

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7438, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7438.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DUSTOFF CREWS OF THE VIETNAM WAR CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2825) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2825

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) a United States Army Dustoff crewman, including a pilot, crew chief, and medic, is a helicopter crew member who served honorably during the Vietnam War aboard helicopter air ambulances, which were both non-division and division assets under the radio call signs "Dustoff" and "Medevac";

(2) Dustoff crews performed aeromedical evacuation for United States, Vietnamese, and allied forces in Southeast Asia from May 1962 through March 1973;

(3) nearing the end of World War II, the United States Army began using helicopters for medical evacuation and years later, during the Korean War, these helicopter air ambulances were responsible for transporting 17,700 United States casualties;

(4) during the Vietnam War, with the use of helicopter air ambulances, United States Army Dustoff crews pioneered the concept of dedicated and rapid medical evacuation and transported almost 900,000 United States, South Vietnamese, and other allied sick and wounded, as well as wounded enemy forces;

(5) helicopters proved to be a revolutionary tool to assist those injured on the battlefield;

(6) highly skilled and intrepid, Dustoff crews were able to operate the helicopters and land them on almost any terrain in nearly any weather to pick up wounded, after which the Dustoff crews could provide care to these patients while transporting them to ready medical facilities;

(7) the vital work of the Dustoff crews required consistent combat exposure and often proved to be the difference between life and death for wounded personnel;

(8) the revolutionary concept of a dedicated combat life-saving system was cultivated and refined by United States Army Dustoff crews during 11 years of intense con-

flict in and above the jungles of Southeast Asia;

(9) innovative and resourceful Dustoff crews in Vietnam were responsible for taking the new concept of helicopter medical evacuation, born just a few years earlier, and revolutionizing it to meet and surpass the previously unattainable goal of delivering a battlefield casualty to an operating table within the vaunted "golden hour";

(10) some Dustoff units in Vietnam operated so efficiently that they were able to deliver a patient to a waiting medical facility on an average of 50 minutes from the receipt of the mission, which saved the lives of countless personnel in Vietnam, and this legacy continues for modern-day Dustoff crews;

(11) the inherent danger of being a member of a Dustoff crew in Vietnam meant that there was a 1 in 3 chance of being wounded or killed;

(12) many battles during the Vietnam War raged at night, and members of the Dustoff crews often found themselves searching for a landing zone in complete darkness, in bad weather, over mountainous terrain, and all while being the target of intense enemy fire as they attempted to rescue the wounded, which caused Dustoff crews to suffer a rate of aircraft loss that was more than 3 times that of all other types of combat helicopter missions in Vietnam;

(13) the 54th Medical Detachment typified the constant heroism displayed by Dustoff crews in Vietnam, over the span of a 10-month tour, with only 3 flyable helicopters and 40 soldiers in the unit, evacuating 21,435 patients in 8,644 missions while being airborne for 4,832 hours;

(14) collectively, the members of the 54th Medical Detachment earned 78 awards for valor, including 1 Medal of Honor, 1 Distinguished Service Cross, 14 Silver Star Medals, 26 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 2 Bronze Star Medals for valor, 4 Air Medals for valor, 4 Soldier's Medals, and 26 Purple Heart Medals;

(15) the 54th Medical Detachment displayed heroism on a daily basis and set the standard for all Dustoff crews in Vietnam;

(16) 6 members of the 54th Medical Detachment are in the Dustoff Hall of Fame, 3 are in the Army Aviation Hall of Fame, and 1 is the only United States Army aviator in the National Aviation Hall of Fame;

(17) Dustoff crew members are among the most highly decorated soldiers in United States military history;

(18) in early 1964, Major Charles L. Kelly was the Commanding Officer of the 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), Provisional, in Soc Trang, South Vietnam;

(19) Major Kelly helped to forge the Dustoff call sign into history as one of the most welcomed phrases to be heard over the radio by wounded soldiers in perilous and dire situations;

(20) in 1964, Major Kelly was killed in action as he gallantly maneuvered his aircraft to save a wounded United States soldier and several Vietnamese soldiers and boldly replied, after being warned to stay away from the landing zone due to the ferocity of enemy fire, "When I have your wounded.";

