

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5437

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the U.S. Air Force aircrew of Reach 871, commonly known as the “Reach 871”, in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service during Operation Allies Refuge.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

Mr. CALVERT (for himself and Mr. GARCIA of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the U.S. Air Force aircrew of Reach 871, commonly known as the “Reach 871”, in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service during Operation Allies Refuge.

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 “Reach 871 Congres-
5 sional Gold Medal Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The U.S. Air Force is an essential and inte-
4 gral part U.S. national security and diplomatic ef-
5 forts, often called upon to enter extremely dangerous
6 situations and provide support and safety for combat
7 and non-combat missions worldwide.

8 (2) A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III air-
9 crew, assigned to the 6th Airlift Squadron, 305 Air
10 Mobility Wing, based at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-
11 Lakehurst (JBMDL), callsign Reach 871, was de-
12 ployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Allies
13 Refuge to assist in non-combatant evacuation oper-
14 ations.

15 (3) Reach 871 safely evacuated over 800 Af-
16 ghans fleeing the Taliban takeover of Kabul.

17 (4) U.S. Air Force confirmed that Reach 871's
18 evacuation flight set a record for the number of per-
19 sonnel onboard an airborne C-17 Globemaster III
20 under any condition.

21 (5) The aircrew's selfless action allowed for the
22 safe evacuation of vulnerable Afghan civilians. The
23 crew maximized previously undemonstrated capa-
24 bility and capacity of the aircraft, while operating
25 the aircraft in extraordinary circumstances—bal-
26 ancing risk and capability to save the lives of others.

1 (6) The crew and its commander made the
2 brave decision, in accordance with their com-
3 mander’s intent, to evacuate as many civilians as
4 possible, including women and children, placing
5 those civilian lives and safety above all else.

6 (7) The selfless service and willingness to face
7 extreme peril in order to secure the safety of Afghan
8 civilians should be recognized and honored. These
9 Airmen exemplify the patriotism and the commit-
10 ment of all our brave service members who have
11 served in Afghanistan over the last 20 years and
12 risked their lives in service of our country.

13 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

14 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
15 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
16 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
17 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of ap-
18 propriate design to the Reach 871 aircrew, commonly
19 known as “Reach 871”, in recognition of their bravery and
20 outstanding service during Operation Allies Refuge.

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

1 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
3 Reach 871 aircrew, the gold medal shall be given to
4 the Smithsonian Institution, where it will be dis-
5 played as appropriate and made available for re-
6 search.

7 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
8 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
9 make the gold medal awarded pursuant to this Act
10 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
11 locations associated with the Reach 871 aircrew.

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 bronze medals, includ-
16 ing labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead
17 expenses.

18 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

19 The gold medal struck pursuant to this Act is a na-
20 tional medal for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United
21 States Code.

22 **SEC. 6. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

23 The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of
24 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,
25 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement

1 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this
2 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record
3 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-
4 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the
5 vote on passage.

