

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1093

To authorize the presentation of gold medals on behalf of Congress to Native Americans who served as Code Talkers during foreign conflicts in which the United States was involved during the 20th Century in recognition of their service to the Nation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 5, 2003

Ms. GRANGER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To authorize the presentation of gold medals on behalf of Congress to Native Americans who served as Code Talkers during foreign conflicts in which the United States was involved during the 20th Century in recognition of their service to the Nation.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Code Talkers Recogni-
5 tion Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPRESSION OF RECOGNITION.**

2 The purpose of the medals authorized by this Act are
3 to express recognition by the United States and its citizens
4 and to honor the Native American Code Talkers who dis-
5 tinguished themselves in performing highly successful
6 communications operations of a unique type that greatly
7 assisted in saving countless lives and in hastening the end
8 of World War I and World War II.

9 **TITLE I—SIOUX CODE TALKERS**

10 **SEC. 101. FINDINGS.**

11 Congress finds the following:

12 (1) Sioux Indians used their native languages,
13 Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota Sioux, as code during
14 World War II.

15 (2) These people, who manned radio commu-
16 nications networks to advise of enemy actions, be-
17 came known as the Sioux Code Talkers.

18 (3) Under some of the heaviest combat action,
19 the Code Talkers worked around the clock to provide
20 information which saved the lives of many Ameri-
21 cans in the Pacific and Europe, such as the location
22 of enemy troops and the number of enemy guns.

23 (4) The Sioux Code Talkers were so successful
24 that military commanders credit the code with sav-
25 ing the lives of countless American soldiers and

1 being instrumental to the success of the United
2 States in many battles during World War II.

3 **SEC. 102. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

4 The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the
5 President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall make appro-
6 priate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of the
7 Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design, to each
8 Sioux Code Talker, including the following:

- 9 (1) Eddie Eagle Boy.
- 10 (2) Simon Brokenleg.
- 11 (3) Iver Crow Eagle, Sr.
- 12 (4) Edmund St. John.
- 13 (5) Walter C. John.
- 14 (6) John Bear King.
- 15 (7) Phillip “Stoney” LaBlanc.
- 16 (8) Baptiste Pumpkinseed.
- 17 (9) Guy Rondell.
- 18 (10) Charles Whitepipe.
- 19 (11) Clarence Wolfguts.

20 **TITLE II—COMANCHE CODE**
21 **TALKERS**

22 **SEC. 201. FINDINGS.**

23 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) On December 7, 1941, the Japanese Em-
2 pire attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and the Con-
3 gress declared war the following day.

4 (2) The military code, developed by the United
5 States for transmitting messages, had been deci-
6 phered by the Axis powers, and United States mili-
7 tary intelligence sought to develop a new means to
8 counter the enemy.

9 (3) The United States Government called upon
10 the Comanche Nation to support the military effort
11 by recruiting and enlisting Comanche men to serve
12 in the United States Army to develop a secret code
13 based on the Comanche language.

14 (4) At the time, the Comanches were second-
15 class citizens, and they were a people who were dis-
16 couraged from using their own language.

17 (5) The Comanches of the 4th Signal Division
18 became known as the “Comanche Code Talkers” and
19 helped to develop a code using their language to
20 communicate military messages during the D-Day
21 invasion and in the European theater during World
22 War II.

23 (6) To the enemy’s frustration, the code devel-
24 oped by these Native American Indians proved to be

1 unbreakable and was used extensively throughout
2 the European theater.

3 (7) The Comanche language, discouraged in the
4 past, was instrumental in developing one of the most
5 significant and successful military codes of World
6 War II.

7 (8) The Comanche Code Talkers contributed
8 greatly to the Allied war effort in Europe and were
9 instrumental in winning the war in Europe. Their
10 efforts saved countless lives.

11 (9) Only 1 of the Comanche Code Talkers of
12 World War II remains alive today.

13 (10) The time has come for the United States
14 Congress to honor the Comanche Code Talkers for
15 their valor and their service to the Nation.

16 (11) The congressional gold medals authorized
17 by this title are the recognition and honor by the
18 United States and its citizens of the Comanche Code
19 Talkers who distinguished themselves in performing
20 a unique, highly successful communications oper-
21 ation that greatly assisted in saving countless lives
22 and in hastening the end of World War II in Eu-
23 rope.

1 **SEC. 202. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

2 The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the
3 President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall make appro-
4 priate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of the
5 Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design to each
6 of the following Comanche Code Talkers of World War
7 II, in recognition of their contributions to the Nation:

- 8 (1) Charles Chibitty.
9 (2) Haddon Codynah.
10 (3) Robert Holder.
11 (4) Forrest Kassinovoid.
12 (5) Willington Mihecoby.
13 (6) Perry Noyebad.
14 (7) Clifford Otitivo.
15 (8) Simmons Parker.
16 (9) Melvin Permansu.
17 (10) Dick Red Elk.
18 (11) Elgin Red Elk.
19 (12) Larry Saupitty.
20 (13) Morris Sunrise.
21 (14) Willie Yackeschi.

22 **TITLE III—CHOCTAW CODE**
23 **TALKERS**

24 **SEC. 301. FINDINGS.**

25 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) On April 6, 1917, the United States, after
2 extraordinary provocations, declared war on Ger-
3 many, thus the United States entered World War I,
4 the War to End All Wars.

5 (2) At the time of this declaration of war, In-
6 dian people in the United States, including members
7 of the Choctaw Nation, were not accorded the status
8 of citizens of the United States.

9 (3) Without regard to this lack of citizenship,
10 many members of the Choctaw Nation joined many
11 members of other Indian tribes and nations in enlist-
12 ing in the Armed Forces to fight on behalf of their
13 native land.

