

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 5909

To authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to E. Royce Williams  
for acts of valor during the Korean War.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 5, 2021

Mr. ISSA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee  
on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor  
to E. Royce Williams for acts of valor during the Korean  
War.

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. FINDINGS.**

4       Congress finds the following:

5               (1) On November 18, 1952, then Lieutenant E.  
6       Royce Williams and Combat Air Patrol Task Force  
7       77 carried out an airstrike on the Hoeryong indus-  
8       trial complex near the Korea-Russia border. In re-  
9       sponse, seven Soviet MiG-15s launched from a So-  
10      viet base near Vladivostok. Williams and three other

1 US pilots flying F9F-5 Panthers were dispatched  
2 from the U.S.S. Oriskany to pursue the seven MiG-  
3 15s in blizzard conditions to engage over the Sea of  
4 Japan.

5 (2) When the Flight Leader's instruments re-  
6 ported a fuel-pump warning, he was escorted back to  
7 the U.S.S. Oriskany by his wingman.

8 (3) Williams and his wingman, Dave Rowlands,  
9 remained airborne. Williams fired upon one MiG-15  
10 and Rowlands followed it out of formation, leaving  
11 Williams to pursue the remaining six MiG-15s on  
12 his own. In his efforts, Williams expended all of his  
13 ammunition and shot down four, very likely five, of  
14 the seven Soviet MiG-15s, setting the American avi-  
15 ator record for MiGs shot in a single sortie and the  
16 only naval dogfight over water in the Korean War.

17 (4) After sustaining a hit from a 37 millimeter  
18 shell that disabled his electrical and hydraulic sys-  
19 tems, Williams underwent enemy fire while returning  
20 to the carrier as well as friendly fire from escort ves-  
21 sels after being mistaken for enemy aircraft.

22 (5) Without rudders to slow his descent, Wil-  
23 liams landed on the U.S.S. Oriskany at a speed of  
24 170 knots, miraculously able to safely engage the  
25 number three wire.

1           (6) Williams' aircraft sustained 263 holes and  
2           a foot-long gash while the only injury sustained by  
3           Williams was a bloody neck, chafed by his gear. Wil-  
4           liams was told not to speak of the events of that day  
5           by his commanders, and, at the time, was only offi-  
6           cially credited for one downed and one damaged  
7           enemy in the fight.

8           (7) Witnesses to this heroism were the first unit  
9           of the then newly created National Security Agency,  
10          codenamed "Canoe", aboard the USS Helena. Inter-  
11          cepting Soviet communications, the unit recorded  
12          the transmissions that three Soviet MiGs were shot  
13          down, and one pilot ejected his compromised aircraft  
14          and then died. One aircraft returned to base in  
15          Vladivostok.

16          (8) At the end of the Cold War, Russia released  
17          the names of the four pilots shot down in combat on  
18          November 18, 1952.

19          (9) When Williams was awarded the Silver Star  
20          for his actions on November 18, 1952, the drafters  
21          did not have access to the top secret radio intel-  
22          ligence or the subsequent Russian report released  
23          after the Cold War.

1           (10) Williams served in the Navy for over 30  
2       years, flew over 220 missions in Korea and Vietnam,  
3       and retired in 1984.

4           (11) E. Royce Williams deserves the Congres-  
5       sional Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on No-  
6       vember 18, 1952, when he successfully eliminated  
7       four, likely five, of seven MiG-15s in a far less supe-  
8       rior aircraft during the 35-minute-long aerial battle  
9       wherein he never once sought safety in the clouds or  
10      abandoned the mission despite being outnumbered  
11      and outgunned.

12 **SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION FOR AWARD OF MEDAL OF HONOR**  
13                               **TO E. ROYCE WILLIAMS FOR ACTS OF VALOR**  
14                               **DURING THE KOREAN WAR.**

15       (a) WAIVER OF TIME LIMITATIONS.—Notwith-  
16      standing the time limitations specified in section 8298 of  
17      title 10, United States Code, or any other time limitation  
18      with respect to the awarding of certain medals to persons  
19      who served in the Armed Forces, the President may award  
20      the Medal of Honor under section 8291 of such title to  
21      E. Royce Williams for the acts of valor described in sub-  
22      section (b).

23       (b) ACTS OF VALOR DESCRIBED.—The acts of valor  
24      described in this subsection are the actions of E. Royce

- 1 Williams, as a lieutenant in the Navy, on November 18,
- 2 1952.

