

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1484

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to Rabbi Arthur Schneier in recognition of his pioneering role in promoting religious freedom and human rights throughout the world, for close to half a century.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 12, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to Rabbi Arthur Schneier in recognition of his pioneering role in promoting religious freedom and human rights throughout the world, for close to half a century.

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 “Rabbi Arthur Schneier
5 Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows:

1 (1) Rabbi Arthur Schneier, Spiritual Leader of
2 Park East Synagogue and Founder and President,
3 Appeal of Conscience Foundation, has played a pio-
4 neering role in promoting religious freedom and
5 human rights throughout the world, for close to half
6 a century.

7 (2) The President of the United States awarded
8 him the Presidential Citizens Medal for “his service
9 as an international envoy for four administrations”
10 and as a Holocaust survivor, “devoting a lifetime to
11 overcoming forces of hatred and intolerance”.

12 (3) He received the United States Department
13 of State Special Recognition Award from Secretary
14 Colin Powell for “. . . his ecumenical work in favor
15 of mutual understanding, tolerance and peace . . .”.

16 (4) In China in 2004, he headed an interfaith
17 Appeal of Conscience Foundation delegation which
18 met with government officials on behalf of religious
19 freedom and strengthened exchanges between reli-
20 gious communities in China and the United States.

21 (5) He has regularly led delegations of religious
22 leaders to China since the early 1980s.

23 (6) In the Former Soviet Union, Rabbi
24 Schneier was, in 2004, the keynote speaker at the

1 Interreligious Conference on Peace hosted by Patri-
2 arch Aleksey II.

3 (7) In Armenia in 2002, he held meetings with
4 the Catholics and government leaders to help ease
5 tensions between Armenia and Turkey.

6 (8) In Yugoslavia, he convened the Religious
7 Summit on the Former Yugoslavia in Switzerland
8 and the Conflict Resolution Conference in Vienna,
9 mobilizing religious leaders to halt the bloodshed in
10 former Yugoslavia (1992, 1995).

11 (9) In the Balkans, Caucasus, and Central
12 Asia, he initiated the Peace and Tolerance Con-
13 ference in Istanbul, Turkey, in cooperation with the
14 Turkish Government and the Ecumenical Patriarch
15 Bartholomew I (1994).

16 (10) In Bosnia-Herzegovina, he met with top
17 government and religious leaders in Sarajevo to pro-
18 mote healing and conciliation between the Serbian
19 Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic, and Jewish commu-
20 nities (1997).

21 (11) Rabbi Schneier initiated the interfaith ap-
22 peal to the United Nations for the worldwide protec-
23 tion of holy sites, which was adopted by the United
24 Nations General Assembly in May 2001 as the reso-
25 lution for the “Protection of Religious Sites”.

1 (12) In 1980, he initiated the Annual Seminar
2 on Religious Life to educate Foreign Service officers
3 in the religious traditions of the countries of their
4 assignment.

5 (13) The Foreign Service Institute honored him
6 in 2001 for “20 years of excellent cooperation in
7 furthering the objective of religious freedom”.

8 (14) He has been very active in humanitarian
9 missions, such as mobilizing the American religious
10 community in support for the victims of the Arme-
11 nian and Turkish earthquakes.

12 (15) A United States Alternate Representative
13 to the United Nations General Assembly and Chair-
14 man of the United States Commission for the Pres-
15 ervation of America’s Heritage Abroad, he was one
16 of 3 American religious leaders appointed by the
17 President of the United States to start the first dia-
18 logue on religious freedom with President Jiang
19 Zemin and other top Chinese leaders (1998).

20 (16) He was a United States delegate to the
21 Stockholm International Forum for the Prevention
22 of Genocide (2004).

23 (17) Born in Vienna, Austria, in 1930, Rabbi
24 Schneier lived under Nazi occupation in Budapest

1 during World War II and arrived in the United
2 States in 1947.

3 (18) He holds the Ordination and Doctor of Di-
4 vinity Degree from Yeshiva University.

5 (19) In 2004, Yeshiva University honored him
6 by establishing the Rabbi Arthur Schneier Center
7 for International Affairs.

8 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

9 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
10 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
11 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
12 for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold
13 medal of appropriate design to Rabbi Arthur Schneier in
14 recognition of his pioneering role in promoting religious
15 freedom and human rights throughout the world, for close
16 to half a century.

17 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the
18 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
19 of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the
20 “Secretary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable em-
21 blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the
22 Secretary.

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

24 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
25 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3

1 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at
2 a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,
3 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses,
4 and the cost of the gold medal.

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

6 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-
7 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter
8 51 of title 31, United States Code.

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

12 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
13 **SALE.**

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

19 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
20 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section
21 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public
22 Enterprise Fund.

○