

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 789

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 SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 23, 2013

Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BURR, and Mr. TESTER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

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 (the
6 “Force”), a military unit composed of volunteers
7 from the United States and Canada, was activated
8 in July 1942 at Fort Harrison near Helena, Mon-
9 tana.

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

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

11 (4) The combat echelon of the Force totaled
12 1,800 soldiers, half from the United States and half
13 from Canada.

14 (5) The Force also contained a service bat-
15 talion, composed of 800 members from the United
16 States, that provided important support for the com-
17 bat troops.

18 (6) A special bond developed between the Cana-
19 dian and United States soldiers, who were not seg-
20 regated by country, although the commander of the
21 Force was a United States colonel.

22 (7) The Force was the only unit formed during
23 World War II that consisted of troops from Canada
24 and the United States.

1 (8) 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, two mountain
4 peaks that were a critical anchor of the German de-
5 fense line.

6 (9) During the night of December 3, 1943, the
7 Force ascended to the top of the precipitous face of
8 Monte La Difensa, where the Force suffered heavy
9 casualties and overcame fierce resistance to overtake
10 the German line.

11 (10) After the battle for La Difensa, the Force
12 continued to fight tough battles at high altitudes, in
13 rugged terrain, and in severe weather.

14 (11) After battles on the strongly defended
15 Italian peaks of Sammucro, Vischiataro, and
16 Remetanea, the size of the Force had been reduced
17 from 1,800 soldiers to fewer than 500.

18 (12) For 4 months in 1944, the Force engaged
19 in raids and aggressive patrols at the Anzio Beach-
20 head.

21 (13) On June 4, 1944, members of the Force
22 were among the first Allied troops to liberate Rome.

23 (14) After liberating Rome, the Force moved to
24 southern Italy and prepared to assist in the libera-
25 tion of France.

1 (15) During the early morning of August 15,
2 1944, members of the Force made silent landings on
3 Les Iles D’Hyeres, small islands in the Mediterra-
4 nean Sea along the southern coast of France.

5 (16) The Force faced a sustained and withering
6 assault from the German garrisons as the Force pro-
7 gressed from the islands to the Franco-Italian bor-
8 der.

9 (17) After the Allied forces secured the Franco-
10 Italian border, the United States Army ordered the
11 disbandment of the Force on December 5, 1944, in
12 Nice, France.

13 (18) During 251 days of combat, the Force suf-
14 fered 2,314 casualties, or 134 percent of its author-
15 ized strength, captured thousands of prisoners, won
16 5 United States campaign stars and 8 Canadian
17 battle honors, and never failed a mission.

18 (19) The United States is forever indebted to
19 the acts of bravery and selflessness of the troops of
20 the Force, who risked their lives for the cause of
21 freedom.

22 (20) The efforts of the Force along the seas
23 and skies of Europe were critical in repelling the ad-
24 vance of Nazi Germany and liberating numerous
25 communities in France and Italy.

1 (21) The bond between the members of the
2 Force from the United States and those from Can-
3 ada has endured over the decades, as the members
4 meet every year for a reunion, alternating between
5 the United States and Canada.

6 (22) The traditions and honors exhibited by the
7 Force are carried on by 2 outstanding active units
8 of 2 great democracies, the Special Forces of the
9 United States and the Canadian Special Operations
10 Regiment.

11 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

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

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

24 (c) AWARD OF MEDAL.—Following the award of the
25 gold medal in honor of the First Special Service Force

1 under subsection (a), the medal shall be given to the First
2 Special Service Force Association in Helena, Montana,
3 where it shall be available for display or temporary loan
4 to be displayed elsewhere, particularly at other appropriate
5 locations associated with the First Special Service Force,
6 including Fort William Henry Harrison in Helena, Mon-
7 tana.

8 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

9 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
10 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2, at a price
11 sufficient to cover the costs of the medal, including labor,
12 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses,
13 and amounts received from the sale of such duplicates
14 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enter-
15 prise Fund.

16 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

17 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national med-
18 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
19 Code.

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