

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3767

To grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the First Special Service Force, in recognition of its superior service during World War II.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 23, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida (for himself, Mr. TURNER of Ohio, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. JONES, Mr. MANZULLO, and Mr. FORBES) 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 grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the First Special Service Force, in recognition of its superior 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) The First Special Service Force (in this Act
6 referred to as the “Force”) was organized as a joint

1 American-Canadian unit activated in July 1942 at
2 Fort Harrison near Helena, Montana.

3 (2) The Force was initially intended to target
4 military and industrial installations that were sup-
5 porting the German war effort, including important
6 hydroelectric plants, which would severely limit the
7 production of strategic materials used by the Axis
8 powers.

9 (3) From July 1942 through June 1943, volun-
10 teers of the Force trained in hazardous, arctic condi-
11 tions, in the mountains of western Montana, and the
12 waterways of Camp Bradford, Virginia.

13 (4) The combat echelon of the Force totaled
14 1,800 soldiers—half American, half Canadian. There
15 were also 800 American members of the Service
16 Battalion, which provided important support for the
17 combat troops.

18 (5) A special bond developed between the Cana-
19 dian and American soldiers. They were not seg-
20 regated by geography, although it was commanded
21 by an American colonel.

22 (6) The Force was unique, as it was the only
23 unit formed during World War II consisting of
24 troops from 2 different countries.

1 (7) In October 1943, the Force went to Italy,
2 where it fought in battles south of Cassino, including
3 Monte La Difensa and Monte Majo.

4 (8) These mountain peaks were a critical an-
5 chor of the German defense line, and on December
6 3, 1943, the Force's units ascended to the top of La
7 Difensa's precipitous face. Climbing through the
8 night, the battalion suffered heavy casualties and
9 overcame fierce resistance to overtake the German
10 line.

11 (9) After La Difensa, the Force continued to
12 fight tough battles at high altitudes, in rugged ter-
13 rain, and in severe weather. After battles on the
14 strongly defended Italian peaks of Sammucro,
15 Vischiataro, and Remetanea, the Force's combat
16 units had been reduced from 1,800 to fewer than
17 500.

18 (10) In 1944, the Force went to the Anzio
19 Beachhead for 4 months, engaging in raids and ag-
20 gressive patrols. On June 4, 1944, members of the
21 Force were the first Allied troops to liberate Rome.

22 (11) After Rome, the Force moved to southern
23 Italy, where it prepared to assist in the liberation of
24 France.

1 (12) During the early morning of August 15,
2 1944, the Force made silent landings on Les Iles
3 D’Hyeres, small islands in the Mediterranean Sea
4 along the southern coast of France. They faced a
5 sustained and withering assault from the German
6 garrisons, as the Force progressed from the islands
7 to the Franco-Italian border.

8 (13) After securing the Franco-Italian border,
9 the United States Army ordered the disbandment of
10 the First Special Service Force on December 5,
11 1944, in Nice, France.

12 (14) In 251 days of combat, the Force suffered
13 2,314 casualties, or 134 percent of its combat
14 strength. It captured more than 30,000 prisoners,
15 won 5 United States campaign stars, and 8 Cana-
16 dian battle honors. It never failed a mission.

17 (15) The United States is forever indebted to
18 the acts of bravery and selflessness of these troops,
19 risking their lives in covert missions for the cause of
20 freedom.

21 (16) The unparalleled work of the Force along
22 the seas and skies of Europe were critical in repel-
23 ling the Nazi advance and liberating numerous
24 French and Italian communities.

1 (17) The bond between the American and Ca-
2 nadian service members has endured over the dec-
3 ades, as they continue to meet every year for re-
4 unions, alternating between Canada and the United
5 States.

6 (18) The traditions and honors exhibited by the
7 First Special Service Force are carried forward with
8 its lineage embracing outstanding active units of 2
9 great democracies in the Special Forces of the
10 United States, the Canadian Airborne Regiment,
11 and the Canadian Special Operations Regiment.

12 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

13 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
14 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
15 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
16 award, on behalf of the Congress, of 2 gold medals of ap-
17 propriate design to the First Special Service Force, collec-
18 tively, in recognition of their dedicated service during
19 World War II.

20 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
21 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
22 Treasury (in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall
23 strike the gold medals with suitable emblems, devices, and
24 inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

1 (c) AWARD TO SMITHSONIAN AND FIRST SPECIAL
2 SERVICE FORCE ASSOCIATION.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
4 gold medals in honor of the First Special Service
5 Force, under subsection (a)—

6 (A) one gold medal shall be given to the
7 Smithsonian Institution, where it will be dis-
8 played as appropriate and made available for
9 research; and

10 (B) one gold medal shall be given to the
11 First Special Service Force Association in Hel-
12 ena, Montana.

13 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
14 the Congress that the Smithsonian Institution and
15 the First Special Service Force Association should
16 make the gold medals received under paragraph (1)
17 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
18 appropriate locations associated with the First Spe-
19 cial Service Force, including Fort William Henry
20 Harrison in Helena, Montana.

21 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

22 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
23 bronze of the gold medals struck under section 2, at a
24 price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including

1 labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead ex-
2 penses.

3 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

4 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national med-
5 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
6 Code.

7 **SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.**

8 (a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.**—There is author-
9 ized to be charged against the United States Mint Public
10 Enterprise Fund, an amount not to exceed \$30,000 to pay
11 for the cost of the medals authorized under section 2.

12 (b) **PROCEEDS OF SALE.**—Amounts received from the
13 sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be
14 deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise
15 Fund.

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