H. R. 755

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Civil Air Patrol.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 15, 2013

Mr. McCaul (for himself and Mr. Cuellar) 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 award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Civil Air Patrol.

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The unpaid volunteer members of the Civil Air Patrol (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “CAP”) during World War II provided extraordinary humanitarian, combat and national services during a critical time of need for the Nation.
(2) During the war, CAP members used their own aircraft to perform a myriad of essential tasks for the military and the Nation within the United States including attacks on enemy submarines off the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts of the United States.

(3) This extraordinary national service set the stage for the post-war CAP to become a valuable nonprofit, public service organization chartered by Congress and designated the Auxiliary of the United States Air Force that provides essential emergency, operational, and public services to communities, States, the Federal Government, and the military.

(4) The CAP was established, initially as a part of the Office of Civil Defense, by air-minded citizens one week before the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 1, 1941, out of the desire of civil airmen of the country to be mobilized with their equipment in the common defense of the Nation.

(5) Within days of the start of the war, the German Navy started a massive submarine offensive, known as Operation Drumbeat, off the east coast of the United States against oil tankers and other critical shipping that threatened the overall war effort.
(6) Neither the Navy nor the Army had enough aircraft, ships, or other resources to adequately patrol and protect the shipping along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts of the United States, and many ships were torpedoed and sunk, often within sight of civilians on shore, including 52 tankers sunk between January and March 1942.

(7) At that time General George Marshall remarked that “[t]he losses by submarines off our Atlantic seaboard and in the Caribbean now threaten our entire war effort”.

(8) From the beginning CAP leaders urged the military to use its services to patrol coastal waters but met with great resistance because of the non-military status of CAP civilian pilots.

(9) Finally, in response to the ever-increasing submarine attacks, the Tanker Committee of the Petroleum Industry War Council urged the Navy Department and the War Department to consider the use of the CAP to help patrol the sea lanes off the coasts of the United States.

(10) While the Navy initially rejected this suggestion, the Army decided it had merit, and the Civil Air Patrol Coastal Patrol began in March 1942.
Oil companies and other organizations provided funds to help pay for some CAP operations, including vitally needed shore radios that were used to monitor patrol missions.

By late March 1942, the Navy also began to use the services of the CAP.

Starting with three bases located in Delaware, Florida, and New Jersey, CAP aircrews (ranging in age from 18 to over 80) immediately started to spot enemy submarines as well as lifeboats, bodies, and wreckage.

Within 15 minutes of starting his patrol on the first Coastal Patrol flight, a pilot had sighted a torpedoed tanker and was coordinating rescue operations.

Eventually 21 bases, ranging from Bar Harbor, Maine, to Brownsville, Texas, were set up for the CAP to patrol the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts of the United States, with 40,000 volunteers eventually participating.

The CAP used a wide range of civilian-owned aircraft, mainly light-weight, single-engine aircraft—manufactured by Cessna, Beech, Waco, Fairchild, Stinson, Piper, Taylorcraft, and Sikorsky,
among others—as well as some twin engine aircraft such as the Grumman Widgeon.

(17) Most of these aircraft were painted in their civilian prewar colors (red, yellow, blue, etc.) and carried special markings (a blue circle with a white triangle) to identify them as CAP aircraft.

(18) Patrols were conducted up to 100 miles off shore, generally with 2 aircraft flying together, in aircraft often equipped with only a compass for navigation and a single radio for communication.

(19) Due to the critical nature of the situation, CAP operations were conducted in bad weather as well as good, often when the military was unable to fly, and in all seasons including the winter, when ditching an aircraft in cold water would likely mean certain death to the aircrew.

(20) Personal emergency equipment was often lacking, particularly during early patrols where inner tubes and kapok duck hunter vests were carried as flotation devices since ocean worthy wet suits, life vests, and life rafts were unavailable.

