

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4107

To award a Congressional gold medal, collectively, to the crew of the USS Indianapolis, in recognition of their perseverance, their bravery, and their service to the nation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 24, 2017

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. GOSAR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To award a Congressional gold medal, collectively, to the crew of the USS Indianapolis, in recognition of their perseverance, their bravery, and their service to the nation.

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 “USS Indianapolis Con-
5 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The USS Indianapolis (CA-35) was a Port-
2 land-class heavy cruiser that fought in the Aleutians,
3 the Gilbert and Marshall Islands, Saipan, the battle
4 of the Philippine Sea, Tinian, Guam, the Caroline
5 Islands, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa for the United
6 States Navy.

7 (2) The USS Indianapolis was manned by Cap-
8 tain Charles Butler McVay III and 1,197 other crew
9 members when it set sail for the Island of Tinian on
10 July 16, 1945, to deliver components of the atomic
11 bomb “Little Boy”. The USS Indianapolis then
12 made its way to Guam and received further orders
13 to join the battleship USS Idaho in the Leyte Gulf
14 in the Philippines. During the length of the trip, the
15 USS Indianapolis went unescorted by a destroyer
16 due to the immense covertness of the operation.

17 (3) On July 30, 1945, at 14 minutes past mid-
18 night, the USS Indianapolis was hit by two tor-
19 pedoes fired by the I-58, a Japanese submarine.
20 The resulting explosion split the ship to the keel,
21 sinking the ship in about twelve minutes. Of 1,197
22 crew members, about 900 made it into the water.
23 While a few life rafts were deployed, most men were
24 stranded in the water with only a kapok life jacket.

1 (4) Shortly after 11:00 A.M. on August 2,
2 1945, four days after the sinking of the USS Indi-
3 anapolis, Lieutenant Wilbur Gwinn was piloting a
4 PV-1 Ventura Bomber and noticed the men of USS
5 Indianapolis in the water. He alerted a PBY, under
6 the command of Lieutenant Adrian Marks of the
7 disaster. Marks then alerted the destroyer USS Cecil
8 Doyle (DD-368) before heading to the scene himself
9 to assist the survivors until the destroyer could get
10 there. The rescue mission continued well into the
11 morning of August 3, 1945.

12 (5) Only 319 men survived the temperature ex-
13 tremes, starvation, terrible thirst, and constant
14 shark attacks while in the water between July 30,
15 1945, and August 3, 1945.

16 (6) During World War II, the USS Indianapolis
17 and the crew served as the Flagship for the Fifth
18 Fleet commander Admiral Raymond Spruance, sur-
19 vived a kamikaze attack, earned a total of 10 battle
20 stars, and took on an incredibly risky mission that
21 was critical to ending the war. Their sacrifice, perse-
22 verance, and bravery should never be forgotten.

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

24 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
25 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore

1 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
2 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a single gold medal
3 of appropriate design to the crew of the USS Indianapolis,
4 in recognition of their perseverance, their bravery, and
5 their service to the Nation.

6 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
7 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
8 Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Sec-
9 retary”) shall strike the gold medal with suitable emblems,
10 devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-
11 retary.

12 (c) INDIANA WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
14 gold medal referred to in subsection (a), the gold
15 medal shall be given to the Indiana War Memorial
16 Museum in Indianapolis, IN, where it will be dis-
17 played as appropriate and made available for re-
18 search.

19 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
20 Congress that the Indiana War Memorial Museum
21 should make the gold medal received under this Act
22 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
23 locations and events associated with the USS Indi-
24 anapolis.

1 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

2 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
3 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
4 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price
5 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
6 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

7 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

8 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national med-
9 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
10 Code.

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