

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1244

To posthumously award a historic Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20, 1619, to December 6, 1865.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Mr. GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. CARSON, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. KEATING, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. ALLRED, Ms. BUSH, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. SOTO, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. TRONE, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. ROSS, Mr. KILMER, Ms. TITUS, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. IVEY, Ms. MENG, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CASAR, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. OMAR, Mr. BOWMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Ms. CROCKETT, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. NEGUSE, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. PORTER, Mr. MFUME, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mrs. FLETCHER, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mrs. TRAHAN, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. STRICKLAND, Mr. POCAN, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. WATERS, Mr. FROST, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. TONKO, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. TORRES of New York, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. JACOBS, Mr. CASTEN, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BROWN, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. COHEN, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. LIEU, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, and Ms. CLARKE of New York) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and the Budget, for a period to be subse-

quently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To posthumously award a historic Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20, 1619, to December 6, 1865.

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 “The original legislation
5 awarding a historic Congressional Gold Medal, collectively,
6 to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our
7 country from August 20, 1619, to December 6, 1865”.

8 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

9 Congress finds the following:

10 (1) Human beings were systematically abducted
11 from the continent of Africa and placed against their
12 will onto ships that would cross the Atlantic Ocean.

13 (2) These persons were chained within the
14 holds of ships in horrendous conditions for the dura-
15 tion of the transatlantic journey, which lasted up to
16 six months.

1 (3) Upon arrival in North America, they were
2 forced into labor among the English and European
3 colonies that would later become the United States.

4 (4) Their enslavement was concentrated on
5 farms and plantations that produced crops such as
6 cotton, tobacco, and sugar cane.

7 (5) The practice of slavery continued up to and
8 past the eventual American Revolution against Eng-
9 land and the founding of the United States of Amer-
10 ica.

11 (6) In the ensuing decades, slavery persisted
12 primarily in States where the economy was based
13 significantly on farming.

14 (7) The treatment of enslaved people continued
15 to be horrendous in nature, including exploitation,
16 family separation, rape, torture, and degradation,
17 among other cruelties.

18 (8) Slave labor was essential to the functioning
19 of many farms and plantations and therefore was es-
20 sential to the growth of the United States economy
21 as a whole.

22 (9) Slave labor was used to build notable build-
23 ings and monuments in the United States, including
24 the United States Capitol Building, the White
25 House, the Washington Monument, Mount Vernon,

1 which was the home of George Washington, and
2 Monticello, which was the home of Thomas Jeffer-
3 son.

4 (10) The profits from and involvement of slave
5 labor were also essential to the construction of the
6 Smithsonian Institution, Wall Street, Harvard Uni-
7 versity, Georgetown University, and Fort Sumter.

8 (11) It has been estimated that the total eco-
9 nomic value of slave labor is between \$5.9 trillion
10 and \$14.2 trillion in 2009 dollars.

11 (12) The United States became increasingly di-
12 vided between slaveholding and non-slaveholding
13 States and territories, including as to whether slav-
14 ery should be expanded to new States and territories
15 or abolished altogether.

16 (13) The secession of States from the United
17 States began on December 20, 1860, and led to the
18 formation of the Confederate States of America on
19 February 4, 1861.

20 (14) The American Civil War began on April
21 12, 1861, with the attack on Fort Sumter by Con-
22 federate forces.

23 (15) On January 1, 1863, President Abraham
24 Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation de-

1 claring that “all persons held as slaves” in Confed-
2 erate States “henceforward shall be free”.

3 (16) After four years of grueling battle and
4 conflict, the Civil War concluded with the surrender
5 of the commander of the Confederate forces on April
6 9, 1865, although fighting continued until November
7 6, 1865, and the Civil War was proclaimed to be
8 over by President Andrew Johnson on August 20,
9 1866.

10 (17) The 13th Amendment to the United States
11 Constitution abolishing slavery passed the Congress
12 on January 31, 1865, and was ratified by the re-
13 quired number of States on December 6, 1865.

14 (18) The text of the 13th Amendment states
15 that, “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, ex-
16 cept as a punishment for crime whereof the party
17 shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the
18 United States, or any place subject to their jurisdic-
19 tion.”.

20 (19) The use of slave labor over hundreds of
21 years resulted in immense suffering and deprivation
22 among the people who fell victim to these abhorrent
23 practices.

1 (20) At the same time, the extensive, long-term
2 use of unpaid labor advantaged the United States
3 economy immeasurably.

4 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

5 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
6 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
7 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
8 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of ap-
9 propriate design dedicated to the enslaved persons collec-
10 tively in recognition of their service as the greatest con-
11 tributors to the foundation of America’s economic great-
12 ness.

13 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
14 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
15 Treasury shall strike the gold medal with suitable em-
16 blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the
17 Secretary.

18 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—Following the
19 award of the gold medal described in subsection (a), the
20 gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution,
21 where it will be displayed at the National Museum of Afri-
22 can American History & Culture and made available for
23 research.

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

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may strike and sell
3 duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under sec-
4 tion 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the bronze
5 medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery,
6 and overhead expenses.

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

11 (c) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is
12 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
13 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
14 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under
15 this Act.

16 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

17 The gold medal struck pursuant to this Act is a na-
18 tional medal for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United
19 States Code.

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

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

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

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