

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the troops from the United States and the Philippines who defended Bataan and Corregidor, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service during World War II.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the troops from the United States and the Philippines who defended Bataan and Corregidor, in recognition of their personal sacrifice and 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 “Defenders of Bataan
5 and Corregidor Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Hours after the attacks on Pearl Harbor,
2 Hawaii, Imperial Japanese forces launched an at-
3 tack on the Philippines, cutting off vital lines of
4 communication to members of the Armed Forces of
5 the United States (referred to in this Act as the
6 “Armed Forces”) and Filipino troops in the Far
7 East under the command of General Douglas Mac-
8 Arthur.

9 (2) On December 8, 1941, the 200th and 515th
10 Coast Artillery Regiments, successors to the New
11 Mexico National Guardsmen who made up part of
12 the famed “Rough Riders” of the Spanish-American
13 War, were the “first to fire”.

14 (3) Despite being cut off from supply lines and
15 reinforcements, members of the Armed Forces and
16 Philippine troops quickly executed a plan to delay
17 the Japanese invasion and defend the Philippines
18 against that invasion.

19 (4) Combined Armed Forces and Filipino
20 ground forces fought a prolonged 6-month resistance
21 to Imperial Japan’s invasion of the Philippines.
22 With the Armed Forces unable to deliver reinforce-
23 ments, the Armed Forces and Filipino forces slowly
24 deteriorated in combat effectiveness through lack of

1 food, supplies, ammunition, and disease as well as
2 from no air and naval support.

3 (5) By December 10, 1941, the United States
4 Army Air Corps airfields at Del Carmen, Clark,
5 Nichols, and Nielson on Luzon in the Philippines, as
6 well as the nearby United States Naval facilities at
7 Cavite and Olongapo had been destroyed. The sur-
8 viving sailors, Marines, and airmen were organized
9 into provisional infantry units and sent to fight on
10 the Bataan Peninsula.

11 (6) By April 1942, troops from the United
12 States and the Philippines had bravely and staunch-
13 ly fought off enemy attacks in Bataan for more than
14 4 months under strenuous conditions that resulted
15 in widespread starvation and disease.

16 (7) Securing the withdrawal of Armed Forces
17 on Luzon to the Bataan Peninsula were:

18 (A) 1,809 New Mexico National Guards-
19 men from 200th and 515th Coast Artillery
20 (Antiaircraft) regiments. First stationed at
21 Fort Stotsenberg north of Manila, they are
22 credited as being the "First to Fire" in the de-
23 fense of the Philippines on December 8, 1941.

24 (B) 1,006 National Guardsmen of the
25 192nd GHQ Light Tank Battalion (596) com-

1 posed of Company A from Janesville, Wis-
2 consin, Company B from Maywood, Illinois,
3 Company C from Port Clinton, Ohio, and Com-
4 pany D from Harrodsburg, Kentucky and the
5 194th Light Tank Battalion (410) composed of
6 Company A from Brainerd, Minnesota, Com-
7 pany B from Saint Joseph, Missouri, and Com-
8 pany C from Salinas, California. The 192nd
9 and 194th Tank Battalions had arrived in the
10 Philippines on or before Thanksgiving Day
11 1941.

12 (8) Barely $\frac{1}{2}$ of the men from these National
13 Guard units returned home at the end of the war,
14 with the majority dying as prisoners of war of the
15 Imperial Japanese Army.

16 (9) By maintaining their position and engaging
17 the enemy for as long as they did, the troops at Ba-
18 taan were able to change the momentum of the war,
19 delaying the Japanese timetable to take control of
20 the Southeast Pacific for needed war materials. Be-
21 cause of the heroic actions of the defenders of Ba-
22 taan, members of the Armed Forces and other Allied
23 forces throughout the Pacific had time to regroup
24 and prepare for the successful liberation of the Pa-
25 cific and the Philippines.

1 (10) On April 9, 1942, approximately 12,000
2 members of the Armed Forces and 66,000 Filipino
3 soldiers became prisoners of war with the surrender
4 of the Armed Forces and Filipino forces on the Ba-
5 taan Peninsula in the Philippines by Major General
6 Edward P. King.

7 (11) Beginning on April 9, 1942, and lasting
8 for almost 2 weeks, troops from the Armed Forces
9 and the Philippines were taken prisoner and forced
10 to march 65 miles without any food, water, or med-
11 ical care in what came to be known as the “Bataan
12 Death March”. They marched from Marviveles north
13 to the San Fernando train station. At San Fer-
14 nando, the men were packed standing in
15 unventilated boxcars for 24-mile journey by rail to
16 Capas. Survivors then marched an additional 3 miles
17 to the make-shift prisoner of war camp at Camp
18 O’Donnell, an unfinished Philippine Army training
19 facility.

