

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4063

To grant the congressional gold medal to the members of the messman and steward branches of United States Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard that served during World War II.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 7, 2009

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland (for herself, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To grant the congressional gold medal to the members of the messman and steward branches of United States Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard that served 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) During World War II, servicemembers of
6 the United States Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast

1 Guard messman and steward branches were men of
2 African-American or Asian-Pacific Island descent.

3 (2) The corresponding branches operated under
4 racially discriminatory policies by limiting nearly all
5 of its minority recruits to duty in these branches,
6 providing food and valet services.

7 (3) The messmen and steward branch
8 servicemembers were targeted for disparagement as
9 servants, menials, and boys.

10 (4) Many volunteers of African-American and
11 Asian-Pacific Islander descent entered the United
12 States Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard with
13 extraordinary talents and training from civilian life
14 and acquired considerable leadership experience and
15 practical seamanship qualifications after enlisting,
16 but were denied requests for transfer to other units.

17 (5) The messman and steward branch
18 servicemembers shared in all the hardships and haz-
19 ards of combat duty on the high seas as integral
20 members of their ship's companies, serving in prac-
21 tically every Navy and Coast Guard combatant ship-
22 type, and in virtually every sea battle from before
23 the Nation's entry into World War II until its finish.

24 (6) The messmen and steward branch
25 servicemembers faithfully and heroically performed

1 their secondary role at their battle stations and
2 made vital contributions that were all too often mis-
3 understood or unappreciated.

4 (7) No fewer than 1,172 Navy, Marine Corps,
5 and Coast Guard messman and steward branch
6 servicemembers were killed in action or died of
7 wounds during World War II.

8 (8) The messman and steward branch
9 servicemembers served honorably and exhibited her-
10 oism, sacrifice, commitment, and patriotism all while
11 experiencing discrimination by their peers and supe-
12 riors.

13 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

14 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
15 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
16 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
17 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal
18 of appropriate design in honor of the steward and
19 messman branches of the United States Navy, Marine
20 Corps, and Coast Guard that served during World War
21 II, collectively, in recognition of their personal sacrifice
22 and service to their country.

23 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
24 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
25 Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Sec-

1 retary”) shall strike the gold medal with suitable emblems,
2 devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-
3 retary.

4 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
6 gold medal in honor of the steward and messman
7 branches of the United States Navy, Marine Corps,
8 and Coast Guard that served during World War II
9 under subsection (a), the gold medal shall be given
10 to the Smithsonian Institution, where it will be dis-
11 played as appropriate and made available for re-
12 search.

13 (2) SENSE.—It is the sense of the Congress
14 that the Smithsonian Institution should make the
15 gold medal received under paragraph (1) available
16 for display elsewhere, particularly at other appro-
17 priate locations associated with the steward and
18 messman branches of the United States Navy, Ma-
19 rine Corps, and Coast Guard that served during
20 World War II.

21 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

22 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
23 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
24 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2, at a price

1 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
2 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

3 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

4 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are National med-
5 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
6 Code.

7 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; PROCEEDS**
8 **OF SALE.**

9 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
10 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
11 Public Enterprise Fund, an amount not to exceed \$30,000
12 to pay for the cost of the medals authorized under section
13 2.

14 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
15 sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be
16 deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise
17 Fund.

○