

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5955

To posthumously award a Congressional gold medal to Muhammad Ali, in recognition of his contributions to the Nation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Mr. CARSON of Indiana introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To posthumously award a Congressional gold medal to Muhammad Ali, in recognition of his contributions to the Nation.

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 “Muhammad Ali Con-
5 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Born Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr., on Janu-
9 ary 17, 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky, Muhammad

1 Ali was the first child of Cassius, Sr., and Odessa
2 Clay.

3 (2) Muhammad Ali was one of the most cele-
4 brated athletes of the 20th century. He produced
5 some of America's greatest sports memories, from
6 winning a gold medal at the 1960 Summer Olympics
7 to lighting the Olympic torch at the 1996 Summer
8 Olympics.

9 (3) After an impressive amateur career, during
10 which he recorded 131 wins and only 7 losses and
11 won 2 National AAU light heavyweight titles, Mu-
12 hammad Ali became the first professional boxer in
13 history to capture the heavyweight title 3 separate
14 times.

15 (4) Muhammad Ali defeated every challenger he
16 faced in the ring. But, on April 28, 1967, he was
17 stripped of his boxing title and barred from com-
18 peting for being a conscientious objector to the war
19 in Vietnam on religious and moral grounds. How-
20 ever, following a unanimous United States Supreme
21 Court decision in 1971, Muhammad Ali's conscien-
22 tious objector status was confirmed, his boxing li-
23 cense was reinstated, and he was cleared of any
24 wrongdoing.

1 (5) As an African American and a Muslim who
2 lived in an era that continued to question his civil
3 rights, Muhammad Ali battled issues of race and re-
4 ligion, and received recognition as one of the cham-
5 pions of the Civil Rights Movement in the United
6 States.

7 (6) Muhammad Ali was the recipient of many
8 awards for his sporting prowess and his support of
9 racial harmony, including the Dr. Martin Luther
10 King Memorial Award, the Spirit of America Award,
11 the Amnesty International Lifetime Achievement
12 Award, the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage, the Es-
13 sence Living Legend Award, the Rainbow Coalition
14 Lifetime Achievement Award, the XNBA Human
15 Spirit Award, the Presidential Citizens Medal, and
16 the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

17 (7) Muhammad Ali was acknowledged by many
18 organizations for his achievements both inside and
19 outside the boxing ring, including being crowned
20 “Sportsman of the Century” by Sports Illustrated,
21 being named “Athlete of the Century” by GQ maga-
22 zine, being named “Sports Personality of the Cen-
23 tury” by the British Broadcasting Corporation,
24 being named “Kentucky Athlete of the Century” by
25 the Kentucky Athletic Hall of Fame, being named

1 “Kentuckian of the Century” by the State of Ken-
2 tucky, being named “Louisvillian of the Century” by
3 the Advertising Club of Louisville, being named
4 “Boxer of the Century” by the World Sports Awards
5 of the Century, being recognized by the Inter-
6 national Boxing Hall of Fame, and receiving hon-
7 orary doctorate degrees from Muhlenberg College
8 and Western Kentucky University, as well as an
9 honorary doctorate of humanities at Princeton Uni-
10 versity’s 260th graduation ceremony.

11 (8) Muhammad Ali received the prestigious
12 “Otto Hahn Peace Medal in Gold” from the United
13 Nations Association of Germany for his work with
14 the United Nations and the Civil Rights Movement
15 in the United States.

16 (9) Muhammad Ali was selected by the Cali-
17 fornia Bicentennial Foundation for the U.S. Con-
18 stitution for personifying the vitality of the Bill of
19 Rights in various high-profile activities.

20 (10) Despite having been diagnosed with Par-
21 kinson’s Syndrome in the early 1980s, Muhammad
22 Ali dedicated his life to the cause of universal
23 human rights and freedom. His commitment to
24 equal justice and peace touched the lives of hundreds
25 of thousands of people worldwide.

1 (11) President Jimmy Carter asked Muhammad
2 Ali to meet with African leaders in Tanzania, Kenya,
3 Nigeria, Liberia, and Senegal as part of President
4 Carter’s diplomatic efforts on behalf of human rights
5 in the 1980s.

6 (12) In 1990, Muhammad Ali traveled to the
7 Middle East to seek the release of American and
8 British hostages that were being held as human
9 shields in the first Gulf War. As a result of his
10 intervention, 15 United States hostages were freed
11 on December 2nd of that year.

12 (13) In 1998, Muhammad Ali was chosen as
13 the “U.N. Messenger of Peace”.

