

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2109

To authorize reference to the National D-Day Museum in New Orleans,
Louisiana, as “America’s National World War II Museum”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 14, 2003

Mr. VITTER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on Armed Services

A BILL

To authorize reference to the National D-Day Museum in
New Orleans, Louisiana, as “America’s National World
War II Museum”.

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 “America’s National
5 World War II Museum Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The National D-Day Museum Foundation,
9 Inc., a nonprofit corporation under section 503(c)(3)

1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, was estab-
2 lished “to celebrate the American Spirit”.

3 (2) The National D-Day Museum Foundation,
4 Inc., is responsible for the finances and management
5 of the National D-Day Museum in New Orleans,
6 Louisiana.

7 (3) The National D-Day Museum is the only
8 museum in the Nation that exists for the exclusive
9 purpose of interpreting the American experience in
10 the World War II years (1939–1945), both on the
11 battle front and the home front, including all
12 branches of the Armed Forces (including the United
13 States merchant marine).

14 (4) The National D-Day Museum was founded
15 by the preeminent American historian, Stephen E.
16 Ambrose, as a result of a conversation with Presi-
17 dent Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1963. During that
18 conversation, the former Supreme Allied Commander
19 credited Andrew Jackson Higgins, chief executive of-
20 ficer of Higgins Industries in New Orleans, as the
21 “man who won the war for us” because the 12,000
22 landing craft designed by Higgins made possible all
23 the amphibious invasions of World War II and car-
24 ried American soldiers into every theater of the war.

1 (5) Since the grand opening of the National D-
2 Day Museum on June 6, 2000, the museum has at-
3 tracted nearly 1,000,000 visitors from around the
4 world, of which 85 percent are Americans from
5 across the Nation.

6 (6) There is an urgent need to preserve the sto-
7 ries, artifacts, and heroic achievements of the
8 “greatest generation” of World War II, who are
9 dying at a rate of more than 1,200 each day.

10 (7) The Nation has a need to preserve forever
11 the knowledge and history of America’s most deci-
12 sive achievement in the 20th century and to portray
13 that history to citizens, visitors, and school children
14 for centuries to come.

15 (8) The Congress recognized this need first in
16 1992 with an appropriation to fund the design and
17 construction of the National D-Day Museum to com-
18 memorate the epic 1944 Normandy invasion and
19 later in 1998, 2000, 2001, and 2002, with appro-
20 priations to help expand the museum’s exhibits to
21 the D-Days of the Pacific and other campaigns of
22 World War II.

23 (9) The State of Louisiana and thousands of
24 donors and foundations across the Nation have con-

1 tributed millions of dollars to help build this national
2 institution.

3 (10) The board of trustees of the National D-
4 Day Museum is national in scope and diverse in its
5 makeup.

6 (11) The World War II Memorial now under
7 construction on the National Mall in Washington,
8 D.C., should always be the Nation's memorial where
9 people go to remember America's sacrifices in World
10 War II.

11 (12) The National D-Day Museum should al-
12 ways be America's museum of the American experi-
13 ence in the World War II years (1939–1945) where
14 people go to learn about this critical period and
15 where the history of the Nation's monumental strug-
16 gle will be preserved so that future generations may
17 understand the role the United States played in the
18 preservation and advancement of democracy and
19 freedom in the middle of the 20th century.

20 (13) The National D-Day Museum seeks to
21 educate a diverse group of audiences through its col-
22 lection of artifacts, photographs, letters, documents,
23 and firsthand personal accounts of the participants
24 in the war on the home front during one of history's
25 darkest hours.

1 (14) The National D-Day Museum is devoted to
2 the combat experience of America’s citizen soldiers
3 in all theaters of the war and to the heroic efforts
4 of the men and women on the home front who
5 worked tirelessly to support the troops and the war
6 effort.

7 (15) The National D-Day Museum continues to
8 add to and maintain one of the Nation’s largest per-
9 sonal history collections of the men and women who
10 participated in World War II and on the home front.

11 (16) No other museum seeks to describe the
12 volunteer spirit that arose throughout the United
13 States during the war years of World War II—the
14 spirit that united the country.

15 (17) The National D-Day Museum is currently
16 engaged in a 250,000-square-foot expansion to in-
17 clude as the core exhibitions of the museum the Cen-
18 ter for the Study of the American Spirit, an ad-
19 vanced format theater, and a new United States pa-
20 vilion.

21 (18) The planned “We’re All in This Together”
22 Exhibit will describe the role played by every State,
23 commonwealth, and territory in World War II, and
24 the computer-driven database and software of the
25 National D-Day Museum’s educational program will

1 be made available to the teachers and school chil-
2 dren of every State, commonwealth, and territory.

3 (19) The National D-Day Museum is an official
4 Smithsonian affiliate institution with formal agree-
5 ment to borrow Smithsonian artifacts for future ex-
6 hibitions.

7 (20) “Le Memorial de Caen” in Normandy,
8 France, has officially recognized the National D-Day
9 Museum as its official partner in a patriotic alliance
10 signed by both museums on October 16, 2002.

11 (21) The official Battle of the Bulge Museums
12 in Luxembourg and the American Battlefield Monu-
13 ments Commission in Europe are already collabo-
14 rating with the National D-Day Museum on World
15 War II exhibitions.

16 (22) The Congress authorized \$4,200,000 in
17 fiscal year 2002 and \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2003
18 Department of Defense Appropriations Acts for
19 planning the expansion of the National D-Day Mu-
20 seum to portray the untold campaigns of World War
21 II and to include new exhibits on the war on land,
22 sea, and air and special exhibits on the China-
23 Burma-India theater, the Japanese invasion of Alas-
24 ka’s Aleutian Islands, the role of women in World

1 War II, the role of African Americans in World War
2 II, and other relevant subjects.

3 (23) It is fitting and proper to refer to the Na-
4 tional D-Day Museum Foundation, Inc., as “Amer-
5 ica’s National World War II Museum”.

6 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

7 The purposes of this Act are—

8 (1) to authorize reference to the National D-
9 Day Museum, including its future and expanded ex-
10 hibits, collections, and educational programs, as
11 “America’s National World War II Museum”;

12 (2) to ensure the continuing preservation, main-
13 tenance, and interpretation of the artifacts, docu-
14 ments, images, and history collected by the museum;

15 (3) to enhance the knowledge of the American
16 people of the American experience during the World
17 War II years, both in combat and on the home
18 front;

19 (4) to provide and support a facility for the
20 public display of the artifacts, photographs, letters,
21 documents, and personal histories of the World War
22 II years (1939–1945);

23 (5) to provide educational outreach programs
24 for teachers and students throughout the Nation;

1 (6) to encourage for educational purposes the
2 further expansion of the European and Pacific ex-
3 hibits in the museum to include the Center for the
4 Study of the American Spirit; and

5 (7) to ensure that all future generations under-
6 stand the magnitude of the American contribution to
7 the Allied victory in World War II, the sacrifices
8 made to preserve freedom and democracy, and the
9 benefits of peace for all future generations in the
10 21st century and beyond.

11 **SEC. 4. REFERENCE TO AMERICA’S NATIONAL WORLD WAR**
12 **II MUSEUM.**

13 The National D-Day Museum located in New Orle-
14 ans, Louisiana, and managed by the National D-Day Mu-
15 seum Foundation, Inc., is hereby authorized to be referred
16 to as “America’s National World War II Museum”.

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