(21) General William Westmoreland, Commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam from 1964 to 1968, singled out Major Kelly as an example of "the greatness of the human spirit" and highlighted his famous reply as an inspiration to all in combat;

(22) General Creighton Abrams, successor to General Westmoreland from 1968 to 1972, and former Chief of Staff of the United States Army, highlighted the heroism of Dustoff crews, "A special word about the Dustoffs . . . Courage above and beyond the call of duty was sort of routine to them. It

was a daily thing, part of the way they lived. That's the great part, and it meant so much to every last man who served there. Whether he ever got hurt or not, he knew Dustoff was there.";

(23) Dustoff crews possessed unique skills and traits that made them highly successful in aeromedical evacuation in Vietnam, including indomitable courage, extraordinary aviation skill and sound judgment under fire, high-level medical expertise, and an unequalled dedication to the preservation of human life;

(24) members of the United States Armed Forces on the ground in Vietnam had their confidence and battlefield prowess reinforced knowing that there were heroic Dustoff crews just a few minutes from the fight, which was instrumental to their well-being, willingness to fight, and morale;

(25) military families in the United States knew that their loved ones would receive the quickest and best possible care in the event of a war-time injury, thanks to the Dustoff crews;

(26) the willingness of Dustoff crews to also risk their lives to save helpless civilians left an immeasurably positive impression on the people of Vietnam and exemplified the finest United States ideals of compassion and humanity; and

(27) Dustoff crews from the Vietnam War hailed from every State in the United States and represented numerous ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service, which saved countless lives and contributed directly to the defense of the United States.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.

(c) U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT MUSEUM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in honor of the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War, the gold medal shall be given to the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum, where it will be available for display as appropriate and available for research.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum should make the gold medal awarded pursuant to this Act available for display elsewhere, particularly at appropriate locations associated with the Vietnam War, and that preference should be given to locations affiliated with the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

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

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United

States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

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

(a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

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

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2825, the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act, the Senate version of H.R. 1015, led by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER), the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS), the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS), and the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN).

Madam Speaker, we lost too many American soldiers during the Vietnam war. That number would be dramatically higher if it were not for the bravery shown by the pilots of the Dustoff crews.

During the Vietnam war, American helicopter rescue crews, known as the Operation Dustoff crews, evacuated some 900,000 people to safety, the equivalent of the populations of Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Orlando combined.

They did so under extremely perilous conditions. The Dustoff missions left the crews unarmed, often flown completely at night, frequently under enemy fire, and even after having to fight for permission to fly because of the dangers.

Madam Speaker, the United States needed the Dustoff crews during the Vietnam war because of the battle landscape. The stealthy, dispersed enemy occupying the dense jungles of Vietnam meant American soldiers had to push far from stationed medical support. Without a speedy exit from combat, a wound during the Vietnam war meant almost certain death.

The brave men of the Dustoff crews rescued American soldiers, civilians,

and Vietnamese soldiers. When a call came in for Dustoff to pick up wounded day and night, they went.

The Dustoff crews flew over 495,000 missions from 1962 to 1973. Sadly, of the 1,400 pilots, 90 were killed, and roughly 380 were wounded. These evacuation flights were some of the Army's most dangerous missions.

The heroism, valor, and tenacity displayed by these young air crews provided a gift of life that few consider or even think about today. For each person saved by a medical evacuation air crew, whether it be a man, woman, or child, those individuals went on to enjoy their life beyond the strains of war. These young men voluntarily put their lives on the line every day to save another human being.

Madam Speaker, I will leave my colleagues with the pledge of the Dustoff crews: "No hesitation. No reservation. No compromise. You get the wounded out."

This pledge speaks volumes. The pilots of the Dustoff crews deserve to be honored by this Congress with a Congressional Gold Medal.

Madam Speaker, I thank the bill's sponsors for bringing forward this important legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2825, the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act, sponsored by Senator CORNYN.

Madam Speaker, we are honoring the United States Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war, who came from every State in the United States, with the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and lifesaving actions in Vietnam.

