

117TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 2607

AN ACT

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the former hostages of the Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979–1981, highlighting their resilience throughout the unprecedented ordeal that they lived through and the national unity it produced, marking 4 decades since their 444 days in captivity, and recognizing their sacrifice 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Iran Hostages Con-
5 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) On January 20, 1981, United States dip-
9 lomats, military personnel, and civilians were re-
10 leased after being held hostage for 444 days by mili-
11 tant student supporters of Iran’s Ayatollah Ruhollah
12 Khomeini in a violation of international law. The in-
13 dividuals were taken from the United States Em-
14 bassy in Tehran, Iran, and the ordeal came to be
15 known as the Iran Hostage Crisis.

16 (2) The hostages were subjected to intense
17 physical and psychological torture throughout their
18 captivity, such as mock executions, beatings, solitary
19 confinement, and inhospitable living conditions.

20 (3) Throughout their time held, the hostages
21 were routinely told to denounce the United States
22 and, when they refused, they were tortured, but re-
23 mained strong in their spirit.

24 (4) One hostage wrote “Viva la roja, blanco, y
25 azul”, which translates to “Long live the red, white,

1 and blue”, on the wall of his cell as a reminder of
2 the values he swore to protect.

3 (5) The hostages showed extraordinary courage
4 by continually engaging in acts of resistance against
5 their captors, such as by refusing to sign condemna-
6 tions of the United States, in the face of gross viola-
7 tions of their human rights.

8 (6) Many of the hostages still experience trau-
9 ma as a result of the events of the crisis and deserve
10 to have their suffering recognized.

11 (7) While, as of the date of enactment of this
12 Act, 35 of the hostages are living, it is important
13 that the people of the United States reflect on the
14 resilience and strength of the hostages, which serve
15 as an example to current generations.

16 (8) The people of the United States should—

17 (A) acknowledge the hostages as heroes
18 who—

19 (i) experienced great tribulation; and

20 (ii) endured, so that the people of the
21 United States may know the blessing of
22 living in the United States; and

23 (B) strive to demonstrate the values shown
24 by the hostages.

1 (9) On January 22, 1981, President Jimmy
2 Carter met with the hostages in West Germany and
3 stated the following: “One of the acts in my life
4 which has been the most moving and gratifying in
5 meeting with and discussing the future and the past
6 with the now liberated Americans who were held
7 hostage in Iran for so long. I pointed out to them
8 that, since their capture by the Iranian terrorists
9 and their being held in this despicable act of sav-
10 agery, that the American people’s hearts have gone
11 out to them and the Nation has been united as per-
12 haps never before in history and that the prayers
13 that have gone up from the people throughout the
14 world to God for their safety have finally been an-
15 swered.”.

16 (10) On January 28, 1981, when welcoming the
17 hostages home, President Ronald Reagan stated the
18 following: “You’ve come home to a people who for
19 444 days suffered the pain of your imprisonment,
20 prayed for your safety, and most importantly, shared
21 your determination that the spirit of free men and
22 women is not a fit subject for barter. You’ve rep-
23 resented under great stress the highest traditions of
24 public service. Your conduct is symbolic of the mil-
25 lions of professional diplomats, military personnel,

1 and others who have rendered service to their coun-
2 try.”.

3 (11) During the 444 days the brave hostages
4 were held, the rest of the United States held its
5 breath, waiting for news of the hostages. The United
6 States hoped and prayed together, as one, for the
7 hostages’ safe return.

8 (12) Bruce Laingen, who served as United
9 States Ambassador to Iran from 1979 to 1980 and
10 was the highest ranking diplomat held hostage,
11 summed up the experience by saying the following:
12 “Fifty-three Americans who will always have a love
13 affair with this country and who join with you in a
14 prayer of thanksgiving for the way in which this cri-
15 sis has strengthened the spirit and resilience and
16 strength that is the mark of a truly free society.”.
17 It is now the responsibility of the people of the
18 United States to honor the spirit, resilience, and
19 strength that the hostages displayed during their
20 444 days of imprisonment.

21 (13) Now, more than 4 decades later, the
22 United States continues to honor the hostages. The
23 recipients of the award bestowed by this Act are he-
24 roes in every sense of the word. They are role mod-
25 els who wore their pride in the United States with

1 esteem and have allowed for subsequent generations
2 to appreciate the blessing of living in the United
3 States. Today, as we mark 40 years since their re-
4 lease, the people of the United States acknowledge
5 their endurance, strength, and contributions to see-
6 ing a more peaceful world. The hostages suffered for
7 the United States and now it is the duty of the
8 United States to recognize them for it.

9 **SEC. 3. DEFINITION.**

10 In this Act, the term “hostage” means a person of
11 the United States who was taken captive on November 4,
12 1979, in Tehran, Iran, at the United States embassy and
13 released on—

- 14 (1) July 11, 1980; or
15 (2) January 20, 1981.

16 **SEC. 4. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

17 (a) **AWARD AUTHORIZED.**—The Speaker of the
18 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
19 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
20 award, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of
21 appropriate design to the 53 hostages of the Iran Hostage
22 Crisis, in recognition of their bravery and endurance
23 throughout their captivity, which started on November 4,
24 1979, and lasted until January 21, 1981.

1 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
2 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
3 Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”) shall
4 strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and
5 inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary, in con-
6 sultation with the Secretary of State.

7 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
9 gold medal under subsection (a), the gold medal
10 shall be given to the National Museum of American
11 History of the Smithsonian Institution, where it
12 shall be available for display as appropriate and
13 made available for research.

14 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
15 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
16 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
17 available for loan, as appropriate, so that the medal
18 may be displayed elsewhere.

19 **SEC. 5. BRONZE DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may strike and sell
21 duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant
22 to section 4, at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof,
23 including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and
24 overhead expenses.

1 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALES.—The amounts received
2 from the sale of duplicate medals under subsection (a)
3 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enter-
4 prise Fund.

5 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**

6 There is authorized to be charged against the United
7 States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may
8 be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck
9 under this Act.

10 **SEC. 7. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

11 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-
12 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter
13 51 of title 31, United States Code.

14 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section
15 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck
16 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

17 **SEC. 8. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

18 The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of
19 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,
20 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement
21 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this
22 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record
23 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-

- 1 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the
- 2 vote on passage.

Passed the Senate December 6, 2022.

Attest:

Secretary.

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