

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 896

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Li Wenliang, in recognition of his efforts to save lives by drawing awareness to COVID–19 and his call for transparency in China.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 5, 2021

Mr. ROY (for himself, Mr. BABIN, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. BUDD, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. HICE of Georgia, Mr. PERRY, Mr. STEWART, and Mr. CRENSHAW) 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

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## A BILL

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Li Wenliang, in recognition of his efforts to save lives by drawing awareness to COVID–19 and his call for transparency in China.

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 “Dr. Li Wenliang Con-  
5 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Dr. Li Wenliang was a 34-year-old ophthal-  
4 mologist in Wuhan, China, who died from the 2019  
5 novel coronavirus (COVID–19) after he sought to  
6 draw attention to the spread of the virus despite the  
7 Chinese government’s effort to suppress him.

8 (2) Research indicates that the first patient in-  
9 fected with COVID–19 exhibited symptoms in early  
10 December 2019, if not earlier.

11 (3) In December 2019, Dr. Li Wenliang noti-  
12 fied his colleagues in the medical community in  
13 China about the outbreak of COVID–19.

14 (4) On January 3, 2020, after raising concerns  
15 about the spread of COVID–19, Dr. Li Wenliang  
16 and seven other doctors were detained and ques-  
17 tioned by Chinese officials. Dr. Li Wenliang was  
18 forced to sign a statement retracting his warnings  
19 about the virus and confessing that he had spread  
20 illegal rumors.

21 (5) Chinese government authorities played down  
22 dangers to the public for weeks as COVID–19 con-  
23 tinued to spread, with more than 42,000 confirmed  
24 cases in China alone and at least 1,000 deaths re-  
25 ported as of February 11, 2020.

1           (6) Dr. Li Wenliang continued to work at  
2           Wuhan Central Hospital despite his knowledge of  
3           the outbreak, and appears to have been infected  
4           himself with COVID–19 after coming in contact  
5           with a patient he was treating.

6           (7) In February 2020, in the hospital where he  
7           worked, Dr. Li Wenliang died after contracting  
8           COVID–19.

9           (8) Before his death, Dr. Li Wenliang stated,  
10          “If the officials had disclosed information about the  
11          epidemic earlier, I think it would have been a lot  
12          better. There should be more openness and trans-  
13          parency.”.

14          (9) The people of China expressed their grief  
15          and anger on social media after the death of Dr. Li  
16          Wenliang with the phrase “I want freedom of  
17          speech”, which was quickly censored by the Govern-  
18          ment of the People’s Republic of China.

19          (10) The Chinese government inflicted incalcu-  
20          lable damage on their own people and the rest of the  
21          world by trying to extinguish the news of the  
22          COVID–19 rather than mobilize global efforts to  
23          battle it.

24          (11) Awarding Dr. Li Wenliang the Congres-  
25          sional Gold Medal, would not only recognize his bold

1 actions to draw attention to the spread of COVID–  
2 19, but call global attention to China’s lack of trans-  
3 parency and censorship of speech.

4 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

5 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of  
6 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-  
7 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements  
8 for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of the Con-  
9 gress, of a gold medal of appropriate design in commemo-  
10 ration of Dr. Li Wenliang’s efforts to save lives by drawing  
11 awareness to COVID–19 and his call for transparency in  
12 China.

13 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the  
14 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary  
15 of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Sec-  
16 retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems,  
17 devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-  
18 retary.

19 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the  
21 gold medal under subsection (a), the gold medal  
22 shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution, where  
23 it shall be available for display as appropriate and  
24 made available for research.

1           (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
2           Congress that the Smithsonian Institution shall  
3           make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)  
4           available for display elsewhere, particularly at appro-  
5           priate locations dedicated to preserving the history  
6           of the Chinese pro-democracy movement.

7   **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

8           The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
9           bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3  
10          under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at  
11          a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,  
12          materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses,  
13          and the cost of the gold medal.

14   **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

15          (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-  
16          ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter  
17          51 of title 31, United States Code.

18          (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section  
19          5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck  
20          under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

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