santo Tomas prisoner of war camp, an event that made front page news across the United States.

(17) In March 1944, members of the 2nd Filipino Infantry Regiment were selected for