

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 5437

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the U.S. Air Force aircrew of Reach 871, commonly known as the “Reach 871”, in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service during Operation Allies Refuge.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

Mr. CALVERT (for himself and Mr. GARCIA of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and the Budget, 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

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## A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the U.S. Air Force aircrew of Reach 871, commonly known as the “Reach 871”, in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service during Operation Allies Refuge.

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 “Reach 871 Congres-  
5 sional Gold Medal Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The U.S. Air Force is an essential and inte-  
4 gral part U.S. national security and diplomatic ef-  
5 forts, often called upon to enter extremely dangerous  
6 situations and provide support and safety for combat  
7 and non-combat missions worldwide.

8 (2) A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III air-  
9 crew, assigned to the 6th Airlift Squadron, 305 Air  
10 Mobility Wing, based at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-  
11 Lakehurst (JBMDL), callsign Reach 871, was de-  
12 ployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Allies  
13 Refuge to assist in non-combatant evacuation oper-  
14 ations.

15 (3) Reach 871 safely evacuated over 800 Af-  
16 ghans fleeing the Taliban takeover of Kabul.

17 (4) U.S. Air Force confirmed that Reach 871's  
18 evacuation flight set a record for the number of per-  
19 sonnel onboard an airborne C-17 Globemaster III  
20 under any condition.

21 (5) The aircrew's selfless action allowed for the  
22 safe evacuation of vulnerable Afghan civilians. The  
23 crew maximized previously undemonstrated capa-  
24 bility and capacity of the aircraft, while operating  
25 the aircraft in extraordinary circumstances—bal-  
26 ancing risk and capability to save the lives of others.

1           (6) The crew and its commander made the  
2           brave decision, in accordance with their com-  
3           mander’s intent, to evacuate as many civilians as  
4           possible, including women and children, placing  
5           those civilian lives and safety above all else.

6           (7) The selfless service and willingness to face  
7           extreme peril in order to secure the safety of Afghan  
8           civilians should be recognized and honored. These  
9           Airmen exemplify the patriotism and the commit-  
10          ment of all our brave service members who have  
11          served in Afghanistan over the last 20 years and  
12          risked their lives in service of our country.

13 **SEC. 3. 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 gold medal of ap-  
18          propriate design to the Reach 871 aircrew, commonly  
19          known as “Reach 871”, in recognition of their bravery and  
20          outstanding service during Operation Allies Refuge.

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

1 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the  
3 Reach 871 aircrew, the gold medal shall be given to  
4 the Smithsonian Institution, where it will be dis-  
5 played as appropriate and made available for re-  
6 search.

7 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
8 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should  
9 make the gold medal awarded pursuant to this Act  
10 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other  
11 locations associated with the Reach 871 aircrew.

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

13 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
14 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price  
15 sufficient to cover the costs of the bronze medals, includ-  
16 ing labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead  
17 expenses.

18 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

19 The gold medal struck pursuant to this Act is a na-  
20 tional medal for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United  
21 States Code.

22 **SEC. 6. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

23 The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of  
24 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,  
25 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement

1 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this  
2 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record  
3 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-  
4 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the  
5 vote on passage.

