

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7501

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to Chad Robichaux, Sarah Verardo, Tim Kennedy, Kevin Rourke, Sean Gabler, Dave Johnson, and Dennis Price, in recognition of their exceptional efforts and selfless dedication during the Afghanistan evacuation in 2021, which led to the safe evacuation of over 17,000 people from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Mr. NORMAN (for himself, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. GIMENEZ, Mrs. SPARTZ, and Mr. MOONEY) 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

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to Chad Robichaux, Sarah Verardo, Tim Kennedy, Kevin Rourke, Sean Gabler, Dave Johnson, and Dennis Price, in recognition of their exceptional efforts and selfless dedication during the Afghanistan evacuation in 2021, which led to the safe evacuation of over 17,000 people from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Save our Allies Con-
3 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) The events of August 2021 marked a sig-
7 nificant turning point in the history of the United
8 States engagement in Afghanistan, as the Nation
9 underwent a process of withdrawal after over two
10 decades of military presence.

11 (2) Over the course of those 20 years, countless
12 men and women in uniform made tremendous sac-
13 rifices to uphold the principles of democracy and
14 freedom, while also honoring the promises made to
15 the Afghan people to build a safer and more pros-
16 perous Nation.

17 (3) Among these exceptional individuals were
18 the 13 individuals who participated in the Afghani-
19 stan evacuation in 2021, serving as a beacon of hope
20 and demonstrating unwavering dedication to the
21 ideals of America.

22 (4) When the final withdrawal was announced,
23 Chad Robichaux knew he needed to act. His combat
24 interpreter, Aziz, who had saved his life on countless
25 occasions throughout his eight deployments to Af-
26 ghanistan as part of a Joint Special Operations

1 Task Force, was now being hunted and targeted by
2 the Taliban for helping him. Determined to save his
3 loyal friend, Chad embarked on a mission that would
4 bring together 13 modern-day avengers, all Special
5 Operations veterans, and one determined woman, to
6 drop everything and rescue Aziz and his family from
7 Afghanistan. Without hesitation, each member of the
8 team agreed to join the daring mission.

9 (5) In a matter of hours, Chad Robichaux as-
10 sembled his team and made a crucial call to Sarah
11 Verardo, the wife of a catastrophically wounded Sol-
12 dier from his service in Afghanistan, who miracu-
13 lously secured their way to Hamid Karzai Inter-
14 national Airport (HKIA) in Kabul, Afghanistan. The
15 12-man team quickly mobilized, with Chad heading
16 to Abu Dhabi, UAE, to establish a humanitarian
17 center for evacuees. Meanwhile, Tim Kennedy, Kevin
18 Roarke, Sean Gabler, and Dave Johnson headed for
19 HKIA itself. Setting up a command center at
20 HKIA, the team conducted non-stop rescue oper-
21 ations amidst Taliban-controlled territory, facing im-
22 mense danger without a Quick Reaction Force
23 (QRF). In just 10 days, their unwavering efforts led
24 to the successful rescue of over 12,000 lives.

1 (6) Even in the face of tremendous adversity,
2 the team's dedication did not waver. Despite Abbey
3 Gate being destroyed and the gates welded shut,
4 they refused to leave. Over the next two months,
5 they continued their humanitarian efforts remotely,
6 leading a coalition to rescue an additional 5,000 in-
7 dividuals through alternate routes around the region.
8 Their commitment and determination made a sig-
9 nificant difference during this critical time of need.

10 (7) Chad Robichaux's mission did not end with
11 the evacuation from HKIA. Teaming up with Fellow
12 Force Recon Marine and Scout Sniper, Staff Ser-
13 geant Dennis Price, he embarked on a grueling 10-
14 day, 90-mile reconnaissance mission along the
15 Tajikistan and Afghanistan border, swimming into
16 Afghanistan every night past Taliban and Chinese
17 soldiers in order to use their special operations expe-
18 rience to build evacuation routes for women and
19 children still trapped in Afghanistan as Afghan
20 Commandos attempted to move them to the
21 Tajikistan border. Braving the treacherous terrain
22 and encounters with foreign militaries, including
23 Chinese, Russian, Tajikistan, and Taliban fighters,
24 they successfully established routes that are still in

1 use today, ensuring more people could find their way
2 to safety.

3 (8) The valor and courage displayed by Chad
4 Robichaux, Sarah Verardo, and the 12 Special Oper-
5 ations veterans during the Afghanistan evacuation in
6 2021 exemplify the very essence of America's prom-
7 ises to the Afghan people throughout the 20 years
8 of war. Their actions served as a powerful testament
9 to the unwavering loyalty and dedication of the
10 United States Armed Forces, reinforcing our na-
11 tion's role as a beacon of hope and justice on the
12 global stage. Their commitment to duty and human-
13 ity will forever be etched in the Congressional record
14 as a shining example of American heroism.

15 (9) Under the exceptional leadership of Force
16 Recon Marine Chad Robichaux, this remarkable
17 team of Special Operation veterans took up the
18 charge to protect and evacuate over 17,000 citizens
19 and Afghan allies from Taliban-controlled Afghani-
20 stan, during a time of unfathomable danger and un-
21 certainty.

22 (10) These individuals have dedicated their lives
23 to protecting our country, putting their own lives on
24 the line to safeguard others, and their heroism de-
25 serves great honor.

1 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDALS.**

2 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
3 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
4 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
5 for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a single
6 gold medal of appropriate design to Chad Robichaux,
7 Sarah Verardo, Tim Kennedy, Kevin Rourke, Sean
8 Gabler, Dave Johnson, and Dennis Price, in recognition
9 of their exceptional efforts and selfless dedication during
10 the Afghanistan evacuation in 2021, which led to the safe
11 evacuation of over 17,000 people from Taliban-controlled
12 Afghanistan.

13 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the 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 the gold medals with suitable em-
17 blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the
18 Secretary.

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.

25 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
26 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should

1 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
2 available for display outside of the District of Co-
3 lumbia at times, particularly at other locations asso-
4 ciated with the team of Special Operation Veterans'
5 service in the Afghanistan evacuation of 2021.

6 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

7 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
8 bronze of the gold medals struck under section 3, at a
9 price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,
10 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

11 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

12 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck pursuant to
13 this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51
14 of title 31, United States Code.

15 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections
16 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals
17 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic
18 items.

19 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
20 **SALE.**

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

1 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—The amounts received
2 from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under
3 section 3 shall be deposited into the United States Mint
4 Public Enterprise Fund.

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