

## NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MEMORIAL ACT

SEPTEMBER 30, 1999.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

Mr. STUMP, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs,  
submitted the following

### R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1663]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1663) to designate as a national memorial the memorial being built at the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California to honor recipients of the Medal of Honor, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendments are as follows:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Medal of Honor Memorial Act".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration which the Nation bestows.

(2) The Medal of Honor is the only military decoration given in the name of Congress, and therefore on behalf of the people of the United States.

(3) The Congressional Medal of Honor Society was established by an Act of Congress in 1958, and continues to protect, uphold, and preserve the dignity, honor, and name of the Medal of Honor and of the individual recipients of the Medal of Honor.

(4) The Congressional Medal of Honor Society is composed solely of recipients of the Medal of Honor.

#### SEC. 3. NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR SITES.

(a) RECOGNITION.—The following sites to honor recipients of the Medal of Honor are hereby recognized as National Medal of Honor sites:

(1) RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA.—The memorial under construction at the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California, to be dedicated on November 5, 1999.

(2) INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.—The memorial at the White River State Park in Indianapolis, Indiana, dedicated on May 28, 1999.

(3) MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA.—The Congressional Medal of Honor Museum at Patriots Point in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, currently situated on the ex-*U.S.S. Yorktown* (CV-6).

(b) INTERPRETATION.—This section shall not be construed to require or permit Federal funds (other than any provided for as of the date of the enactment of this Act) to be expended for any purpose related to the sites recognized in subsection (a).

Amend the title so as to read:

A bill to recognize National Medal of Honor sites in California, Indiana, and South Carolina.

#### INTRODUCTION

Mr. Calvert and 69 cosponsors introduced H.R. 1663, a bill to designate as a national memorial the memorial being built at the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California to honor recipients of the Medal of Honor, on May 4, 1999. On June 16, 1999 the Subcommittee on Benefits met to receive testimony on H.R. 1663. On September 22, 1999, the full Committee met and, after adopting by unanimous voice vote an amendment proposed by Ms. Carson, the Committee ordered the bill reported favorably to the House.

#### SUMMARY OF THE REPORTED BILL

H.R. 1663, as amended, would recognize National Medal of Honor sites in Riverside, California; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. Nothing in this legislation would require or permit Federal funds (other than any provided for as of the date of enactment of this Act) to be expended for any purpose related to the sites recognized in the bill.

#### BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration the Nation bestows. The Medal has its origins in the Civil War era. In December 1861, Congress passed legislation signed by Abraham Lincoln establishing the Medal of Honor. Since that time our Nation has awarded 3,429 Medals of Honor. Originally, only enlisted men were eligible, but Congress soon expanded eligibility to include officers as well.

Congress chartered the Congressional Medal of Honor Society in 1958. The purposes of the Society are to:

- form a bond of friendship and comradeship among all holders of the Medal of Honor;
- protect, uphold, and preserve the dignity and honor of the medal at all times and on all occasions;
- protect the name of the medal and individual holders of the medal from exploitation;
- provide appropriate aid to all persons to whom the medal has been awarded, their widows, and their children;
- serve our country in peace as in war;

- inspire and stimulate our youth to become worthy citizens of our country; and
- foster and perpetuate Americanism.

The Society's theme under Mr. Paul W. Bucha, its president since 1995, is that ordinary persons can do extraordinary things. The Society desires to recognize the unlimited potential of the ordinary individual in all aspects of American life. One hundred fifty five recipients of the Medal of Honor are alive today.

H.R. 1663, as amended, recognizes Medal of Honor recipients by designating three national Medal of Honor sites.

1. *Riverside, California.—The memorial under construction at the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California, to be dedicated on November 5, 1999.*

A Medal of Honor Memorial is being built with \$1.3 million in private donations on Department of Veterans Affairs land at the Riverside, California VA National Cemetery. The purpose of the Memorial is to:

- perpetuate the names of Medal of Honor recipients in a national shrine;
- help exalt and glorify one of the busiest—and prospectively one of the largest—national cemeteries in VA's 117-cemetery system, which in turn will;
- further honor all of those who have paid for the freedoms and liberties we enjoy.

Aspects of the design of the Memorial:

- The Memorial will be a partially enclosed contemplative setting situated within Riverside National Cemetery. It will not interfere with the burial capabilities of the cemetery, occurring at a rate of approximately 29 burials per day;
- The interior of the Memorial will include a waterfall and a polished granite wall on which will be inscribed the names of all 3,417 recipients of the Medal of Honor. Space will be provided for additional names;
- For each Medal of Honor recipient, the Society will plant an Italian Cypress. An initial grouping of 300 trees will be planted in the immediate vicinity of the memorial. The remaining number will be planted throughout the cemetery; and
- A computer kiosk will provide detailed information on the history of the Medal of Honor, the congressional legislation associated with the decoration, and the citation for each recipient (including the 20 who were decorated twice).

