

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1299

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the group of heroic participants in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising who led an armed resistance against Nazi occupiers and fought to preserve and protect the Jewish culture.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 1, 2023

Mr. KEATING (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. TURNER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the group of heroic participants in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising who led an armed resistance against Nazi occupiers and fought to preserve and protect the Jewish culture.

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 “Heroes of the Warsaw
5 Ghetto Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Jewish people have long formed an in-
2 tegral part of the culture and history of Europe and
3 of Poland.

4 (2) Europeans Jews contribute to the rich di-
5 versity of society and culture across Europe.

6 (3) For centuries, prior to World War II, Po-
7 land represented a center of Jewish life in Europe
8 and was home to millions of Jews.

9 (4) Prior to World War II, 350,000 Jews lived
10 in Warsaw, representing about 30 percent of the
11 city's population.

12 (5) Following the Nazi takeover of Poland, the
13 Germans established the Warsaw ghetto in October
14 1940, and unlawfully confined Jewish civilians to the
15 ghetto in November 1940, with the population of the
16 ghetto reaching a height of 400,000 Jews.

17 (6) Life in the Warsaw ghetto was marked by
18 widespread starvation, disease, physical violence, and
19 deplorable conditions unsuitable for life, leading to
20 the deaths of 83,000 Jews between 1940 and mid-
21 1942.

22 (7) In less than two months in 1942, German
23 units deported about 265,000 Jews from Warsaw to
24 the Treblinka death camp and killed an additional
25 35,000 Jews inside the ghetto.

1 (8) In early 1943, German and SS units in-
2 tended to deport the remaining Jewish population of
3 the ghetto to forced labor camps, but many Jews re-
4 sisted deportation.

5 (9) The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising began on
6 April 19, 1943, when SS and police forces appeared
7 outside the walls of the Warsaw ghetto with the in-
8 tent of liquidating the ghetto and deporting its re-
9 maining inhabitants.

10 (10) Aided in part by arms from the Polish un-
11 derground and relying on clandestinely organized
12 Jewish self-defense groups, the ghetto heroically re-
13 sisted German forces, mounting an organized armed
14 resistance against SS and police units and fighting
15 against impossible odds.

16 (11) Jews in the ghetto continued to fend off
17 their German occupiers for almost one month, fight-
18 ing to the last.

19 (12) After weeks of resistance, the Germans
20 systematically destroyed the ghetto, burning build-
21 ings and razing city blocks in an attempt to erase
22 the memory and existence of the Jewish people.

23 (13) By May 16, 1943, German forces had sup-
24 pressed the uprising and deported the ghetto's sur-

1 viving inhabitants to concentration camps and killing
2 centers.

3 (14) The heroes of the Warsaw ghetto who
4 bravely defended themselves in the face of unimagi-
5 nable crimes set an example for other occupied cities
6 and for other Jewish communities.

7 (15) In total, over 3,000,000 Polish Jews were
8 murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust, with
9 only about 380,000 Polish Jews still alive in Poland,
10 the Soviet Union, or in concentration camps by the
11 end of the war.

12 (16) Genocide involves the erasure and elimi-
13 nation of the memory and culture of a people, and
14 therefore the United States must work to preserve
15 the historical record of Jewish people around the
16 world, many of whom now live in the United States.

17 (17) Current and future generations benefit
18 from the preservation and memorialization of their
19 history and culture.

20 (18) Millions of Jewish people whose ancestors
21 came from Poland now live in the United States,
22 Israel, and around the world.

23 (19) Preservation of the history and culture of
24 Jewish people in Poland is essential to learning the

1 lessons of history and ensuring the prosperity of the
2 Jewish people for future generations.

3 (20) Museums are an important contributor to
4 the historical preservation of human memory, pro-
5 viding cultural, education and civic centers where
6 people can learn about the life and record of individ-
7 uals or groups of people from the past.

8 (21) Museums dedicated to the historical mem-
9 ory of Jewish people or the struggle for survival of
10 the Jewish people during the Holocaust play a crit-
11 ical role in preserving the memory of Jewish people.

12 (22) The construction of further museums, in-
13 cluding the Warsaw Ghetto Museum, would be a
14 welcoming place for all visitors who want to better
15 understand the fate of Jews incarcerated in the
16 Warsaw ghetto.

17 (23) The POLIN Museum of the History of the
18 Polish Jews is a central location for Jewish people
19 around the world to learn about the life, history, and
20 culture of their ancestors.

21 (24) The POLIN Museum is an important edu-
22 cational hub for all people to learn about the rich
23 history of Jewish people who were targeted and he-
24 roically fought back against the Nazis in their at-
25 tempt to erase the memory of Jewish life in Europe.

1 (25) The POLIN Museum in Warsaw should be
2 celebrated for the important role it plays in the pres-
3 ervation of the memory of Jewish life as it docu-
4 ments the long history of Jewish life in Poland and
5 Europe both before and after the war, and sits on
6 the site of the former Warsaw ghetto where so many
7 heroic Jews fought against the erasure of the mem-
8 ory of the Jewish people.

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

10 (a) PRESENTATIONS AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
11 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
12 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
13 for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of the Con-
14 gress, of a gold medal of appropriate design in collective
15 commemoration of the group of heroic participants in the
16 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising who led an armed resistance
17 against Nazi occupiers and fought to preserve and protect
18 the Jewish culture.

19 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the
20 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
21 of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the
22 “Secretary”) shall strike the gold medal with suitable em-
23 blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the
24 Secretary.

1 (c) UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MU-
2 SEUM.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
4 gold medal under subsection (a), the gold medal
5 shall be given to the United States Holocaust Memo-
6 rial Museum, where it shall be available for display
7 and research in accordance with the Museum’s poli-
8 cies regarding materials in the Museum’s care.

9 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
10 Congress that the United States Holocaust Memo-
11 rial Museum should make the gold medal received
12 under paragraph (1) available for display elsewhere,
13 in accordance with the Museum’s policies regarding
14 materials in the Museum’s care, at other appropriate
15 locations, including those associated with commemo-
16 ration of the Holocaust and other relevant entities
17 such as the POLIN Museum of the History of the
18 Polish Jews, that may make such a request.

19 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

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

1 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

2 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medal struck pursuant
3 to this Act is a national medal for purposes of chapter
4 51 of title 31, United States Code.

5 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections
6 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals
7 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic
8 items.

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

11 (a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is
12 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
13 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-
14 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck pursuant
15 to this Act.

16 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—The amounts received
17 from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under
18 section 3 shall be deposited into the United States Mint
19 Public Enterprise Fund.

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