14 (4) Members of the Choctaw Nation were en-
15 listed in the force known as the American Expedi-
16 tionary Force, which began hostile actions in France
17 in the fall of 1917, and specifically, members of the
18 Choctaw Nation were incorporated in a company of
19 Indian enlistees serving in the 142d Infantry Com-
20 pany of the 36th Division.

21 (5) A major impediment to Allied operations in
22 general, and American operations in particular, was
23 the fact that the German forces had deciphered all
24 codes used for transmitting information between Al-
25 lied commands, leading to substantial loss of men

1 and materiel during the first year of American ac-
2 tion.

3 (6) Because of the proximity and static nature
4 of the battle lines, a method to communicate without
5 the knowledge of the enemy was needed.

6 (7) An American commander realized the fact
7 that he had under his command a number of men
8 who spoke a native language. While the use of such
9 native languages was discouraged by the American
10 Government, the commander sought out and re-
11 cruited 18 Choctaw Indians to use for transmission
12 of field telephone communications during an upcom-
13 ing campaign.

14 (8) Because the language used by the Choctaw
15 soldiers in the transmission of information was not
16 based on a European language or on a mathematical
17 progression, the Germans were unable to understand
18 any of the transmissions.

19 (9) The Choctaw soldiers were placed in dif-
20 ferent command positions, to achieve the widest pos-
21 sible area for communications.

22 (10) The use of the Choctaw Code Talkers was
23 particularly important in the movement of American
24 soldiers in October of 1918 (including securing for-
25 ward and exposed positions), in the protection of

1 supplies during American action (including pro-
2 tecting gun emplacements from enemy shelling), and
3 in the preparation for the assault on German posi-
4 tions in the final stages of combat operations in the
5 fall of 1918.

6 (11) In the opinion of the officers involved, the
7 use of Choctaw Indians to transmit information in
8 their native language saved men and munitions, and
9 was highly successful. Based on this successful expe-
10 rience, Choctaw Indians were being withdrawn from
11 frontline units for training in transmission of codes
12 so as to be more widely used when the war came to
13 a halt.

14 (12) The Germans never succeeded in breaking
15 the Choctaw code.

16 (13) This was the first time in modern warfare
17 that such transmission of messages in a native
18 American language was used for the purpose of con-
19 fusing the enemy.

20 (14) This action by members of the Choctaw
21 Nation is another example of the commitment of
22 American Indians to the defense of our great Nation
23 and adds to the proud legacy of such service.

24 (15) The Choctaw Nation has honored the ac-
25 tions of these 18 Choctaw Code Talkers through a

1 memorial bearing their names located at the en-
2 trance of the tribal complex in Durant, Oklahoma.

3 **SEC. 302. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

4 The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the
5 President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall make appro-
6 priate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of the
7 Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design honoring
8 the Choctaw Code Talkers.

9 **TITLE IV—GENERAL**
10 **PROVISIONS**

11 **SEC. 401. MEDALS FOR OTHER CODE TALKERS.**

12 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—In addition to
13 the gold medals authorized to be presented under section
14 102, 202, and 302, the Speaker of the House of Rep-
15 resentatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate
16 shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation,
17 on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate
18 design to any other Native American Code Talker identi-
19 fied by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to subsection
20 (b) who has not previously received a congressional gold
21 medal.

22 (b) IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER NATIVE AMERICAN
23 CODE TALKERS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Any Native American mem-
25 ber of the United States Armed Forces who served

1 as a Code Talker in any foreign conflict in which the
2 United States was involved during the 20th Century
3 shall be eligible for a gold medal under this section.

4 (2) DETERMINATION.—Eligibility under para-
5 graph (1) shall be determined by the Secretary of
6 Defense and such Secretary shall establish a list of
7 the names of such eligible individuals before the end
8 of the 120-day period beginning on the date of the
9 enactment of this Act.

10 **SEC. 402. PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL MEDALS**
11 **UNDER THIS ACT.**

12 (a) MEDALS AWARDED POSTHUMOUSLY.—Medals
13 authorized by this Act may be awarded posthumously on
14 behalf of, and presented to the next of kin or other rep-
15 resentative of, a Native American Code Talker.

16 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of any presen-
18 tation of a gold medal under this Act, the Secretary
19 of the Treasury shall strike gold medals with suit-
20 able emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be deter-
21 mined by the Secretary.

22 (2) DESIGNS EMBLEMATIC OF TRIBAL AFFILI-
23 ATION.—The design of the gold medals struck under
24 this Act for Native American Code talkers of the

1 same Indian tribe shall be emblematic of the partici-
2 pation of the Code Talkers of such Indian tribe.

3 (3) INDIAN TRIBE DEFINED.—For purposes of
4 this subsection, the term “Indian tribe” has the
5 same meaning as in section 4 of the Indian Self-De-
6 termination and Education Assistance Act.

7 **SEC. 403. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

8 The Secretary of the Treasury may strike and sell
9 duplicates in bronze of the gold medals struck under this
10 Act in accordance with such regulations as the Secretary
11 may prescribe, and at a price sufficient to cover the costs
12 thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery,
13 and overhead expenses, and the cost of the bronze medal.

14 **SEC. 404. STATUS AS NATIONAL MEDALS.**

15 The medals struck pursuant to this Act are national
16 medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United
17 States Code.

18 **SEC. 405. FUNDING.**

19 (a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is
20 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
21 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
22 essary to pay for the costs of the medals authorized by
23 this Act.

24 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
25 sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 403 shall

- 1 be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise
- 2 Fund.