20 (12) During this force march, an estimated 700
21 members of the Armed Forces and possibly 10,000
22 Filipino soldiers died from starvation, lack of med-
23 ical care, sheer exhaustion, or abuse by their cap-
24 tors. Hundreds of men on the Death March remain

1 unaccounted for from the march and its immediate
2 aftermath.

3 (13) Conditions at the prisoner of war camps
4 were appalling, leading to increased disease and mal-
5 nutrition, which precipitated extraordinary death
6 rates of as high as 300 per day.

7 (14) Thousands of troops fought under siege
8 conditions on Corregidor (Fort Mills), a fortress is-
9 land in Manila Bay, the headquarters of the wartime
10 U.S. Army Forces in the Far East, and the nearby
11 fortified islands of Fort Hughes, Fort Drum, and
12 Fort Frank until May 6, 1942.

13 (15) On May 6, 1942, Corregidor, which had
14 become the military command center for all the Phil-
15ippines, United States Forces in the Philippines
16 (USFIP), was surrendered by Lt. General Jonathan
17 M. Wainwright. Nearly 10,000 members of the
18 Armed Forces as well as over 3,000 Filipino soldiers
19 and nurses become prisoners of war of Imperial
20 Japan;

21 (16) On June 6, 1942, the prisoners at Camp
22 O'Donnell were transferred to Camp Cabanatuan,
23 north of Camp O'Donnell.

24 (17) Nearly 26,000 of the 50,000 Filipino pris-
25 oners of war died at Camp O'Donnell and survivors

1 were gradually paroled from September through De-
2 cember 1942.

3 (18) Between September of 1942 and December
4 of 1944, prisoners of war from the Armed Forces
5 who had survived the horrific death march were
6 shipped north for forced labor aboard “hell ships”
7 and succumbed in great numbers because of the
8 abysmal conditions. Many of those ships were mis-
9 takenly targeted by Allied naval forces because the
10 Japanese military convoys were not properly labeled
11 as carrying prisoners of war. The sinking of the
12 Arisan Maru alone claimed nearly 1,800 lives of
13 members of the Armed Forces.

14 (19) The prisoners who remained in the camps
15 suffered from continued mistreatment, malnutrition,
16 lack of medical care, and horrific conditions until
17 they were liberated in 1945.

18 (20) The veterans of Bataan and Corregidor
19 represented the best of the United States and the
20 Philippines, hailed from various locales across both
21 countries, and represented true diversity.

22 (21) Over the subsequent decades, the veterans
23 of Bataan and Corregidor formed support groups,
24 were honored in local and State memorials, and told
25 their stories to all people of the United States.

1 (22) The United States Navy has continued to
2 honor the history and stories of the veterans of Ba-
3 taan by naming 2 ships after the battle, including 1
4 ship that is still in service, the USS Bataan (LHD-
5 5), in memory of their valor and honorable resist-
6 ance against Imperial Japanese forces.

7 (23) Many of the survivors of Bataan and Cor-
8 regidor have died and those who remain continue to
9 tell their stories.

10 (24) The people of the United States and the
11 Philippines are forever indebted to these men for—

12 (A) the courage and tenacity they dem-
13 onstrated during the first 4 months of World
14 War II fighting against enemy soldiers; and

15 (B) the perseverance they demonstrated
16 during 3 years of capture, imprisonment, and
17 atrocious conditions, while maintaining dignity,
18 honor, patriotism, and loyalty.

19 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

20 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
21 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
22 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
23 collective award, on behalf of Congress, of a gold medal
24 of appropriate design to the troops from the United States
25 and the Philippines who defended Bataan and Corregidor,

1 in recognition of their personal sacrifice and service during
2 World War II.

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

8 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
10 gold medal under subsection (a) in honor of the pris-
11 oners of war at Bataan and the troops from the
12 United States and the Philippines who defended Ba-
13 taan and Corregidor, the gold medal shall be given
14 to the Smithsonian Institution, where it shall be dis-
15 played as appropriate and made available for re-
16 search.

17 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
18 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
19 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
20 available for display at other locations, particularly
21 at locations that are associated with the prisoners of
22 war at Bataan and the troops from the United
23 States and the Philippines who defended Bataan and
24 Corregidor.

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

2 (a) STRIKING OF DUPLICATES.—Under such regula-
3 tions as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may
4 strike duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under
5 section 3.

6 (b) SELLING OF DUPLICATES.—The Secretary may
7 sell such duplicates under subsection (a) at a price suffi-
8 cient to cover the costs of such duplicates, including labor,
9 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

10 (c) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
11 sale of duplicate bronze medals under subsection (b) shall
12 be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise
13 Fund.

14 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

15 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck under this
16 Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title
17 31, United States Code.

18 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section
19 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck
20 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.