

114TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 2992

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 1, 2016

Received

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## AN ACT

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the U.S. Merchant Marine of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Merchant Marine of  
3 World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 The Congress finds the following:

6 (1) 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the Al-  
7 lied victory in World War II and the restoration of  
8 peacetime across the European and Pacific theaters.

9 (2) The United States Merchant Marine was in-  
10 tegral in providing the link between domestic pro-  
11 duction and the fighting forces overseas, providing  
12 combat equipment, fuel, food, commodities, and raw  
13 materials to troops stationed overseas.

14 (3) Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King acknowledged  
15 the indispensability of the Merchant Marine to the  
16 victory in a 1945 letter stating that without their  
17 support, “the Navy could not have accomplished its  
18 mission”.

19 (4) President and former Supreme Commander  
20 of the Allied Forces, Dwight D. Eisenhower, ac-  
21 knowledged that “through the prompt delivery of  
22 supplies and equipment to our armed forces over-  
23 seas, and of cargoes representing economic and mili-  
24 tary aid to friendly nations, the American Merchant  
25 Marine has effectively helped to strengthen the  
26 forces of freedom throughout the world”.

1           (5) Military missions and war planning were  
2 contingent upon the availability of resources and  
3 that the United States Merchant Marine played a  
4 vital role in this regard, ensuring the efficient and  
5 reliable transoceanic transport of military equipment  
6 as well as both military and civilian personnel.

7           (6) The United States Merchant Marine pro-  
8 vided for the successful transport of resources and  
9 personnel despite consistent and ongoing exposure to  
10 enemy combatants from both the air and the sea,  
11 such as enemy bomber squadrons, submarines, and  
12 mines.

13           (7) The efforts of the United States Merchant  
14 Marine were not without sacrifices as they bore a  
15 higher per capita casualty rate than any other  
16 branch of the military during the war.

17           (8) The United States Merchant Marine proved  
18 to be an instrumental asset on untold occasions, par-  
19 ticipating in every landing operation by the United  
20 States Marine Corps from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima  
21 as well as providing, for instance, the bulk tonnage  
22 of material necessary for the invasion of Normandy  
23 which “would not have been possible without the  
24 Merchant Marine”, as a 1944 New York Times arti-  
25 cle observed.

1           (9) In also assessing their performance, General  
2 Dwight D. Eisenhower stated, “every man in this  
3 Allied command is quick to express his admiration  
4 for the loyalty, courage, and fortitude of the officers  
5 and men of the Merchant Marine. We count upon  
6 their efficiency and their utter devotion to duty as  
7 we do our own; they have never failed us”.

8           (10) During a September 1944 speech, Presi-  
9 dent Franklin D. Roosevelt stated, the Merchant  
10 Marine has “delivered the goods when and where  
11 needed in every theater of operations and across  
12 every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult, and  
13 dangerous transportation job ever undertaken. As  
14 time goes on, there will be greater public under-  
15 standing of our merchant fleet’s record during this  
16 war.”.

17           (11) The feats and accomplishments of the  
18 Merchant Marine are deserving of broader public  
19 recognition.

20           (12) The United States will be forever grateful  
21 and indebted to the U.S. Merchant Marine for their  
22 effective, reliable, and courageous transport of goods  
23 and resources in enemy territory throughout thea-  
24 ters of every variety in World War II; that these  
25 goods and resources saved thousands of lives and en-

1 abled the Allied Powers to claim victory in World  
2 War II.

3 (13) The Congressional Gold Medal will be an  
4 appropriate way to shed further light on the service  
5 of the Merchant Marine in World War II and the in-  
6 strumental role they played in winning World War  
7 II.

8 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

9 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the  
10 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore  
11 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the  
12 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal  
13 of appropriate design to the U.S. Merchant Marine of  
14 World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital  
15 service during World War II.

16 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the  
17 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the  
18 Treasury (hereafter referred to as the “Secretary”) shall  
19 strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and  
20 inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

21 (c) AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE MUSEUM.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the  
23 gold medal in honor of the U.S. Merchant Marine,  
24 the gold medal shall be given to the American Mer-

1 chant Marine Museum, where it will be available for  
2 display as appropriate and available for research.

3 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

4 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-  
5 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
6 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price  
7 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,  
8 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

9 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

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

13 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section  
14 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck  
15 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

Passed the House of Representatives November 30,  
2016.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

*Clerk.*