

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9473

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the individuals who fought for or with the United States against the Armed Forces of Imperial Japan in the Pacific theater and became prisoners of war from December 8, 1941, to August 15, 1945.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 25, 2026

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ (for herself, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. FIGURES, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. VINDMAN, Mr. HOYER, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mr. HURD of Colorado, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. COLE, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. LaLOTA, Mr. HARDER of California, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. STANSBURY, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. CARSON, Ms. TITUS, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. CRAIG, Ms. KING-HINDS, Mr. CISCOMANI, Mrs. SPARTZ, Mr. PALMER, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. SHREVE, Mr. MIN, Mr. STAUBER, Mr. BACON, Mr. VASQUEZ, Mr. FALLON, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GUEST, Mr. BABIN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. CAREY, Ms. MENG, Mr. CROW, Ms. ROSS, Mr. MCGUIRE, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. VALADAO, Mrs. GRIJALVA, and Mr. MOULTON) 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 individuals who fought for or with the United States against the Armed Forces of Imperial Japan in the Pa-

cific theater and became prisoners of war from December 8, 1941, to August 15, 1945.

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 “Defenders of Bataan
5 and Corregidor Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Hours after the attacks on Pearl Harbor,
9 Hawaii Territory, on December 7, 1941, Imperial
10 Japanese forces launched coordinated attacks
11 throughout Asia, striking Malaya, Thailand, Singa-
12 pore, Shanghai, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and
13 the United States territories of Guam, Midway Is-
14 land, Wake Island, and Howland Island.

15 (2) For the next 7 months, undermanned
16 United States forces in the Pacific fought with out-
17 dated weapons, expired ammunition, and without re-
18 inforcement or resupply to their besieged island
19 posts.

20 (3) On the first day of United States participa-
21 tion in World War II, December 8, 1941, the “first
22 to fire” in the Philippines at the Imperial Japanese
23 were the New Mexico National Guardsmen from the
24 200th and 515th Coast Artillery (AA) regiments, the

1 successors to the famed “Rough Riders” of the
2 Spanish-American War, who had only recently ar-
3 rived in the Philippines where they were stationed at
4 Fort Stotsenburg north of Manila with the mission
5 of defending Clark Field.

6 (4) Filipino soldiers and civilians valiantly
7 fought alongside and as part of the United States
8 Armed Forces and were integral to their war efforts.

9 (5) By the end of December 1941, all United
10 States forces on Luzon Island in the Philippines
11 withdrew to the Bataan Peninsula of the island,
12 where, for the next 4 months, with neither air nor
13 sea defenses, an estimated 12,000 United States and
14 at least 63,000 Filipino troops and 20,000 Filipino
15 civilians endured siege conditions.

16 (6) On April 9, 1942, Major General Edward
17 P. King, Jr. surrendered the United States and Fili-
18 pino forces on the Bataan Peninsula. The Imperial
19 Japanese Army forced thousands of troops and civil-
20 ians to assemble at the port of Mariveles at the tip
21 of Bataan and other locations along the peninsula
22 for a 65-mile forced march. This forced trek came
23 to be known as the “Bataan Death March”.

24 (7) During the Bataan Death March, approxi-
25 mately 700 people of the United States and 6,000

1 to 10,000 Filipinos were killed. Survivors were sent
2 to Camp O'Donnell where 26,000 more Filipino pris-
3 oners died.

4 (8) On May 6, 1942, Lieutenant General Jona-
5 than Wainwright surrendered the fortress islands of
6 Corregidor (Fort Mills), Fort Drum, Fort Frank,
7 and Fort Hughes in Manila Bay. The complete sur-
8 render of the remaining United States and Filipino
9 forces in the Philippines occurred on June 9, 1942.

10 (9) Included in the surrenders in the Phil-
11ippines were female nurses of the United States
12 Army and Navy and the Philippine Army and civil-
13 ian volunteers who became the first large group of
14 United States women in combat and, counted with
15 the Army and Navy nurses surrendered on Guam in
16 December 1941, comprised the first group of United
17 States military women taken captive and imprisoned
18 by an enemy.

19 (10) Between January 1942 and August 1945,
20 thousands of prisoners of war from the United
21 States who had survived the surrenders throughout
22 the Pacific were shipped in unmarked freighters and
23 vessels.

24 (11) It is time to recognize the defenders of Ba-
25 taan, Corregidor, and other places throughout the

1 Pacific who were ordinary men and women who
2 found uncommon courage in extraordinary cir-
3 cumstances.

4 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) INDIVIDUALS WHO FOUGHT FOR OR WITH
7 THE UNITED STATES.—The term “individuals who
8 fought for or with the United States”—

9 (A) includes any individual who—

10 (i) was in the Pacific theater at any
11 time during the period beginning on De-
12 cember 8, 1941, and ending on August 15,
13 1945; and

14 (ii)(I) served honorably as a member
15 of the United States Armed Forces or at
16 the command of the United States Armed
17 Forces in the defensive battles in the Pa-
18 cific from December 8, 1941, to June 9,
19 1942; or

20 (II) became a prisoner of war of Im-
21 perial Japan during World War II until
22 August 15, 1945, including civilians who
23 the Imperial Japanese Armed Forces con-
24 sidered military prisoners of war and re-
25 ceived veterans status after the war; and

1 (B) does not include a member of the Pa-
2 cific Fleet or the Hawaiian Department.

3 (2) PACIFIC THEATER.—The term “Pacific the-
4 ater” means Shanghai, the Central Pacific Area, and
5 the Southwest Pacific Area.

6 (3) RESISTANCE OR BATTLE.—The term “re-
7 sistance or battle” includes an action in and around
8 Shanghai, Tientsin, Guam, Wake Island, the Dutch
9 East Indies, Borneo, the Philippines, or Midway Is-
10 land.

11 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
12 the Secretary of the Treasury.

13 **SEC. 4. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

14 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
15 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
16 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
17 collective award, on behalf of Congress, of a gold medal
18 of appropriate design to the individuals who fought for
19 or with the United States to defend Bataan, Corregidor,
20 and other places in the Pacific theater, and became pris-
21 oners of war, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and
22 service during World War II.

23 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the
24 award under subsection (a), the Secretary shall strike the

1 gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscrip-
 2 tions, to be determined by the Secretary.

3 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
 5 gold medal under subsection (a), the gold medal
 6 shall be given to the National Museum of American
 7 History of the Smithsonian Institution, where it
 8 shall be displayed as appropriate and made available
 9 for research.

10 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
 11 Congress that the National Museum of American
 12 History of the Smithsonian Institution should make
 13 the gold medal received under paragraph (1) avail-
 14 able for display at other locations, particularly at lo-
 15 cations that are associated with—

16 (A) the defensive battles of World War II
 17 in the Pacific theater from December 8, 1941,
 18 to August 15, 1945;

19 (B) the prisoners of war of Imperial
 20 Japan; and

21 (C) the defense of the Philippines, Guam,
 22 Wake Island, Midway Island, and Java.

23 **SEC. 5. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

24 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
 25 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 4, at a price

1 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
2 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

3 **SEC. 6. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

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

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

11 **SEC. 7. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
12 **SALE.**

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

18 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
19 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section
20 5 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public
21 Enterprise Fund.

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