

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1688

To award the Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), collectively, in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 13, 2013

Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To award the Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), collectively, in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

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 “Office of Strategic
5 Services Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was
2 the first effort by the United States to implement a
3 system of strategic intelligence during World War II
4 and provided the basis for the modern-day intel-
5 ligence and special operations communities of the
6 United States.

7 (2) OSS founder General William J. Donovan is
8 the only person in the history of the United States
9 to receive the 4 highest military decorations of the
10 United States, including the Medal of Honor. Upon
11 learning of his death in 1959, President Eisenhower
12 called General Donovan the “last hero”. In addition
13 to founding and leading the OSS, General Donovan
14 was also selected by President Roosevelt, who called
15 General Donovan his “secret legs”, as an emissary
16 to Great Britain and continental Europe before the
17 United States entered World War II.

18 (3) During World War II, each branch of the
19 Armed Forces of the United States contributed per-
20 sonnel to the OSS. United States Coast Guard per-
21 sonnel were recruited for the Maritime Unit and the
22 Operational Swimmer Group.

23 (4) The present-day United States special oper-
24 ations forces trace their lineage to the OSS. The
25 Maritime Unit of the OSS was a precursor to the

1 Navy SEALs. The OSS Operational Groups and
2 Jedburghs were forerunners of the United States
3 Army Special Forces. The 801st/492nd Bombard-
4 ment Group (“Carpetbaggers”) were progenitors of
5 the United States Air Force Special Operations
6 Command. The Marines who served in the OSS, in-
7 cluding the actor Sterling Hayden and Colonel Wil-
8 liam Eddy, whom General Donovan described as the
9 “American Lawrence of Arabia”, were predecessors
10 of the United States Marine Corps Forces Special
11 Operations Command.

12 (5) The OSS organized, trained, supplied, and
13 fought with resistance organizations throughout Eu-
14 rope and Asia that played an important role in the
15 victory of the United States during World War II.
16 President Eisenhower credited the work of the OSS
17 with the French Resistance during the liberation of
18 France as the equivalent of the French Resistance
19 having an extra division.

20 (6) Four future Directors of Central Intel-
21 ligence served as OSS officers: William Casey, Wil-
22 liam Colby, Allen Dulles, and Richard Helms.

23 (7) Women comprised more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of OSS
24 personnel and played a critical role in the organiza-
25 tion. These women included Virginia Hall, the only

1 civilian female to receive a Distinguished Service
2 Cross in World War II, and Julia Child.

3 (8) The OSS recruited Fritz Kolbe, a German
4 diplomat who became the most important spy of the
5 United States against the Nazis in World War II.

6 (9) Leading scientists and scholars in the
7 United States served in the OSS Research and Anal-
8 ysis Branch, including Ralph Bunche, the first Afri-
9 can-American to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, Pul-
10 itzer Prize-winning historian Arthur Schlesinger,
11 Jr., Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, Sher-
12 man Kent, John King Fairbank, and Walt Rostow.
13 Its ranks also included 7 future presidents of the
14 American Historical Association, 5 of the American
15 Economic Association, and 2 Nobel laureates. The
16 Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the United
17 States Department of State traces its creation to the
18 OSS Research and Analysis Branch.

19 (10) The OSS invented and employed new tech-
20 nology through its Research and Development
21 Branch, including new weapons and revolutionary
22 communications equipment. Dr. Christian
23 Lambertsen invented the first underwater breathing
24 apparatus that was first utilized by the OSS and is
25 known today as “SCUBA”.

1 (11) OSS Detachment 101 operated in Burma
2 and pioneered the art of unconventional warfare. It
3 was the first unit of the United States to deploy a
4 large guerrilla army deep in enemy territory. OSS
5 Detachment 101 has been credited with the highest
6 kill/loss ratio for any infantry-type unit in the mili-
7 tary history of the United States and was awarded
8 a Presidential Unit Citation.

9 (12) The X-2 branch of the OSS pioneered
10 counterintelligence with the British and established
11 the modern counterintelligence community. The net-
12 work of contacts built by the OSS with foreign intel-
13 ligence services led to enduring Cold War alliances.

14 (13) Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of
15 French North Africa in November 1942, was aided
16 by the networks established and information ac-
17 quired by the OSS to guide the landings of the Al-
18 lies.

19 (14) OSS Operation Halyard resulted in the
20 rescue of more than 500 downed airmen trapped be-
21 hind enemy lines in Yugoslavia, one of the most dar-
22 ing and successful rescue operations of World War
23 II.

24 (15) OSS “Mercy Missions” at the end of
25 World War II saved the lives of thousands of Allied

1 prisoners of war whom it was feared would be mur-
2 dered by the Japanese.

3 (16) The handful of surviving men and women
4 of the OSS, whom General Donovan called his “glo-
5 rious amateurs”, are among the greatest generation.
6 They have never been collectively recognized for
7 their heroic and pioneering service in World War II.

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

9 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
10 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
11 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
12 for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a gold
13 medal of appropriate design in commemoration to the
14 members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), in rec-
15 ognition of their superior service and major contributions
16 during World War II.

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

23 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
25 gold medal in commemoration of the members of the

1 Office of Strategic Services under subsection (a), the
2 gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Insti-
3 tution, where it will be displayed as appropriate and
4 made available for research.

5 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
6 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
7 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
8 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
9 appropriate locations associated with the Office of
10 Strategic Services.

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 and the cost of the gold medal.

18 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

19 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-
20 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter
21 51 of title 31, United States Code.

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

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