(21) The initial purpose of the Coastal Patrol was to spot submarines, report their position to the military, and force them to dive below the surface, which limited their operating speed and maneuver-
ability and reduced their ability to detect and attack shipping because attacks against shipping were conducted while the submarines were surfaced.

(22) It immediately became apparent that there were opportunities for CAP pilots to attack submarines, such as when a Florida CAP aircrew came across a surfaced submarine that quickly stranded itself on a sand bar. However, the aircrew could not get any assistance from armed military aircraft before the submarine freed itself.

(23) Finally, after several instances when the military could not respond in a timely manner, a decision was made by the military to arm CAP aircraft with 50- and 100-pound bombs, and to arm some larger twin-engine aircraft with 325-pound depth charges.

(24) The arming of CAP aircraft dramatically changed the mission for these civilian aircrews and resulted in more than 57 attacks on enemy submarines.

(25) While CAP volunteers received $8 a day flight reimbursement for cost incurred, their patrols were accomplished at a great economic cost to many CAP members who—
(A) used their own aircraft and other equipment in defense of the Nation;

(B) paid for much of their own aircraft maintenance and hangar use; and

(C) often lived in the beginning in primitive conditions along the coast, including old barns and chicken coops converted for sleeping.

(26) More importantly, the CAP Coastal Patrol service came at the high cost of 26 fatalities, 7 serious injuries, and 90 aircraft lost.

(27) At the conclusion of the 18-month Coastal Patrol, the heroic CAP aircrews would be credited with the following:

(A) 2 submarines possibly damaged or destroyed;

(B) 57 submarines attacked;

(C) 82 bombs dropped against submarines;

(D) 173 radio reports of submarine positions (with a number of credited assists for kills made by military units);

(E) 17 floating mines reported;

(F) 36 dead bodies reported;

(G) 91 vessels in distress reported;

(H) 363 survivors in distress reported;

(I) 836 irregularities noted;
(J) 1,036 special investigations at sea or along the coast;
(K) 5,684 convoy missions as aerial escorts for Navy ships;
(L) 86,685 total missions flown;
(M) 244,600 total flight hours logged; and
(N) more than 24,000,000 total miles flown.

(28) It is believed that at least one high-level German Navy Officer credited CAP as one reason that submarine attacks moved away from the United States when he concluded that “[i]t was because of those damned little red and yellow planes!”.

(29) CAP was dismissed from coastal missions with little thanks in August 1943 when the Navy took over the mission completely and ordered CAP to stand down.

(30) While the Coastal Patrol was ongoing, CAP was also establishing itself as a vital wartime service to the military, States, and communities nationwide by performing a wide range of missions including among others—

(A) border patrol;

(B) forest and fire patrols;
(C) military courier flights for mail, repair and replacement parts, and urgent military deliveries;

(D) emergency transportation of military personnel;

(E) target towing (with live ammunition being fired at the targets and seven lives being lost) and searchlight tracking training missions;

(F) missing aircraft and personnel searches;

(G) air and ground search and rescue for missing aircraft and personnel;

(H) radar and aircraft warning system training flights;

(I) aerial inspections of camouflaged military and civilian facilities;

(J) aerial inspections of city and town blackout conditions;

(K) simulated bombing attacks on cities and facilities to test air defenses and early warning;

(L) aerial searches for scrap metal materials;

(M) river and lake patrols including aerial surveys for ice in the Great Lakes;
(N) support of war bond drives;

(O) management and guard duties at hundreds of airports;

(P) support for State and local emergencies such as natural and manmade disasters;

(Q) predator control;

(R) rescue of livestock during floods and blizzards;

(S) recruiting for the Army Air Force;

(T) initial flight screening and orientation flights for potential military recruits;

(U) mercy missions including the airlift of plasma to central blood banks;

(V) nationwide emergency communications services; and

(W) a cadet youth program which provided aviation and military training for tens of thousands.

