

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 954

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the individuals and communities who volunteered or donated items to the North Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, during World War II from December 25, 1941, to April 1, 1946.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 9, 2023

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska (for himself, Mr. BACON, and Mr. FLOOD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the individuals and communities who volunteered or donated items to the North Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, during World War II from December 25, 1941, to April 1, 1946.

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 “North Platte Canteen
5 Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Home-front volunteerism was integral to the
2 victory of the United States during World War II.
3 Numerous exemplars of patriotism emerged through-
4 out the Midwest, galvanizing the rural United States
5 and the rest of the country supporting the war ef-
6 fort.

7 (2) The North Platte Canteen in North Platte,
8 Nebraska, was one of the largest volunteer efforts of
9 World War II.

10 (3) Canteen services boosted morale in the
11 United States by providing free, wholesome enter-
12 tainment to troops traveling across the country. Ap-
13 proximately 120 community-based canteens operated
14 in the United States during World War II.

15 (4) The North Platte Canteen greeted and
16 served food to approximately 6,000,000 U.S. troops
17 traveling across the United States from December
18 25, 1941, to April 1, 1946.

19 (5) On December 17, 1941, the residents of
20 North Platte, Nebraska, received information that a
21 train of Nebraska National Guardsmen would be
22 traveling through North Platte en route to the West
23 Coast of the United States. Although the train car-
24 ried members of the Kansas National Guard, resi-
25 dents of the community welcomed the men from

1 Kansas with food and other items as an appreciation
2 for their service.

3 (6) On December 18, 1941, Rae Wilson, of
4 North Platte, proposed to her community the idea of
5 establishing the North Platte Canteen so that resi-
6 dents could greet U.S. troops en route to serving the
7 United States in the European Theater or the Pa-
8 cific Theater.

9 (7) 55,000 individuals, the majority of whom
10 were women, from 125 communities in Nebraska,
11 Colorado, and Kansas donated food and volunteered
12 at the North Platte Canteen for approximately 5
13 years.

14 (8) The North Platte Canteen provided hospi-
15 tality to as many as 24 troop trains per day. During
16 a 1-month period, the Canteen's volunteers served
17 over 40,000 homemade cookies, 30,000 hard-boiled
18 eggs, 6,500 doughnuts, 4,000 loaves of bread, 3,000
19 pounds of meat, 450 pounds of cheese, 60 quarts of
20 peanut butter, 1,350 pounds of coffee, 1,000 quarts
21 of cream, 750 dozen rolls, and 600 birthday cakes.

22 (9) The North Platte Canteen principally oper-
23 ated at the Union Pacific Railroad station in North
24 Platte, Nebraska, with volunteers from local commu-

1 nities, organizations, churches, schools, and other
2 groups, and without Federal assistance.

3 (10) \$137,000 in cash contributions supported
4 the North Platte Canteen's operations for almost 5
5 years. The funds were raised through benefit dances,
6 scrap-metal drives, school victory clubs, donation
7 cans in local businesses, and from the relatives of
8 troops who traveled through the North Platte area.

9 (11) In December 1943, the North Platte Can-
10 teen was honored by the United States Army with
11 the presentation of the Meritorious Wartime Service
12 Award by the Secretary of War.

13 (12) In 2004, the 108th Congress passed a res-
14 olution recognizing the heroic efforts of those who
15 made enormous sacrifices to make the North Platte
16 Canteen a success during World War II.

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

18 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
19 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
20 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
21 for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a gold
22 medal of appropriate design to the individuals and commu-
23 nities who volunteered or donated items to the North
24 Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, during World
25 War II.

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

6 (c) LINCOLN COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM.—Fol-
7 lowing the award of the gold medal under subsection (a),
8 the gold medal shall be given to the Lincoln County His-
9 torical Museum in North Platte, Nebraska, where it will
10 be available for display as appropriate and available for
11 research.

12 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

13 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
14 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price
15 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
16 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

17 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

18 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck pursuant to
19 this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51
20 of title 31, United States Code.

21 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections
22 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals
23 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic
24 items.

1 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
2 **SALE.**

3 (a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**—There is
4 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
5 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
6 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under
7 this Act.

8 (b) **PROCEEDS OF SALE.**—Amounts received from the
9 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section
10 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public
11 Enterprise Fund.

○