

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6836

To award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal to Robert Parris Moses, in recognition of his achievements and contributions to advancing American education and civil rights.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2022

Mr. ESPAILLAT (for himself, Mr. RASKIN, and Ms. WILSON of Florida) 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 award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal to Robert Parris Moses, in recognition of his achievements and contributions to advancing American education and civil rights.

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 “Robert Parris Moses  
5 Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds that:

3 (1) Robert Parris Moses was born in Harlem,  
4 New York City, on January 23, 1935.

5 (2) Robert Parris Moses is regarded as an in-  
6 influential civil rights activist, peace activist, public  
7 education advocate, and math literacy educator.

8 (3) Moses grew up in Harlem River Houses and  
9 was one of only a handful of Black students at the  
10 time who was admitted to Stuyvesant High School.

11 (4) Moses earned a scholarship to Hamilton  
12 College in Clinton, New York, and subsequently ob-  
13 tained a master's degree in philosophy from Harvard  
14 University in 1957.

15 (5) His doctorate studies in mathematics were  
16 halted due to the death of his mother and the hos-  
17 pitalization of his father.

18 (6) In 1959, Moses helped with the second  
19 Youth March for Integrated Schools in Washington,  
20 DC.

21 (7) Moses visited Mississippi in the summer of  
22 1960, and met with local National Association for  
23 the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) lead-  
24 ers who indicated the need to focus on voter reg-  
25 istration. He returned to Mississippi after teaching  
26 the 1960–1961 school year in New York, where he

1 organized and registered thousands of poor, illit-  
2 erate, and rural Black residents to vote.

3 (8) As a leader of the Student Nonviolent Co-  
4 ordinating Committee, in 1964, Moses helped orga-  
5 nize the Mississippi “Freedom” Summer Project.

6 (9) Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., called Moses’  
7 “contribution to the freedom struggle in America”  
8 an “inspiration”.

9 (10) After Moses married Janet, they started a  
10 family in Tanzania. He spent nearly a decade there  
11 teaching mathematics and working with the Ministry  
12 of Education.

13 (11) Moses returned to the United States in  
14 1976, and continued his doctoral studies in Philos-  
15 ophy of Mathematics at Harvard. He received a  
16 MacArthur Fellowship in 1982, which he used to  
17 promote the Algebra Project.

18 (12) In founding the Algebra Project, Moses  
19 stated that K–12 math literacy, like voting literacy,  
20 is key to full citizenship for Americans from poor  
21 and minority communities as our society shifts from  
22 the Industrial Age to the Information Age.

23 (13) The Algebra Project is a non-profit dedi-  
24 cated to helping students from historically  
25 marginalized communities, including Black, Brown,

1 and youth living in poverty, who often hail from low-  
2 income households. Students develop math literacy  
3 skills, which Bob Moses viewed as the path to per-  
4 manently improving their life circumstances, as well  
5 as the social and economic conditions of their com-  
6 munities.

7 (14) The Algebra Project uses mathematics lit-  
8 eracy as an organizing tool to guarantee quality pub-  
9 lic-school education for all children in the United  
10 States.

11 (15) The Algebra Project is one of the few  
12 mathematics education initiatives to originate in the  
13 African-American community.

14 (16) Since its inception in 1982, the Algebra  
15 Project has helped more than 40,000 students in  
16 hundreds of schools nationwide.

17 (17) In 1996, the Young People’s Project was  
18 launched by Algebra Project graduates from Cam-  
19 bridge, MA, and Algebra Project middle school stu-  
20 dents from Jackson, Mississippi. The Young Peo-  
21 ple’s Project recruits and trains high school and col-  
22 lege age “Math Literacy Workers” to facilitate en-  
23 richment workshops for younger students in mathe-  
24 matics.

1           (18) For his work, Bob Moses has been hon-  
2           ored, including with an Honorary Doctor of Science  
3           from Harvard University and Ohio State University,  
4           an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Princeton Uni-  
5           versity, the John Dewey Prize for Progressive Edu-  
6           cation, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Na-  
7           tional Council of the Teachers of Mathematics, and  
8           was inducted to the American Academy of Arts and  
9           Sciences.

10           (19) Moses wrote about his vision for education  
11           and experiences. He was co-author of *Radical Equa-*  
12           *tions—Civil Rights from Mississippi to the Algebra*  
13           *Project* (2001), and co-editor of *Quality Education*  
14           *as a Constitutional Right—Creating a Grassroots*  
15           *Movement to Transform America’s Schools* (2010).

16           (20) Moses wrote in *Radical Equations* that  
17           “the most urgent social issue affecting poor people  
18           and people of color, is economic access. In today’s  
19           world, economic access and full citizenship depend  
20           crucially on math and science literacy. I believe that  
21           the absence of math literacy in urban and rural com-  
22           munities throughout this country is an issue as ur-  
23           gent as the lack of registered Black voters in Mis-  
24           sissippi was in 1961.”.

1           (21) Bob Moses passed away in Hollywood,  
2           Florida, on July 25, 2021.

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

4           (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of  
5 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-  
6 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements  
7 for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of the Con-  
8 gress, of a gold medal of appropriate design in commemo-  
9 ration of Robert Parris Moses, in recognition of his  
10 achievements and contributions to American education  
11 and civil rights.

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

18          (c) AUTHORIZED RECIPIENT.—Following the award  
19 of the gold medal under subsection (a), in honor of Moses,  
20 the gold medal shall be given to Maisha Moses, Robert  
21 Parris Moses’ daughter.

22          (d) NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HIS-  
23 TORY AND CULTURE.—

24           (1) IN GENERAL.—A bronze duplicate of the  
25 gold medal awarded under subsection (a) shall be

1 given to the National Museum of African American  
2 History and Culture, where it shall be available for  
3 display as appropriate and made available for re-  
4 search.

5 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
6 Congress that the National Museum of African  
7 American History and Culture should make the gold  
8 medal received under paragraph (1) available for  
9 display elsewhere, particularly at other appropriate  
10 locations associated with Robert Parris Moses.

11 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

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

17 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

18 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck under  
19 this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51  
20 of title 31, United States Code.

21 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections  
22 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals  
23 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic  
24 items.

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