

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 2992

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 1, 2016

Received

AN ACT

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.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 The Congress finds the following:

6 (1) 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the Al-
7 lied victory in World War II and the restoration of
8 peacetime across the European and Pacific theaters.

9 (2) The United States Merchant Marine was in-
10 tegral in providing the link between domestic pro-
11 duction and the fighting forces overseas, providing
12 combat equipment, fuel, food, commodities, and raw
13 materials to troops stationed overseas.

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

19 (4) President and former Supreme Commander
20 of the Allied Forces, Dwight D. Eisenhower, ac-
21 knowledged that “through the prompt delivery of
22 supplies and equipment to our armed forces over-
23 seas, and of cargoes representing economic and mili-
24 tary aid to friendly nations, the American Merchant
25 Marine has effectively helped to strengthen the
26 forces of freedom throughout the world”.

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

7 (6) The United States Merchant Marine pro-
8 vided for the successful transport of resources and
9 personnel despite consistent and ongoing exposure to
10 enemy combatants from both the air and the sea,
11 such as enemy bomber squadrons, submarines, and
12 mines.

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

17 (8) The United States Merchant Marine proved
18 to be an instrumental asset on untold occasions, par-
19 ticipating in every landing operation by the United
20 States Marine Corps from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima
21 as well as providing, for instance, the bulk tonnage
22 of material necessary for the invasion of Normandy
23 which “would not have been possible without the
24 Merchant Marine”, as a 1944 New York Times arti-
25 cle observed.

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

8 (10) During a September 1944 speech, Presi-
9 dent Franklin D. Roosevelt stated, the Merchant
10 Marine has “delivered the goods when and where
11 needed in every theater of operations and across
12 every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult, and
13 dangerous transportation job ever undertaken. As
14 time goes on, there will be greater public under-
15 standing of our merchant fleet’s record during this
16 war.”.

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

20 (12) The United States will be forever grateful
21 and indebted to the U.S. Merchant Marine for their
22 effective, reliable, and courageous transport of goods
23 and resources in enemy territory throughout thea-
24 ters of every variety in World War II; that these
25 goods and resources saved thousands of lives and en-

1 abled the Allied Powers to claim victory in World
2 War II.

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

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

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

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

21 (c) AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE MUSEUM.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
23 gold medal in honor of the U.S. Merchant Marine,
24 the gold medal shall be given to the American Mer-

1 chant Marine Museum, where it will be available for
2 display as appropriate and available for research.

3 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

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

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

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

13 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section
14 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck
15 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

Passed the House of Representatives November 30,
2016.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.