

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9274

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Ritchie Boys, in recognition of their bravery and dedication and the importance of their contributions to the success of the Allied Forces during World War II.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 3, 2022

Mr. TRONE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Ritchie Boys, in recognition of their bravery and dedication and the importance of their contributions to the success of the Allied Forces 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 “Ritchie Boys Congres-
5 sional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) In 1942, the Federal Government ordered
2 that a Maryland National Guard Training Ground
3 be turned into a War Department Military Intel-
4 ligence Training Center, which was named Camp
5 Ritchie after the late Governor, Albert C. Ritchie.

6 (2) Starting in 1942, more than 19,000 men
7 trained at Camp Ritchie in Maryland and became
8 known as the Ritchie Boys.

9 (3) While the approximately 2,800 refugees who
10 had fled Nazi persecution in Germany and Austria
11 and had come to the United States as “enemy
12 aliens” prior to the entry of the United States into
13 World War II only constituted approximately 14
14 percent of the total number of Ritchie Boys, they
15 had the strongest motivation to return to Europe
16 and fight for their newly adopted country.

17 (4) The Ritchie Boys included—

18 (A) soldiers of many faiths (including
19 Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic soldiers);

20 (B) both soldiers born in the United States
21 and foreign-born soldiers from more than 70
22 countries;

23 (C) soldiers with German, Japanese
24 (Nisei), and other language skills; and

1 (D) more importantly, soldiers with gen-
2 eral intelligence skills suitable for being trained
3 as order-of-battle specialists, counterintelligence
4 operatives, photo interpreters, psychological
5 warfare experts, and other specialists.

6 (5) During World War II, Ritchie Boys were
7 assigned to every unit of the Army and the Marines
8 as well as to the Office of Strategic Services and the
9 Counter Intelligence Corps.

10 (6) Starting in 1942, the Ritchie Boys were
11 sent as individual specialists to the Supreme Head-
12 quarters Allied Expeditionary Force (“SHAEF”) in
13 small elite teams to join combat units in the North
14 African, Mediterranean, European, and Pacific thea-
15 ters and to military camps, prisoner-of-war camps,
16 and interrogation centers (such as Fort Hunt, Vir-
17 ginia) in the United States.

18 (7) The Ritchie Boys accompanied the Army on
19 D-Day in Europe as foot soldiers with all Army divi-
20 sions and as paratroopers with all airborne divisions
21 and were often selected to be the second soldier to
22 land after the commander in order to provide needed
23 immediate interpretation in languages such as
24 French, German, and Italian.

1 (8) The Ritchie Boys served as personal inter-
2 preters for General George Patton and other mili-
3 tary leaders.

4 (9) The Ritchie Boys served honorably in the
5 Pacific in the assaults on Guadalcanal, Okinawa,
6 Iwo Jima, and the Philippines, including 2 Marine
7 Corps Ritchie Boys who died in the initial landing
8 on Iwo Jima and a Ritchie Boy who was awarded
9 the Medal of Honor posthumously for bravery.

10 (10) Approximately 140 Ritchie Boys lost their
11 lives during World War II.

12 (11) The Ritchie Boys garnered more than 65
13 Silver Star Medals and numerous Bronze Star Med-
14 als as well as at least 5 Legion of Honor and many
15 Croix de Guerre Medals.

16 (12) Among the 150-man Second Mobile Radio
17 Broadcast Company of the Ritchie Boys, 6 members
18 received the Croix de Guerre Medal and at least 15
19 received Bronze Star Medals for service and bravery.

20 (13) The Ritchie Boys made significant con-
21 tributions to the success of the Allied Forces on the
22 Western Front through their knowledge and their
23 skills, as demonstrated by a classified postwar report
24 by the Army finding that the Ritchie Boys were the

1 source of nearly 60 percent of the credible intel-
2 ligence gathered in Europe during World War II.

3 (14) Many of the Ritchie Boys continued to
4 serve their country following the conclusion of World
5 War II, including through service as translators or
6 interrogators prosecuting war criminals with the
7 Judge Advocate General's Office during trials at Da-
8 chau and Nuremberg.

9 (15) The Ritchie Boys include such notable fig-
10 ures as David Rockefeller, Archibald Roosevelt Jr.,
11 William Sloane Coffin, Philip Johnson, J.D. Sal-
12 inger, and William Warfield, as well as Senators
13 John Chafee of Rhode Island and Frank Church of
14 Idaho, and the father of the current senior Senator
15 from Oregon, Ron Wyden.

16 (16) The Ritchie Boys also contributed outside
17 of the military through careers as writers, artists,
18 architects, academics, diplomats, economists, fin-
19 anciers, philanthropists, and psychologists.

20 (17) Because the roles of the Ritchie Boys re-
21 mained classified for decades, the public generally
22 lacks awareness of their contributions.

23 (18) Camp Ritchie closed in 1998, and a mu-
24 seum and educational center is now being planned
25 for the location.

1 (19) Approximately 200 Ritchie Boys are still
2 living, ranging in age between 95 and 107.

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

4 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
5 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
6 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
7 for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of Congress,
8 of a gold medal of appropriate design in commemoration
9 of the Ritchie Boys, in recognition of their bravery and
10 dedication and the importance of their contributions to the
11 success of the Allied Forces during World War II.

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

18 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
20 gold medal under subsection (a), the gold medal
21 shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution, where
22 it shall be available for display as appropriate and
23 made available for research.

24 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
25 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should

1 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
2 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
3 appropriate locations associated with the Ritchie
4 Boys.

5 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

6 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
7 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3, at
8 a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,
9 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

10 **SEC. 5. 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. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
18 **SALE.**

19 (a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is
20 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
21 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
22 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under
23 this Act.

24 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
25 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section

- 1 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public
- 2 Enterprise Fund.

