

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8653

To award a Congressional gold medal to Major Thomas D. Howie, in recognition of his bravery and outstanding service during the Battle of Normandy.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 7, 2024

Mr. DUNCAN (for himself, Mr. TIMMONS, Ms. MACE, Mr. FRY, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. NORMAN, and Mr. CLYBURN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To award a Congressional gold medal to Major Thomas D. Howie, in recognition of his bravery and outstanding service during the Battle of Normandy.

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 “Major Thomas D.
5 Howie Congressional Gold Medal”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Major Thomas D. Howie was born on April
9 12, 1908, in Abbeville, South Carolina, and went on

1 to both a storied academic and athletic career at
2 The Citadel as class president, a star football half-
3 back and captain of the baseball team.

4 (2) Major Howie answered his nations call to
5 service by accepting a commission as a Second Lieu-
6 tenant in the Officers Reserve Corps in the Virginia
7 National Guard upon graduation from The Citadel.

8 (3) Major Howie was commissioned into the
9 U.S. Army Reserve and later transferred to the Vir-
10 ginia National Guard's 116th Infantry Regiment in
11 Staunton, Virginia.

12 (4) Major Thomas Howie valiantly served his
13 country during the Battle of Normandy, dem-
14 onstrating exceptional courage, devotion to duty, and
15 skill in battle after landing on Omaha Beach on
16 June 6th, 1944.

17 (5) Major Howie commanded 3rd Battalion,
18 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division on
19 July 13th, 1944, and shortly thereafter was tasked
20 with rescuing the encircled 2nd Battalion, 116th In-
21 fantry Regiment.

22 (6) Major Howie was instructed by his com-
23 manding officer to take St. Lo on July 17th 1944,
24 he decided to leave the battered 2nd Battalion be-
25 hind to recuperate and proceed with only the 3rd

1 Battalion. When questioned on this, he was over-
2 heard saying “See you in St. Lo” to Major General
3 Charles Gerhardt, words which would serve as inspi-
4 ration for his men in the coming battle.

5 (7) While giving his company commanders in-
6 structions for the attack, the unit came under fire
7 from German mortars, and Major Howie was killed,
8 a sacrifice for which he was posthumously awarded
9 a Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, French
10 Legion of Honor, French Fourragere, and Combat
11 Infantry Badge.

12 (8) Major Howie’s men strapped his body to a
13 stretcher, draped him with an American flag, and
14 placed him on the hood of a Jeep so that he could
15 be the first American to enter St. Lo. He was laid
16 in the rubble of the St. Croix Cathedral, where fel-
17 low soldiers and French civilians paid their respects.
18 From then on, he was known as “The Major of St.
19 Lo”.

20 (9) Major Howie’s leadership and unwavering
21 commitment to his soldiers inspired bravery and de-
22 termination among his troops, ultimately leading to
23 the successful capture of St. Lo, a crucial strategic
24 objective that directly led to Operation Cobra and

1 the Allied Liberation France, Belgium, and the
2 Netherlands from Nazi Tyranny.

3 (10) Though his command of the 116th Infan-
4 try Regiment was short-lived, Major Howie em-
5 bodied the extraordinary courage and valor that de-
6 fined American soldiers during the Battle of Nor-
7 mandy. His sacrifice echoes through the halls of his-
8 tory to inspire Americans to this day.

9 (11) The character of Major Howie was used as
10 inspiration for the role of Captain John Miller, por-
11 trayed by Tom Hanks in the movie “Saving Private
12 Ryan”. This brought attention to his remarkable
13 leadership and sacrifice, thereby furthering public
14 recognition of his valor.

15 (12) Major Howie’s legacy extends beyond the
16 silver screen. Monuments and markers commemo-
17 rating his valor and leadership stand in Abbeville,
18 Greenwood, and Charleston, South Carolina; Staun-
19 ton, Virginia; Shelby, North Carolina; and Saint-Lo,
20 Normandy, France. In 2003, South Carolina further
21 honored him with a posthumous induction into the
22 South Carolina Hall of Fame.

23 (13) Major Howie’s sacrifice and exemplary
24 service symbolize the highest ideals of patriotism, in-
25 tegrity, and dedication to duty.

1 (14) Major Thomas D. Howie’s legacy con-
2 tinues to inspire future generations to uphold the
3 seven army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless
4 service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.

5 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

6 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
7 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
8 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
9 posthumous award, on behalf of Congress, of a gold medal
10 of appropriate design to Major Thomas D. Howie, in rec-
11 ognition of his bravery and outstanding service during the
12 Battle of Normandy.

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

18 (c) PRESENTATION.—The gold medal referred to in
19 subsection (a) shall be presented to—

20 (1) the nephew of Thomas Howie, Tom Howie;
21 or

22 (2) if Tom Howie is unavailable, the next of kin
23 of Thomas Howie.

24 (d) AWARD OF MEDAL.—Following the presentation
25 described in subsection (c), the gold medal shall be given

1 to The Citadel Museum, where it shall be displayed as ap-
2 propriate and made available for research.

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

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

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

10 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck under
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 sections
14 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals
15 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic
16 items.

17 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
18 **SALE.**

19 (a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is
20 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
21 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
22 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck pursuant
23 to this Act.

24 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—The amounts received
25 from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under

- 1 section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint
- 2 Public Enterprise Fund.