(31) The CAP flew more than 500,000 hours on these additional missions, including, for example—

(A) 20,500 missions involving target towing (with live ammunition) and gun/searchlight tracking which resulted in 7 deaths, 5 serious injuries, and the loss of 25 aircraft;
(B) a courier service involving 3 major Air
Force Commands over a 2-year period carrying
more than 3,500,000 pounds of vital cargo and
543 passengers;

(C) southern border patrol flying more
than 30,000 hours and reporting 7,000 unusual
sightings including a vehicle (that was appre-
hended) with 2 enemy agents attempting to
enter the country;

(D) a week in February 1945 during which
CAP units rescued seven missing Army and
Navy pilots; and

(E) a State in which the CAP flew 790
hours on forest fire patrol missions and re-
ported 576 fires to authorities during a single
year.

(32) On April 29, 1943, the CAP was trans-
ferred to the Army Air Forces, thus beginning its
long association with the United States Air Force.

(33) Hundreds of CAP-trained women pilots
joined military women’s units including the Women’s
Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) program.

(34) Many members of the WASP program
joined or rejoined the CAP during the post-war pe-
riod because it provided women opportunities to fly
and continue to serve the Nation that were severely lacking elsewhere.

(35) Due to the exceptional emphasis on safety, unit and pilot training and discipline, and the organization of the CAP, by the end of the war a total of only 64 CAP members had died in service and only 150 aircraft had been lost (including its Coastal Patrol losses from early in the war).

(36) It is estimated that up to 100,000 civilians (including youth in its cadet program) participated in CAP in wide range of staff and operational positions and that CAP aircrews flew a total of approximately 750,000 hours during the war, most of which was in their own personal aircraft and often at risk to their lives.

(37) After the war, at a CAP dinner for Congress, a quorum of both Houses attended with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President thanking CAP for its service.

(38) While air medals were issued for some of those participating in the Coastal Patrol, little other recognition was forthcoming for the myriad of services CAP volunteers provided during the war.

(39) Despite some misguided efforts to end CAP at the end of the war, the organization had
proved its capabilities to the Nation and strength-
ened its ties with the Air Force and Congress.

(40) In 1946, Congress chartered the CAP as
a nonprofit, public service organization and in 1948
made CAP the Auxiliary of the United States Air
Force.

(41) Today the CAP conducts many of the
same missions it performed during World War II,
including a vital role in homeland security.

(42) CAP’s wartime service was highly unusual
and extraordinary due to the unpaid civilian status
of its members, the use of privately-owned aircraft
and personal funds by many of its members, the
myriad of humanitarian and national missions flown
for the Nation, and the fact that for 18 months,
during a time of great need for the United States,
CAP flew combat-related missions in support of mili-
tary operations off the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico
coasts.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) AWARD.—

(1) AUTHORIZED.—The President pro tempore
of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Rep-
resentatives shall make appropriate arrangements
for the award, on behalf of Congress, of a single
gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the
World War II members of the Civil Air Patrol collec-
tively, in recognition of the military service and ex-
emplary record of the Civil Air Patrol during World
War II.

(2) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes
of the award referred to in paragraph (1), the Sec-
retary of the Treasury shall strike the gold medal
with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to
be determined by the Secretary.

(3) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of
the gold medal referred to in paragraph (1) in
honor of all of the World War II members of
the Civil Air Patrol, the gold medal shall be
given to the Smithsonian Institution, where it
shall be displayed as appropriate and made
available for research.

(B) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense
of Congress that the Smithsonian Institution
should make the gold medal received under this
paragraph available for display elsewhere, par-
ticularly at other locations associated with the
Civil Air Patrol.
(b) **DUPLICATE MEDALS.**—Under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under this Act, at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

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

**SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.**

(a) **Authorization of Appropriations.**—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund, an amount not to exceed $30,000 to pay for the cost of the medals authorized under section 2.

(b) **Proceeds of Sale.**—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 2(b) shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.