

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1537

To direct the Postmaster General to issue a forever stamp depicting Bayard Rustin, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 5, 2019

Ms. NORTON introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Oversight and Reform

A BILL

To direct the Postmaster General to issue a forever stamp
depicting Bayard Rustin, and for other purposes.

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 “Bayard Rustin Stamp
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Bayard Rustin was born on March 17,
9 1912, and was raised by his grandparents in West
10 Chester, Pennsylvania. From a young age, Rustin

1 learned to prioritize the values of nonviolence and
2 peacekeeping from his grandparents' Quaker faith,
3 and would continue to build these values in his life
4 as a civil rights movement leader.

5 (2) Rustin attended City College of New York,
6 where he joined a progressive club that aimed to
7 remedy racial issues during turbulent times. His
8 time with the club was short lived, but it inspired
9 him to join the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an or-
10 ganization that became a champion for labor rights,
11 equality, and world peace.

12 (3) His time with the Fellowship of Reconcili-
13 ation prompted Rustin to become a leader in the
14 1947 "Journey to Reconciliation", an event where
15 White and Black people across the South rode buses
16 together to challenge segregation laws, a precursor
17 to the Freedom Rides.

18 (4) Rustin was an advisor in Martin Luther
19 King, Jr.'s inner circle as he advocated pacifism and
20 nonviolence for achieving equal treatment for Afri-
21 can Americans.

22 (5) Rustin used his brilliant strategic handling
23 of the use of aggressive, peaceful action in the civil
24 rights movement and throughout his life as an activ-
25 ist.

1 (6) His most important role was as the chief or-
2 ganizer of the 1963 March on Washington, DC, the
3 largest demonstration ever organized at the time, in
4 which a quarter of a million people turned out to de-
5 mand civil rights for African Americans.

6 (7) In the years after the civil rights movement,
7 Rustin used his background as a gay man to inspire
8 others to advocate for and to achieve LGBT rights.

9 (8) Rustin remained a strategist and public
10 speaker for workers' rights movements, including co-
11 founding the A. Philip Randolph Institute for Black
12 trade union members.

13 (9) Rustin committed to promoting social good
14 and advocating for the disenfranchised until his
15 death in 1987.

16 **SEC. 3. BAYARD RUSTIN STAMP.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—In order to honor the life and
18 work of Bayard Rustin, a leader in the civil rights move-
19 ment, the Postmaster General shall provide for the
20 issuance of a forever stamp suitable for that purpose that
21 depicts Bayard Rustin.

22 (b) DEFINITION OF DEFINITIVE STAMP.—For the
23 purposes of this Act, the term “forever stamp” means a
24 definitive stamp that—

1 (1) meets the postage required for first-class
2 mail up to one ounce in weight; and

3 (2) retains full validity for that purpose even if
4 the rate of that postage is later increased.

5 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The stamp described in sub-
6 section (a) shall be issued as soon as practicable after the
7 date of the enactment of this Act.

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