

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 697

To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the Bicentennial of Harriet Tubman's birth.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 11, 2021

Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CARPER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. COONS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. PADILLA) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the Bicentennial of Harriet Tubman's birth.

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 “Harriet Tubman Bi-
5 centennial Commemorative Coin Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Harriet Tubman was a formerly enslaved
2 abolitionist who guided about 70 people from slavery
3 to freedom in 10 years.

4 (2) Born in March 1822, Tubman was a nota-
5 ble abolitionist who not only freed herself, but also
6 freed others from slavery.

7 (3) Harriet Ross Tubman, born Araminta
8 “Minty” Ross, was born enslaved on the plantation
9 of Anthony Thompson in Dorchester County, Mary-
10 land.

11 (4) With the help of the Underground Railroad
12 network, in the fall of 1849, Tubman escaped from
13 Poplar Neck in Caroline County, Maryland, heading
14 north to freedom in Pennsylvania.

15 (5) With the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act
16 as part of the Compromise of 1850, the operations
17 to help enslaved persons escape became dangerous
18 and she risked her life to rescue them from slavery.

19 (6) Despite passage of the Compromise of 1850
20 and the Fugitive Slave Act, Tubman continued her
21 work, escorting her refugees to Canada instead.

22 (7) It was during the 1850s that Tubman made
23 13 trips back to Maryland, guiding approximately 70
24 enslaved persons to the North, including family

1 members, and providing instruction to about 70
2 more who found their way to freedom on their own.

3 (8) Regardless of the arduous process of help-
4 ing fugitive enslaved persons escape through the Un-
5 derground Railroad, not a single person was recap-
6 tured under Tubman's supervision.

7 (9) During 1859, Tubman aided abolitionist
8 John Brown by recruiting supporters for his raid on
9 Harper's Ferry, a planned insurrection against
10 slaveholders in Virginia and Maryland.

11 (10) In the beginning of the Civil War, Tubman
12 served as a spy, cook, and nurse in South Carolina
13 and Florida.

14 (11) Tubman also recruited newly freed Afri-
15 can-American men to join regiments of African-
16 American soldiers called United States Colored
17 Troops.

18 (12) In recognition of her abilities, Tubman
19 served as an army scout and spy for Major General
20 David Hunter and Colonel James Montgomery. Har-
21 riet Tubman was inducted into the Military Intel-
22 ligence Corps Hall of Fame.

23 (13) Tubman distinguished herself as the first
24 woman to lead an armed expedition in the Civil War,

1 the Combahee River Raid, resulting in more than
2 700 enslaved persons in South Carolina being freed.

3 (14) After the Civil War, Tubman frequently
4 sheltered and fed newly freed enslaved persons at
5 her home on South Street in Auburn, New York,
6 which she purchased from Secretary of State Wil-
7 liam Henry Seward, even though she had little
8 money herself. She found a means to an end by
9 working as a domestic, selling produce from her gar-
10 den, taking in donations of food, loans from friends,
11 and raising pigs on her farm.

12 (15) Tubman became active in the women's
13 movement as early as 1860. She attended meetings
14 and gave speeches in her home State of New York,
15 as well as in Boston and Washington, DC.

16 (16) Tubman was an avid advocate for African-
17 American women and their civil rights. In 1896, she
18 was invited as a speaker at the first meeting of the
19 National Association of Colored Women in Wash-
20 ington, DC.

21 (17) Although living in financial insecurity,
22 Tubman transferred a 25-acre parcel of land to the
23 African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1903,
24 which eventually became The Harriet Tubman
25 Home for the Aged and Indigent Negroes. At the

1 time, few social services existed for elderly and ill
2 people of color.

3 (18) Escaping slavery, risking everything to
4 save her family and friends, aiding enslaved persons
5 in escape from slavery, leading a military raid,
6 championing the cause of women’s suffrage, advo-
7 cating for civil rights and access to health care, Har-
8 riet Tubman is an individual that has performed
9 achievements that have had profound impacts on
10 history and culture in the United States.

11 **SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.**

12 (a) DENOMINATIONS.—In commemoration of Harriet
13 Tubman, the Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter referred
14 to in this Act as the “Secretary”) shall mint and issue
15 the following coins:

16 (1) \$5 GOLD COINS.—Not more than 50,000 \$5
17 coins, which shall—

18 (A) weigh 8.359 grams;

19 (B) be struck on a planchet having a di-
20 ameter of 0.850 inches; and

21 (C) contain at least 90 percent gold.

22 (2) \$1 SILVER COINS.—Not more than 400,000
23 \$1 coins, which shall—

24 (A) weigh 26.73 grams;

1 (B) be struck on a planchet having a di-
2 ameter of 1.500 inches; and

3 (C) contain at least 90 percent silver.