2. *Indianapolis, Indiana.—The memorial at the White River State Park in Indianapolis, Indiana, unveiled and dedicated on May 28, 1999.*

Features of the design of the memorial include the following:

- The memorial is composed of 27 curved walls of glass, each between 7 and 10-feet high and representing specific conflicts in which the medal was awarded; and

- The glass walls feature the names of the recipients, along with their branch of service and the location of their heroic action. Each day at dusk, the sound system of the memorial plays recorded stories of medal winners or of the conflicts in which they fought. Most of the stories have been recorded by living Medal of Honor recipients.

As a gift to the Nation to honor the acts of Medal of Honor recipients, Indiana Power and Light Company (IPALCO) donated \$2.5 million for the memorial, including design, construction, and future maintenance. Ninety-six of the 155 living members of the Society participated in the dedication. Located on the north bank of the Central Canal in White River State Park in downtown Indianapolis, the site is adjacent to Military Park. During the Civil War, the park was a military camp used for recruitment and training of troops. The city held its first recorded Fourth of July celebration there in 1822.

“As a symbol of heroism, the Medal of Honor has no equal in American life,” said IPALCO Chairman John Hodowal at the dedication. “The individuals who received the medal for acts of valor have been singled out not to glorify war, but to recognize that, for all its destructiveness, war often is the backdrop for extraordinary acts of bravery.”

3. *Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.—The Congressional Medal of Honor Museum at Patriot’s Point in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, currently situated on the ex-U.S.S. Yorktown.*

The Museum is located on the hangar deck of the ex-U.S.S. *Yorktown* (CV-6) at Patriot’s Point in Charleston Harbor. The Yorktown is the centerpiece of Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum:

- The Medal of Honor Museum details the eight eras of Medal of Honor history: Civil War; Indian Campaigns; Wars of American Expansion; Peacetime; World War I; World War II; Korea; and Vietnam;
- Panels list all of the Medal of Honor recipients to date and include such well-known names as Audie Murphy, Sergeant Alvin York, and Jimmy Doolittle; and
- Exhibits include memorabilia and artifacts relating to Medal of Honor recipients and archives of important documents.

The Committee notes that H.R. 1663, as amended, shall not be construed to require or permit Federal funds (other than any provided for as of the date of enactment of this Act) to be expended for any purpose related to the sites recognized by the bill.

#### SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 states that the title of the Act is the “National Medal of Honor Memorial Act”.

Section 2 makes findings with respect to the Medal of Honor and the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. Such findings include that the Medal of Honor is the only military decoration given in the name of Congress and, therefore, on behalf of the people of the United States. The Society continues to protect, uphold, and preserve the dignity, honor, and name of the Medal of Honor and of

the individual recipients of the Medal of Honor. The Society is composed solely of recipients of the Medal of Honor.

Section 3 recognizes three sites to honor recipients of the Medal of Honor to be recognized as National Medal of Honor sites: the memorial under construction at the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California, to be dedicated on November 5, 1999; the memorial at the White River State Park in Indianapolis, Indiana, dedicated on May 28, 1999; the Congressional Medal of Honor Museum at Patriots Point in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, currently situated on the ex-U.S.S. *Yorktown*.

#### OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

No oversight findings have been submitted to the Committee by the Committee on Government Reform.

#### CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

The following letter was received from the Congressional Budget Office concerning the cost of the reported bill:

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
*Washington, DC, September 24, 1999.*

Hon. BOB STUMP,  
*Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1663, the National Medal of Honor Memorial Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Evan W. Christman who can be reached at 226-2840.

Sincerely,

DAN L. CRIPPEN,  
*Director*

Enclosure.

#### CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

*H.R. 1663, National Medal of Honor Memorial Act, As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on September 22, 1999*

H.R. 1663 would recognize three sites in California, Indiana, and South Carolina as National Medal of Honor sites. CBO estimates that this bill would have no budgetary impact because it would only confer recognition on these sites and would not authorize any additional federal action or spending.

Because H.R. 1663 would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. This bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates. Any costs to state or local governments as a result of enactment of this bill would be incurred voluntarily.

This estimate was prepared by Evan W. Christman, who can be reached at 226-2840. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

INFLATIONARY IMPACT STATEMENT

The enactment of the reported bill would have no inflationary impact.

APPLICABILITY TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The reported bill would not be applicable to the legislative branch under the Congressional Accountability Act, Public Law 104-1, because the bill simply designates National Medal of Honor sites.

STATEMENT OF FEDERAL MANDATES

The reported bill would not establish a federal mandate under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, Public Law 104-4.

STATEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, the reported bill is authorized by Congress' power to "provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States".