The Dustoff crewmen served aboard helicopter air ambulances and performed medical evacuations for almost 900,000 Americans, South Vietnamese, and other individuals from allied forces for more than 10 years.

In these efforts, they often proved to be the difference between life and death for wounded personnel. The Dustoff crews in Vietnam were innovative and resourceful. They took the new concept of helicopter medical evacuation and revolutionized it to meet the goal of quickly delivering a battlefield casualty to a hospital's operating table.

Being a member of the Dustoff crew meant that there was an inherent danger to their work and a high likelihood of being wounded or killed.

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Additionally, many of the evacuations took place at night, and Dustoff crews would find themselves searching for a landing zone in complete darkness, bad weather, and mountainous terrain, all while being the target of intense enemy fire as they rescued the wounded.

Collectively, the members of the Dustoff crews earned 78 awards for their valor. The crews displayed heroism on a daily basis and were among the most highly decorated soldiers in United States history.

Today, we will vote to present them with our highest honor, the Congressional Gold Medal.

Madam Speaker, I thank the sponsors of this bill, including Mr. KILMER.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER), who is also the sponsor of the House companion of this bill.

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, every now and then, Democrats and Republicans come together to do something that matters for our veterans, and today is one of those days as we honor Vietnam veterans for their service and sacrifice, especially Dustoff crews.

Madam Speaker, between 1956 and 1975, 2.7 million Americans served in some of the most severe conditions in the history of American warfare. Unfortunately, when our servicemembers came home, they often didn't get the gratitude that they earned.

The legislation in front of us today is a small step in the effort to correct that.

Today is an opportunity for our Congress and our country to say to Vietnam veterans and specifically to Dustoff crewmembers that we are grateful for their service and sacrifice for this country. They stepped up and offered their bodies and lives to protect our way of life.

Despite everything Vietnam veterans went through, many never stopped serving our country or looking out for people who wear the uniform. As a Representative, that means a lot to me. As a dad, knowing my kids are growing up in a country that is stronger and freer because of those who served means a lot to me, as well.

That gratitude needs to come with more than words of thanks. It needs to come with a commitment that future generations know of their sacrifice and service to our country. It means backing up words with action. It means the men and women who fight for our country shouldn't have to fight for a job when they come home. It means that in the land of the free and the home of the brave, every brave servicemember should have a home. It means ensuring that veterans get the care, benefits, and recognition that they have earned.

Today, Congress can take another step forward in recognizing the valiant efforts of our Vietnam veterans by passing this bipartisan legislation, led by myself and CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, called the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act.

This legislation has a simple but important mission: to award Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Dustoff crewmembers—helicopter air ambulance pilots, crew chiefs, and

medics—performed aeromedical evacuations of over 900,000 U.S., Vietnamese, and allied forces from May 1962 to March 1973. Dustoff crews often faced foul weather, mountainous terrain, and intense enemy fire, with crewmembers facing a one-in-three chance of being wounded or killed.

These were heroes who saved lives.

One Dustoff unit, the 54th Medical Detachment, typified the heroism of Dustoff crews. Over 10 months, 40 soldiers equipped with only three helicopters evacuated over 21,000 patients on 8,600 missions over nearly 5,000 hours, earning 78 valor awards.

Awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war is an important step toward recognizing the pivotal role that these servicemembers played in saving the lives of so many and serving our country so proudly.

Since the American Revolution, Congress has commissioned gold medals as its highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Congress has never awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to any group of Vietnam veterans. Today, we can change that by passing this legislation. I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote to do just that.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representative MCMORRIS RODGERS and Senators CORNYN and WARREN for their partnership and leadership on this effort. I also thank our veterans and every family member or friend who has supported a veteran.

Madam Speaker, we honor the service of our Vietnam veterans. Today, we move forward in ensuring that the Dustoff crews are recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal, and I thank them for their service.

May God bless them and this country.

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I am so pleased and proud to be on this floor today in recognition of Vietnam-era veterans and their service to this country.

As a matter of fact, I have always felt very bad when I encountered Vietnam-era veterans and always apologized to them for the fact that they were not received back to their country in a manner that they should have been and received the resources that they deserved, having served our country.