14 (14) Several Presidents of the United States
15 recognized Muhammad Ali, including President
16 George W. Bush who, on November 17, 2002, called
17 him “a man of peace” and stated that “across the
18 world, billions of people know Muhammad Ali as a
19 brave, compassionate, and charming man, and the
20 American people are proud to call Muhammad Ali
21 one of our own”, President Bill Clinton who stated
22 that Muhammad Ali “captured the world’s imagina-
23 tion and its heart. Outside the ring, Muhammad Ali
24 has dedicated his life to working for children, feed-
25 ing the hungry, supporting his faith, and standing

1 up for racial equality. He always fought for a just
2 and more humane world, breaking down barriers
3 here in America and around the world. There is no
4 telling how many tens of millions of people had their
5 hearts swell with pride and their eyes swell with
6 tears in 1996 when Muhammad Ali lit the Olympic
7 torch, because we know, now and forever, he is the
8 greatest”, President Jimmy Carter who cited Mu-
9 hammad Ali as “Mr. International Friendship”, and
10 President Barack Obama who, as a Senator, had a
11 framed picture of Muhammad Ali hanging in his of-
12 fice, and before announcing his intentions to run for
13 President, Obama visited with Muhammad Ali at the
14 Ali Center in Louisville, Kentucky.

15 (15) Muhammad Ali encouraged humanity
16 through his perseverance and the support of thou-
17 sands of people. He helped such organizations as the
18 Chicago-based adoption agency, The Cradle; the
19 Make-A-Wish Foundation; the Special Olympics’ or-
20 ganization, Best Buddies; and Herbert E. Birch
21 Services, an organization that runs a school for
22 handicapped children and young adults, in addition
23 to a summer camp for children with AIDS.

24 (16) Muhammad Ali and his wife Lonnie were
25 the founding directors of the Muhammad Ali Par-

1 kinson Center in Phoenix, Arizona, and helped raise
2 over \$50,000,000 for Parkinson’s research. The
3 Center’s mission is to provide excellence in treat-
4 ment, research, and education for patients and fami-
5 lies affected by Parkinson’s disease and other move-
6 ment disorders, regardless of their ability to pay.

7 (17) Muhammad Ali was an inspiration to
8 countless individuals with Parkinson’s disease, in-
9 cluding members of the Rock Steady Boxing Foun-
10 dation in Indianapolis, Indiana, which was founded
11 to give people with Parkinson’s disease hope by im-
12 proving their quality of life using boxing for fitness.

13 (18) Muhammad Ali was one of the founding
14 members of Athletes for Hope, an organization cre-
15 ated by a few very successful athletes of exemplary
16 character who have a deep commitment to charitable
17 and community causes.

18 (19) Muhammad Ali also established the Mu-
19 hammad Ali Center in his hometown of Louisville,
20 Kentucky, which promotes respect, hope, and under-
21 standing, and inspires people everywhere to be as
22 great as they can be. A visitor of the Muhammad Ali
23 Center experiences the “hows” of Ali’s life: How he
24 found the courage, the dedication, and the discipline
25 to become a world champion; how he found the con-

1 viction to stand up for what he believed; and how he
2 turned his passion for excellence in the ring to a
3 passion for peace on the world stage.

4 (20) Like Muhammad Ali himself, the Muham-
5 mad Ali Center focuses on what brings individuals
6 together, not what sets them apart, and is a “global
7 gathering place” to which people can come, both on-
8 line and in person, to learn, share, and celebrate our
9 commonalities as human beings and to formulate
10 ways of advancing humanity.

11 (21) Muhammad Ali helped to provide more
12 than 22,000,000 aid packets to assist people in
13 need, and until the last years of his life, he traveled,
14 on average, more than 200 days per year for human-
15 itarian causes.

16 (22) Muhammad Ali, known simply as “the
17 greatest,” transcended the glamour and glory of
18 being a sports champion to become not only one of
19 the greatest sports figures, but one of the greatest
20 role models of our time.

21 (23) On June 3, 2016, Muhammad Ali died at
22 the age of 74.

23 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

24 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
25 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-

1 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
2 for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a gold
3 medal of appropriate design, to Muhammad Ali, in rec-
4 ognition of his contributions to the Nation.

5 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purpose of the
6 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
7 of the Treasury (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the
8 “Secretary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable em-
9 blems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the
10 Secretary.

11 (c) TRANSFER OF MEDAL AFTER PRESENTATION.—
12 Following the presentation of the gold medal in honor of
13 Muhammad Ali under subsection (a), the gold medal shall
14 be given to his wife, Lonnie Ali.

15 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

16 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
17 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
18 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3 at
19 a price sufficient to cover the cost of the bronze medals
20 (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and
21 overhead expenses) and the cost of the gold medal.

22 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

23 The medals struck under this Act are national medals
24 for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

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