

H.R. 431—To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, or the final Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March in March of 1965, which served as a catalyst for the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Sewell, D-AL)

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FLOOR SCHEDULE: FEBRUARY 11, 2015 UNDER A SUSPENSION OF THE RULES, WHICH REQUIRES A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY FOR PASSAGE.

TOPLINE SUMMARY: [H.R. 431](#) would direct the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate to arrange for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a gold medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in [Bloody Sunday](#), [Turnaround Tuesday](#), or the final [Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March](#) during March of 1965, which served as a catalyst for the [Voting Rights Act of 1965](#).

COST: A Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report is currently unavailable.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** No.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: March 7, 2015, will mark 50th anniversary of the voting rights movement's first attempted to march from Selma to Montgomery on "Bloody Sunday" in protest against the denial of their right to vote. The marchers—known as the "Foot Soldiers"—were brutally assaulted by Alabama state troopers. News stations across the country broadcasted the tragic turn of events on a day that would be later known as "Bloody Sunday."

On March 17, 1965, one week after "Turnaround Tuesday," a federal court ruled the Foot Soldiers had a First Amendment right to petition the government through peaceful protest, and ordered federal agents to provide full protection to the Foot Soldiers during the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March.

On March 21, 1965, under the court order, the U.S. Army, the federalized Alabama National Guard, and federal agents and marshals escorted nearly 8,000 Foot Soldiers from the start of their heroic journey in Selma, Alabama to their safe arrival on the steps of the Alabama State Capitol Building on March 25, 1965.

These events served the catalyst for Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which President Johnson signed into law on August 6, 1965.

This bill would also authorize the Department of the Treasury to strike and sell duplicates of the gold medal at a price sufficient to cover the cost of the duplicates, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

The medals struck under H.R. 431 are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

COMMITTEE ACTION: This bill was introduced on January 21, 2015, by Representative Sewell and referred to the House Committee on Financial Services.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION: No statement of administration policy is available.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY: "H.R. 431. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I Section 8"

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