



Legislative Bulletin.....January 26, 2005

Contents:

H.R. 54 — Congressional Gold Medal Enhancement Act of 2005

Summary of the Bill Under Consideration Today:

Total Number of New Government Programs: 0

Total Cost of Discretionary Authorizations: \$0

Effect on Revenue: \$0

Total Change in Mandatory Spending: \$0

Total New State & Local Government Mandates: 0

Total New Private Sector Mandates: 0

Number of Bills Without Committee Reports: 1

Number of Reported Bills that Don't Cite Specific Clauses of Constitutional Authority: 1

**H.R. 54 — Congressional Gold Medal Enhancement Act of 2005
(Castle)**

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, January 26th, under a structured rule allowing one hour of debate, three amendments, and a motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Summary: H.R. 54 amends 31 U.S.C. 5111 by adding a new provision on standards for Congressional Gold Medals. Beginning in 2006, the Secretary of the Treasury would be limited during each calendar year to striking “not more than two congressional gold medals for presentation.” The bill also establishes two requirements that must be met for the gold medals: 1) only an individual may be a recipient of a congressional gold medal

and 2) no gold medal may be presented posthumously on behalf of any individual except during the 20-year period beginning five years after the person's death (unless the gold medal was authorized before the individual's death).

Amendments:

Oxley #1 (R-OH): The amendment would make the bill effective on the date of enactment instead of in 2006.

Crowley #2 (D-NY): The amendment would strike the provision in the bill that limits medals to two per calendar year and instead allow "not more than six" medals per Congress (2 years). The amendment thus would result in a possible net increase of two medals over the underlying bill.

Crowley #4 (D-NY): The amendment would add the following to the bill dealing with the political affiliation of the gold medal legislation sponsors:

"and the Secretary may not strike any congressional gold medal, notwithstanding an Act of the Congress providing for the striking and presentation of such congressional gold medal during a period referred to in this paragraph, if at least half the total number of congressional gold medals permitted to be struck under this paragraph during such period were already authorized to be struck during such period pursuant to Acts of the Congress that were originally introduced as bills or joint resolutions by Members associated with the same political party as the political party with which the Member is associated who introduced the bill or resolution that resulted in the Act of the Congress that authorized the striking of such congressional gold medal."

Additional Background: Congressional Gold Medal legislation usually authorizes funds to be spent from the U.S. Mint's Public Enterprise Fund to pay for the costs of the medals, while sales from the duplicate bronze medals are usually deposited back into the Public Enterprise Fund. For previous Congressional Gold Medal legislation, CBO has estimated that it costs \$30,000 to design a Gold Medal and noted that each medal has \$5,500 worth of gold. A bill recently enacted to award Congressional Gold Medals to the Navajo Code Talkers was estimated by the RSC to have had design costs of \$90,000 with a total gold cost of \$236,500.

Among the recipients of the medal are President George Washington, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks, Winston Churchill, and Pope John Paul II. Legislation has been introduced in recent Congresses to award the gold medal to individuals including the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Arnold Palmer, Cesar Chavez, and Fred Rogers. To see a full list of award recipients see: <http://www.congressionalgoldmedal.com/>

Researchers have reported that gold medals awarded posthumously to individuals or groups have resulted, in some circumstances, in litigation and disputes between survivors regarding ownership of the medal.

Committee Action: On January 4, 2005, the bill was introduced and was referred to the House Committee on Financial Services. The Committee did not consider the bill.

Cost to Taxpayers: The bill has no cost, but if signed into law it would likely have the effect of saving taxpayers funds, since it limits the number of Congressional Gold Medals that could be awarded in any given year.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is available from the House Committee on Financial Services.

RSC Staff Contact: Sheila Cole, sheila.cole@mail.house.gov, (202) 226-9719.

###