

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2730

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, known as the “Ghost Army”, collectively, in recognition of its unique and incredible service during World War II.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 17, 2016

Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, known as the “Ghost Army”, collectively, in recognition of its unique and incredible 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 “Ghost Army Congres-
5 sional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The 23rd Headquarters Special Troops (the
2 “Ghost Army”) was a top-secret unit of the United
3 States Army that served in the European Theater of
4 Operations during World War II.

5 (2) The unit was actively engaged in battlefield
6 operations from June of 1944 through March of
7 1945.

8 (3) The deceptive activities of the Ghost Army
9 were essential to several Allied victories across Eu-
10 rope and are estimated to have saved thousands of
11 lives.

12 (4) In evaluating the performance of the Ghost
13 Army after the War, a U.S. Army analysis found
14 that “Rarely, if ever, has there been a group of such
15 a few men which had so great an influence on the
16 outcome of a major military campaign.”.

17 (5) Many Ghost Army soldiers were specially
18 selected for their mission, and were recruited from
19 art schools, advertising agencies, communications
20 companies, and other creative and technical profes-
21 sions.

22 (6) The first four members of the Ghost Army
23 landed on D-Day and two became casualties while
24 camouflaging early beach installations.

1 (7) The Ghost Army's secret deception oper-
2 ations commenced in France on June 14, 1944,
3 when Task Force Mason landed at Omaha Beach to
4 draw enemy fire and protect the 980th Artillery for
5 28 days.

6 (8) Task Force Mason was a prelude to 21 full-
7 scale tactical deceptions completed by the Ghost
8 Army.

9 (9) Often operating on or near the front lines,
10 the Ghost Army used inflatable tanks, artillery, air-
11 planes and other vehicles, advanced engineered
12 soundtracks, and skillfully crafted radio trickery to
13 create the illusion of sizable American forces where
14 there were none and to draw the enemy away from
15 Allied troops.

16 (10) Ghost Army soldiers impersonated other,
17 larger Army units by sewing counterfeit patches
18 onto their uniforms, painting false markings on their
19 vehicles, and creating phony headquarters staffed by
20 fake generals, all in an effort to feed false informa-
21 tion to Axis spies.

22 (11) During the Battle of the Bulge, the Ghost
23 Army created counterfeit radio traffic to mask the
24 efforts of General George Patton's Third Army as it
25 mobilized to break through to the 101st Airborne

1 and elements of 10th Armored Division in the be-
2 sieged Belgian town of Bastogne.

3 (12) In its final mission, Operation Viersen, the
4 Ghost Army deployed a tactical deception that drew
5 German units down the Rhine River and away from
6 the 9th Army, allowing the 9th Army to cross the
7 Rhine into Germany. On this mission, the 1,100
8 men of the Ghost Army, with the assistance of other
9 units, impersonated forty thousand men, or two
10 complete divisions of American forces, by using fab-
11 ricated radio networks, soundtracks of construction
12 work and artillery fire, and more than 600 inflatable
13 vehicles.

14 (13) Three Ghost Army soldiers gave their lives
15 and dozens were injured in carrying out their mis-
16 sion.

17 (14) The activities of the Ghost Army remained
18 classified for more than forty years after the war
19 and the extraordinary accomplishments of this unit
20 are deserving of belated recognition.

21 (15) The United States will be eternally grate-
22 ful to the Ghost Army for their proficient use of in-
23 novative tactics throughout World War II, which
24 saved thousands of lives and were instrumental in
25 the defeat of Nazi Germany.

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

2 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
3 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
4 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
5 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of ap-
6 propriate design to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops,
7 known as the “Ghost Army”, collectively, in recognition
8 of its unique and incredible service during World War II.

9 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
10 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
11 Treasury (in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall
12 strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and
13 inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

14 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
16 gold medal in honor of the Ghost Army, the gold
17 medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution,
18 where it will be available for display as appropriate
19 and available for research.

20 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
21 the Congress that the Smithsonian Institution
22 should make the gold medal awarded pursuant to
23 this Act available for display elsewhere, particularly
24 at appropriate locations associated with the Ghost
25 Army, and that preference should be given to loca-
26 tions affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution.

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

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

6 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

7 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national med-
8 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
9 Code.

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