

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1527

To authorize the award of a Congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines of World War II.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2011

Mrs. HAGAN (for herself, Mr. BURR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. GRAHAM) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the award of a Congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines of 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. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds that—

5 (1) on June 25, 1941, President Franklin D.
6 Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802, estab-
7 lishing the Fair Employment Practices Commission
8 and opening the doors for African-American individ-

1 uals to enlist in the United States Marine Corps for
2 the first time;

3 (2) the first African-American Marine recruits
4 were trained at Camp Montford Point, near the New
5 River in Jacksonville, North Carolina;

6 (3) on August 26, 1942, Howard P. Perry of
7 Charlotte, North Carolina, was the first African-
8 American private to set foot on Montford Point;

9 (4) during April 1943, the first African-Amer-
10 ican Marine drill instructors took over as the senior
11 drill instructors of the 8 platoons then in training,
12 including—

13 (A) Edgar R. Huff, 16th Platoon;

14 (B) Thomas Brokaw, 17th Platoon;

15 (C) Charles E. Allen, 18th Platoon;

16 (D) Gilbert H. Johnson, 19th Platoon;

17 (E) Arnold R. Bostic, 20th Platoon;

18 (F) Mortimer A. Cox, 21st Platoon;

19 (G) Edgar R. Davis, Jr., 22nd Platoon;

20 and

21 (H) George A. Jackson, 23rd Platoon;

22 (5) African-American Marines of the 8th Am-
23 munition Company and the 36th Depot Company
24 landed on the Island of Iwo Jima on D-Day, Feb-
25 ruary 19, 1945;

1 (6) the largest number of African-American
2 Marines to serve in combat during World War II
3 took part in the seizure of Okinawa in the Ryuku Is-
4 lands, with some 2,000 African-American Marines
5 seeing action during the campaign;

6 (7) on November 10, 1945, Frederick C.
7 Branch was the first African-American Marine to be
8 commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, at the Marine
9 Base in Quantico, Virginia;

10 (8) overall, 19,168 African-Americans served in
11 the Marine Corps in World War II;

12 (9) 16 years after the closure of Montford Point
13 as a training facility for African-American recruits,
14 an enterprising group of men, including original
15 Montford Point Master Sergeant Brooks E. Gray,
16 planned a reunion of the “Men of Montford Point”,
17 and on September 15, 1965, approximately 400
18 Montford Point Marines gathered at the Adelphi
19 Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and laid the
20 foundation for the Montford Point Marine Associa-
21 tion Inc.;

22 (10) organized as a nonmilitary, nonprofit enti-
23 ty, the Montford Point Marine Association has as its
24 main mission to preserve the legacy of the first Afri-

1 can-American Marines, and today the Association
2 has 36 chapters throughout the United States;

3 (11) many of the first African-American Ma-
4 rines stayed in the Marine Corps for a career, in-
5 cluding Sergeant Major Edgar R. Huff, 1 of the
6 very first recruits at Montford Point;

7 (12) Sergeant Major Huff was the first Afri-
8 can-American Sergeant Major and the first African-
9 American Marine to retire with 30 years of service,
10 which included combat in 3 major conflicts, World
11 War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War;

12 (13) Sergeant Major Huff was awarded the
13 Bronze Star medal with a combat “V” for valor for
14 saving the life of his radio operator during the Tet
15 Offensive in Vietnam;

16 (14) another original Montford Point Marine
17 who saw extensive combat action in both the Korean
18 Conflict and the Vietnam War was Sergeant Major
19 Louis Roundtree, who was awarded the Silver Star,
20 4 Bronze Stars, 3 Purple Hearts, and numerous
21 other personal and unit awards for his service dur-
22 ing those conflicts;

23 (15) on April 19, 1974, Montford Point was re-
24 named “Camp Johnson”, after legendary Montford

1 Point Marine Sergeant Major Gilbert “Hashmark”
2 Johnson; and

3 (16) the Montford Point Marine Association
4 has several memorials in place to perpetuate the
5 memory of who they were and what they accom-
6 plished, including—

7 (A) the Montford Point Marine Association
8 Edgar R. Huff Memorial Scholarship, which is
9 offered annually through the Marine Corps
10 Scholarship Foundation;

11 (B) the Montford Point Museum located at
12 Camp Johnson in Jacksonville, North Carolina;

13 (C) the Brooks Elbert Gray, Jr. Consoli-
14 dated Academic Instruction Facility, named in
15 honor of original Montford Point Marine and
16 Montford Point Marine Corps Association
17 founder Master Gunnery Sergeant Gray (dedi-
18 cated on April 15, 2005, at Camp Johnson,
19 North Carolina); and

20 (D) Branch Hall, a building within the Of-
21 ficers Candidate School in Quantico, Virginia,
22 which was named in honor of Captain Frederick
23 Branch during July of 1997.

1 **SEC. 2. 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 single gold medal
6 of appropriate design to the Montford Point Marines,
7 United States Marine Corps, collectively, in recognition of
8 their dedicated 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 (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Sec-
12 retary”) shall strike the gold medal with suitable emblems,
13 devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-
14 retary.

15 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
17 gold medal in honor of the Montford Point Marines,
18 United States Marine Corps, under subsection (a),
19 the gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian In-
20 stitution, where it will be displayed as appropriate
21 and made available for research.

22 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
23 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
24 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
25 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other

1 appropriate locations associated with the Montford
2 Point Marines, United States Marine Corps.

3 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

4 Under such regulations as the Secretary may pre-
5 scribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
6 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2, at a price
7 sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,
8 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

9 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

10 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national med-
11 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
12 Code.

13 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; PROCEEDS**
14 **OF SALE.**

15 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
16 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint
17 Public Enterprise Fund, an amount not to exceed \$30,000
18 to pay for the cost of the medal authorized under section
19 2.

20 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
21 sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be
22 deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise
23 Fund.

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