4 (3) HALF-DOLLAR CLAD COINS.—Not more
5 than 750,000 half-dollar coins which shall—

6 (A) weigh 11.34 grams;

7 (B) have a diameter of 1.205 inches; and

8 (C) be minted to the specifications for half-
9 dollar coins contained in section 5112(b) of title
10 31, United States Code.

11 (b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this
12 Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of
13 title 31, United States Code.

14 (c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections
15 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins
16 minted under this Act shall be considered to be numis-
17 matic items.

18 **SEC. 4. DESIGNS OF COINS.**

19 (a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The designs of the coins
21 minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the
22 legacy of Harriet Tubman as an abolitionist. At
23 least one obverse design shall bear the image of
24 Harriet Tubman.

1 (2) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On
2 each coin minted under this Act, there shall be—

- 3 (A) an inscription of Harriet Tubman;
4 (B) a designation of the value of the coin;
5 (C) an inscription of the year “2024”; and
6 (D) inscriptions of the words “Liberty”,
7 “In God We Trust”, “United States of Amer-
8 ica”, and “E Pluribus Unum”.

9 (b) SELECTION.—The designs for the coins minted
10 under this Act shall be—

11 (1) selected by the Secretary, after consultation
12 with the National Underground Railroad Freedom
13 Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, The Harriet Tubman
14 Home, Inc. in Auburn, New York, and the Commis-
15 sion of the Fine Arts; and

16 (2) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory
17 Committee.

18 **SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.**

19 (a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this
20 Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

21 (b) MINT FACILITY.—Only 1 facility of the United
22 States Mint may be used to strike any particular quality
23 of the coins minted under this Act.

24 (c) PERIOD FOR ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may
25 issue coins under this Act only during the period begin-

1 ning on January 1, 2024, and ending on December 31,
2 2024.

3 **SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.**

4 (a) SALE PRICE.—The coins issued under this Act
5 shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum
6 of—

7 (1) the face value of the coins;

8 (2) the surcharge provided under section 7(a)
9 with respect to the coins; and

10 (3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins
11 (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery,
12 overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

13 (b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk
14 sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable
15 discount.

16 (c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept
18 prepaid orders for the coins minted under this Act
19 before the issuance of the coins.

20 (2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to pre-
21 paid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a rea-
22 sonable discount.

23 **SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—All sales of coins issued under this
25 Act shall include—

1 (1) a surcharge of \$35 per coin for the \$5
2 coins;

3 (2) a surcharge of \$10 per coin for the \$1
4 coins; and

5 (3) a surcharge of \$5 per coin for the half-dol-
6 lar coin.

7 (b) DISTRIBUTION.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
9 graph (2), subject to section 5134(f) of title 31,
10 United States Code, all surcharges received by the
11 Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this
12 Act shall be promptly paid by the Secretary equally
13 to the National Underground Railroad Freedom
14 Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, and The Harriet Tub-
15 man Home, Inc. in Auburn, New York, for the pur-
16 pose of accomplishing and advancing their missions.

17 (2) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding section
18 5134(f)(1) of title 31, United States Code, if an en-
19 tity described in paragraph (1) of this subsection
20 raises funds from private sources in an amount that
21 is less than the total amount of the proceeds of the
22 surcharge derived from the sale of the coins issued
23 under this Act, the Secretary shall promptly pay to
24 the other entity the proceeds of such surcharge.

1 (c) AUDITS.—The National Underground Railroad
2 Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, and The Harriet
3 Tubman Home, Inc. in Auburn, New York, shall be sub-
4 ject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title
5 31, United States Code, with regard to the amounts re-
6 ceived under subsection (b).

7 (d) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a),
8 no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance
9 under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as
10 of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin
11 would result in the number of commemorative coin pro-
12 grams issued during such year to exceed the annual 2
13 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under
14 section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code. The
15 Secretary of the Treasury may issue guidance to carry out
16 this subsection.

17 **SEC. 8. FINANCIAL ASSURANCES.**

18 The Secretary shall take such actions as may be nec-
19 essary to ensure that—

20 (1) minting and issuing coins under this Act
21 will not result in any net cost to the United States
22 Government; and

23 (2) no funds, including applicable surcharges,
24 are disbursed to any recipient designated in section
25 7 until the total cost of designing and issuing all of

1 the coins authorized by this Act (including labor,
2 materials, dies, use of machinery, winning design
3 compensation, overhead expenses, marketing, and
4 shipping) is recovered by the United States Treas-
5 ury, consistent with sections 5112(m) and 5134(f) of
6 title 31, United States Code.

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