

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 409

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal in commemoration of  
Aretha Franklin.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 7, 2019

Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. PETERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. REED, Mr. KAINÉ, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. WARREN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. JONES, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. COONS, and Ms. HASSAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

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## A BILL

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal in  
commemoration of Aretha Franklin.

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 “Aretha Franklin Con-  
5 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Aretha Franklin was born on March 25,  
2           1942, in Memphis, Tennessee, and died peacefully at  
3           her home in Detroit, Michigan, surrounded by family  
4           and loved ones, on August 16, 2018.

5           (2) Aretha Franklin’s musical talents have in-  
6           fluenced generations of musicians and political lead-  
7           ers, creating a legacy that spans an incredible 6 dec-  
8           ades.

9           (3) Aretha Franklin, dubbed the “Queen of  
10          Soul”, was the first woman ever inducted into the  
11          Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, was a 2005 recipient  
12          of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and was a  
13          1999 recipient of the National Medal of Arts and  
14          Humanities Award, among other accolades.

15          (4) Aretha Franklin’s music served as a 1960s  
16          call to action that inspired thousands of individuals  
17          to join civil rights movements and still resonates  
18          across those movements today.

19          (5) Aretha Franklin’s contributions go beyond  
20          music and the arts.

21          (6) Aretha Franklin was also a philanthropist  
22          who supported causes that advanced civil rights,  
23          human health, and gender equality.

1           (7) Aretha Franklin’s talents instilled hope, up-  
2           lifted generations, and changed the lives of millions  
3           of individuals across the globe.

4           (8) The City of Detroit shaped Aretha Frank-  
5           lin’s life and music, as her father and church intro-  
6           duced her to local Motown artists.

7           (9) In return, Aretha Franklin made countless  
8           contributions to the City of Detroit and few people  
9           have played a greater role in shaping a culturally  
10          and socially relevant discography in the United  
11          States than Aretha Franklin.

12 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

13          (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of  
14          the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-  
15          pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements  
16          for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of Congress,  
17          of a gold medal of appropriate design in commemoration  
18          of Aretha Franklin.

19          (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the  
20          presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary  
21          of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Sec-  
22          retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems,  
23          devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-  
24          retary.

25          (c) AWARD OF MEDAL.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—After the award of the gold  
2 medal referred to in subsection (a), the gold medal  
3 shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution, where  
4 it shall be displayed as appropriate and made avail-  
5 able for research.

6           (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
7 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should  
8 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)  
9 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other  
10 locations and events associated with Aretha Frank-  
11 lin.

12 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

13       The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
14 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3 under  
15 such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at a price  
16 sufficient to cover the cost, including labor, materials,  
17 dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, of the gold  
18 medal and any such duplicates.

19 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

20       (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck under  
21 this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51  
22 of title 31, United States Code.

1       (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section  
2 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck  
3 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

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