This is a very important bill that will honor the U.S. Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war collectively in recognition of their extraordinary her-

oism, their lifesaving actions in Vietnam, and their direct contribution to the defense of the United States.

I thank Mr. KILMER and all the other sponsors of this bill. Further, I asked my staff as we were sitting here: Were the Dustoff crews a special unit that we are honoring today? Should we be looking at other Vietnam-era veterans?

It is a question I am raising as I make this presentation today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. KILMER so very much for his comments. I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I, too, echo all the comments that were said about honoring the Vietnam war-era veterans. I take the challenge that our ranking member has spoken about, identifying and recognizing other Vietnam war veterans, and that is why I have done this.

As I am sure many of my colleagues do, too, in their respective districts, we take the time to identify the Vietnam-era war veterans, and every time we have a community event, we invite them and present them with a token of a lapel pin to show our appreciation. It is a small token of saying thank you. We can never say enough about how we are happy that they are home, so we welcome everybody home, especially from the Vietnam war.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 2825, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2825.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BILLIE JEAN KING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2861) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King, an American icon, in recognition of a remarkable life devoted to championing equal rights for all, in sports and in society.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2861

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Billie Jean King Congressional Gold Medal Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Billie Jean King, born Billie Jean Moffitt on November 22, 1943, in Long Beach, California, demonstrated athletic prowess from a young age. She was introduced to tennis at the age of 11, and soon after, Billie Jean purchased her first tennis racket using money she earned working various jobs in her neighborhood.

(2) Billie Jean broke numerous barriers to become a number one professional tennis player. She dominated women's tennis with 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles, and mixed doubles titles, including a record 20 championships at Wimbledon. She also was a member of 3 World Team Tennis championship teams.

(3) After growing in prominence, Billie Jean used her platform as a celebrity to fight for equal rights and opportunities for equality for all in sports, and society, in the United States.

(4) Billie Jean played an instrumental role in the passage of title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), a law that mandates equal funding for women's and men's sports programs in schools and colleges. This legislation has unlocked a world of opportunities for girls and women in education and sports.

(5) During Billie Jean's career, the pay difference between prize money for men and women in tennis continued to expand. By the early 1970s, the pay gap in prize money reached ratios of as much as 12 to 1. Fewer and fewer tournaments were hosting women's events. Billie Jean harnessed the energy of the women's rights movement to create a women's tennis tour that would elevate women's tennis and establish pay equity within the sport. Along with 8 other women tennis players, she formed an independent women's professional tennis circuit, the Virginia Slims Series.

(6) In 1973, Billie Jean founded the Women's Tennis Association, today's principal governing body for women's professional tennis.

(7) Billie Jean helped found womenSports magazine and founded the Women's Sports Foundation. Both have been at the forefront of advancing women's voice in sports.

(8) Billie Jean successfully lobbied for equal prize money for men and women at the 1973 US Open Tennis Championships. It would take another 34 years for the other 3 major tournaments to all offer equal prize money.

(9) In 1973, Billie Jean played a tennis match against Bobby Riggs, a former World Number 1 player who sought to undermine the credibility and prominence of women in sports. Billie Jean defeated Riggs in what became a firm declaration of women's role in sports and society.

(10) Billie Jean King was the first tennis player and woman to be named Sports Illustrated's Sportsperson of the Year, one of the "100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century" by LIFE magazine, was the recipient of the 1999 Arthur Ashe Award for Courage, and has been admitted to the International Women's Sports Hall of Fame, the International Tennis Hall of Fame, and the National Women's Hall of Fame.

(11) In 2006, the United States Tennis Association recognized Billie Jean's immeasurable impact on the sport of tennis by renaming the site of the US Open in her honor as the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, which is located in Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens, New York. This was the first time a major sporting complex was named after a woman.

(12) In 2009, Billie Jean was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States, by President Barack Obama for her impactful work advocating for the rights of women. She was the first female athlete to receive this honor.

(13) In 2014, Billie Jean King founded the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative to empower companies and individuals to create inclusive work environments that celebrate and promote diversity and equality in the workplace.