

**Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H.R. 550, with an Amendment**  
**(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a new text)**

116<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 550

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Merchant Mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 15, 2019

Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

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## A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Merchant Mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service 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 “Merchant Mariners  
5 of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) 2015 marked the 70th anniversary of the  
4 Allied victory in World War II and the restoration  
5 of peacetime across the European and Pacific thea-  
6 ters.

7 (2) The United States Merchant Marine (in  
8 this section referred to as the “Merchant Marine”)  
9 was integral in providing the link between domestic  
10 production and the fighting forces overseas, pro-  
11 viding combat equipment, fuel, food, commodities,  
12 and raw materials to troops stationed abroad.

13 (3) Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King acknowledged  
14 the indispensability of the Merchant Marine to the  
15 victory in a 1945 letter stating that, without the  
16 support of the Merchant Marine, “the Navy could  
17 not have accomplished its mission”.

18 (4) President, and former Supreme Commander  
19 of the Allied Forces, Dwight D. Eisenhower ac-  
20 knowledged that “through the prompt delivery of  
21 supplies and equipment to our armed forces over-  
22 seas, and of cargoes representing economic and mili-  
23 tary aid to friendly nations, the American Merchant  
24 Marine has effectively helped to strengthen the  
25 forces of freedom throughout the world”.

1           (5) Military missions and war planning were  
2 contingent upon the availability of resources and the  
3 Merchant Marine played a vital role in this regard,  
4 ensuring the efficient and reliable transoceanic  
5 transport of military equipment and both military  
6 and civilian personnel.

7           (6) The Merchant Marine provided for the suc-  
8 cessful transport of resources and personnel despite  
9 consistent and ongoing exposure to enemy combat-  
10 ants from both the air and the sea, including from  
11 enemy bomber squadrons, submarines, and mines.

12           (7) The efforts of the Merchant Marine were  
13 not without sacrifices as the Merchant Marine bore  
14 a higher per-capita casualty rate than any other  
15 branch of the military during the war.

16           (8) The Merchant Marine proved to be an in-  
17 strumental asset on an untold number of occasions,  
18 participating in every landing operation by the  
19 United States Marine Corps, from Guadalcanal to  
20 Iwo Jima.

21           (9) The Merchant Marine provided the bulk  
22 tonnage of material necessary for the invasion of  
23 Normandy, an invasion which, according to a 1944  
24 New York Times article, “would not have been pos-  
25 sible without the Merchant Marine”.

1           (10) In assessing the performance of the Mer-  
2           chant Marine, General Eisenhower stated, “every  
3           man in this Allied command is quick to express his  
4           admiration for the loyalty, courage, and fortitude of  
5           the officers and men of the Merchant Marine. We  
6           count upon their efficiency and their utter devotion  
7           to duty as we do our own; they have never failed  
8           us”.

9           (11) During a September 1944 speech, Presi-  
10          dent Franklin D. Roosevelt stated that the Merchant  
11          Marine had “delivered the goods when and where  
12          needed in every theater of operations and across  
13          every ocean in the biggest, the most difficult, and  
14          dangerous transportation job ever undertaken. As  
15          time goes on, there will be greater public under-  
16          standing of our merchant fleet’s record during this  
17          war.”.

18          (12) The feats and accomplishments of the  
19          Merchant Marine are deserving of broader public  
20          recognition.

21          (13) The United States will be forever grateful  
22          and indebted to these merchant mariners for their  
23          effective, reliable, and courageous transport of goods  
24          and resources in enemy territory throughout thea-  
25          ters of every variety in World War II.

1           (14) The goods and resources transported by  
2           the Merchant Marine saved thousands of lives and  
3           enabled the Allied Powers to claim victory in World  
4           War II.

5           (15) The Congressional Gold Medal would be  
6           an appropriate way to shed further light on the serv-  
7           ice of the merchant mariners in World War II and  
8           the instrumental role they played in winning that  
9           war.

10 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

11           (a) **AWARD AUTHORIZED.**—The Speaker of the  
12 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore  
13 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the  
14 award, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of  
15 appropriate design to the United States Merchant Mari-  
16 ners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated  
17 and vital service during World War II.

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

23           (c) **AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE MUSEUM.**—

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

1 shall be given to the American Merchant Marine  
2 Museum, where it will be available for display as ap-  
3 propriate and available for research.

4 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
5 Congress that the American Merchant Marine Mu-  
6 seum should make the gold medal given to the Mu-  
7 seum under paragraph (1) available for display else-  
8 where, particularly at appropriate locations associ-  
9 ated with the United States Merchant Marine and  
10 that preference should be given to locations affiliated  
11 with the United States Merchant Marine.

12 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

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

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

19 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck under this  
20 Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title  
21 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.

1 **SEC. 6. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

2       The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of  
3 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,  
4 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement  
5 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this  
6 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record  
7 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-  
8 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the  
9 vote on passage.