

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Aretha Franklin in recognition of her artistic and historical significance and her outstanding contributions to culture in the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. HARRIS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Aretha Franklin in recognition of her artistic and historical significance and her outstanding contributions to culture in the United States.

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 “Aretha Franklin Con-
5 gressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Aretha Franklin was born on March 25,
2 1942, in Memphis, Tennessee, and died peacefully at
3 her home in Detroit, Michigan, surrounded by family
4 and loved ones, on August 16, 2018.

5 (2) Aretha Franklin’s musical talents have in-
6 fluenced generations of musicians and political lead-
7 ers, creating a legacy that spans an incredible 6 dec-
8 ades.

9 (3) Aretha Franklin, dubbed the “Queen of
10 Soul”, was the first woman ever inducted into the
11 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, was a 2005 recipient
12 of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and was a
13 1999 recipient of the National Medal of Arts and
14 Humanities Award, among other accolades.

15 (4) Aretha Franklin’s music served as a 1960s
16 call to action that inspired thousands of individuals
17 to join civil rights movements and still resonates
18 across those movements today.

19 (5) Aretha Franklin’s contributions go beyond
20 music and the arts.

21 (6) Aretha Franklin was also a philanthropist
22 who supported causes that advanced civil rights,
23 human health, and gender equality.

1 (7) Aretha Franklin’s talents instilled hope, up-
2 lifted generations, and changed the lives of millions
3 of people across the globe.

4 (8) The City of Detroit shaped Aretha Frank-
5 lin’s life and music, as her father and church intro-
6 duced her to local Motown artists.

7 (9) In return, Aretha Franklin made countless
8 contributions to the City of Detroit and few people
9 have played a greater role in shaping a culturally
10 and socially relevant discography in the United
11 States than Aretha Franklin.

12 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

13 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
14 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-
15 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
16 for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of Congress,
17 of a gold medal of appropriate design in commemoration
18 of Aretha Franklin and in recognition of her artistic and
19 historical significance and her outstanding contributions
20 to culture in the United States.

21 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the
22 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
23 of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Sec-
24 retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems,

1 devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-
2 retary.

3 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the
5 gold medal referred to in subsection (a), the gold
6 medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution,
7 where it shall be displayed as appropriate and made
8 available for research.

9 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of
10 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should
11 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)
12 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other
13 locations and events associated with Aretha Frank-
14 lin.

15 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

16 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
17 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3 under
18 such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at a price
19 sufficient to cover the cost of the gold medal and any such
20 duplicates, including labor, materials, dies, use of machin-
21 ery, and overhead expenses.

22 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

23 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck under
24 this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51
25 of title 31, United States Code.

1 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section
2 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck
3 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.