

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 450

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to members of the Armed Forces who fought in defense of Guam, Wake Island, and the Philippine Archipelago between December 7, 1941 and May 10, 1942, and who died or were imprisoned by the Japanese military in the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Manchuria, Wake Island, and Guam from April 9, 1942 until September 2, 1945, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service to the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 27, 2017

Mr. MANCHIN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to members of the Armed Forces who fought in defense of Guam, Wake Island, and the Philippine Archipelago between December 7, 1941 and May 10, 1942, and who died or were imprisoned by the Japanese military in the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Manchuria, Wake Island, and Guam from April 9, 1942 until September 2, 1945, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service to the United States.

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 “Pacific Defenders of
3 World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that—

6 (1) Guam was captured by Imperial Japanese
7 forces on December 10, 1941, 3 days after the at-
8 tack on Pearl Harbor and remained in the hands of
9 the Japanese until June 1944;

10 (2) the prisoners who remained on Guam suf-
11 fered atrocities at the hands of the Japanese, with
12 some prisoners being transported on hell ships to
13 Japanese prisoner of war camps;

14 (3) on December 22, 1941, the Japanese took
15 approximately 1,600 prisoners on Wake Island;

16 (4) approximately 450 members of the Armed
17 Forces and 1,150 civilians were captured on Wake
18 Island and transported on hell ships to prisoner of
19 war camps in China and Japan;

20 (5) Major General Edward King led the com-
21 bined Philippine-United States force of 75,000
22 troops in the defense of the Bataan peninsula, until
23 April 9, 1942, at which point, due to diminishing re-
24 sources and disease, Major General King surren-
25 dered soldiers from the United States and the Com-
26 monwealth of the Philippines into enemy hands;

1 (6) over the next week, the soldiers from the
2 United States and the Philippine Commonwealth
3 were taken prisoner and forced to march 65 miles
4 without food, water, or medical care in what came
5 to be known as the Bataan Death March, where ap-
6 proximately 600 members of the Armed Forces and
7 between 5,000 and 10,000 Filipino soldiers died
8 from starvation disease, exposure, exhaustion, and
9 abuse by their captors;

10 (7) on May 6, 1942, the resistance reached its
11 limitations after a weeklong siege and Lieutenant
12 General Wainwright, as authorized by President
13 Roosevelt, surrendered the remaining 11,000 troops
14 on Corregidor Island;

15 (8) on May 10, 1942, the only remaining resist-
16 ance force in the archipelago, under the command of
17 Major General William F. Sharp, surrendered after
18 fighting the Japanese from April 29, 1942, to May
19 9, 1942, on the island of Mindanao, at which point
20 Lieutenant General Jonathan Wainwright, as Su-
21 preme Allied Commander, surrendered all Allied
22 Forces in the Philippine archipelago;

23 (9) within the first 40 days 1,600 more United
24 States prisoners died at Camp O'Donnell, a pre-war
25 training camp turned prisoner of war camp, which

1 had substandard conditions, leading to increased dis-
2 ease and malnutrition among the prisoners;

3 (10) in May 1942, the Japanese began trans-
4 ferring prisoners of war by sea to Japan, Taiwan,
5 Korea, Manchuria, Sumatra, Burma, and Siam;

6 (11) during the transfer, prisoners were
7 crammed into cargo holds with little air, food or
8 water for journeys that would last for weeks on what
9 were to be known as the hell ships;

10 (12) many died due to asphyxia, starvation, or
11 dysentery and some prisoners became delirious and
12 unresponsive in an environment of heat, humidity
13 and lack of oxygen, food, and water;

14 (13) estimates of more than 126,000 Allied
15 prisoners of war were transported in 156 voyages on
16 134 Japanese merchant ships, of whom more than
17 21,000 people of the United States were killed or in-
18 jured;

19 (14) on June 6, 1942, 6,000 United States
20 prisoners of war were transferred to Cabanatuan,
21 north of Camp O'Donnell, where they were assigned
22 to work details and hard labor and where 3,000
23 members of the Armed Forces died from disease,
24 starvation, beatings, and executions;

1 (15) the campus of the University of Santo
2 Tomás in Manila was converted to the Santo Tomás
3 Internment Camp by the Japanese during their oc-
4 cupation of the Philippines, from January 1942
5 until February 1945;

6 (16) Santo Tomás became the internment camp
7 for United States Army and Navy nurses also known
8 as “the Angels of Bataan and Corregidor”, who con-
9 tinued to serve as a nursing unit while imprisoned
10 and until their liberation;

11 (17) the prisoners who remained in the camps
12 suffered from continued mistreatment, malnutrition,
13 lack of medical care, and horrific conditions;

14 (18) Operation Blacklist began in early 1945 to
15 locate, recover, and repatriate all prisoners of war;

16 (19) over the subsequent decades, these pris-
17 oners formed support groups, were honored in local
18 and State memorials, and told their story to the peo-
19 ple of the United States; and

20 (20) the people of the United States are forever
21 indebted to these men and women for—

22 (A) the courage they demonstrated during
23 the first 4 months of World War II in fighting
24 against enemy soldiers; and

1 (B) the perseverance they demonstrated
2 during subsequent years of capture and impris-
3 onment under brutal conditions, while maintain-
4 ing their dignity, honor, patriotism, and loyalty.

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

6 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
7 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
8 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
9 for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold
10 medal of appropriate design in commemoration of mem-
11 bers of the Armed Forces who fought in defense of Guam,
12 Wake Island, and the Philippine archipelago between De-
13 cember 7, 1941, and May 10, 1942, and who died or were
14 imprisoned by the Japanese military in the Philippines,
15 Japan, Korea, Manchuria, Wake Island, and Guam from
16 April 9, 1942, until September 2, 1945, in recognition of
17 their personal sacrifice and service to the United States.

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

23 (c) TRANSFER AND DISPLAY OF MEDALS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the presentation
25 of the gold medal under subsection (a), the gold

1 medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution,
2 where it shall be displayed as appropriate and made
3 available for research.

4 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
5 the Congress that the Smithsonian Institution
6 should make the gold medal received under para-
7 graph (1) available for display at other locations,
8 particularly such locations as are associated with the
9 members of the Armed Forces described under sub-
10 section (a).

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

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

18 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

19 The medals struck pursuant to this Act are national
20 medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United
21 States Code.

○