119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the individuals and communities who volunteered or donated items to the North Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, during World War II from December 25, 1941, to April 1, 1946.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. RICKETTS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the individuals and communities who volunteered or donated items to the North Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, during World War II from December 25, 1941, to April 1, 1946.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "North Platte Canteen Congressional Gold Medal Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Home-front volunteerism was integral to the victory of the United States during World War II. Numerous exemplars of patriotism emerged throughout the Midwest, galvanizing the rural United States and the rest of the country supporting the war effort.

(2) The North Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, was one of the largest volunteer efforts of World War II.

(3) Canteen services boosted morale in the United States by providing free, wholesome entertainment to troops traveling across the country. Approximately 120 community-based canteens operated in the United States during World War II.

(4) The North Platte Canteen greeted and served food to approximately 6,000,000 United States troops traveling across the United States from December 25, 1941, to April 1, 1946.

(5) On December 17, 1941, the residents of North Platte, Nebraska, received information that a train of Nebraska National Guardsmen would be traveling through North Platte en route to the West Coast of the United States. Although the train carried members of the Kansas National Guard, residents of the community welcomed the men from

Kansas with food and other items as an appreciation for their service.

(6) On December 18, 1941, Rae Wilson, of North Platte, proposed to her community the idea of establishing the North Platte Canteen so that residents could greet United States troops en route to serving the United States in the European Theater or the Pacific Theater.

(7) 55,000 individuals, the majority of whom were women, from 125 communities in Nebraska, Colorado, and Kansas donated food and volunteered at the North Platte Canteen for approximately 5 years.

(8) The North Platte Canteen provided hospitality to as many as 24 troop trains per day. During a 1-month period, the volunteers at the Canteen served over 40,000 homemade cookies, 30,000 hard-boiled eggs, 6,500 doughnuts, 4,000 loaves of bread, 3,000 pounds of meat, 450 pounds of cheese, 60 quarts of peanut butter, 1,350 pounds of coffee, 1,000 quarts of cream, 750 dozen rolls, and 600 birthday cakes.

(9) The North Platte Canteen principally operated at the Union Pacific Railroad station in North Platte, Nebraska, with volunteers from local commu-

nities, organizations, churches, schools, and other groups, and without Federal assistance.

(10) $137,000 in cash contributions supported the operations of the North Platte Canteen for almost 5 years. The funds were raised through benefit dances, scrap-metal drives, school victory clubs, donation cans in local businesses, and from the relatives of troops who traveled through the North Platte area.

(11) In December 1943, the North Platte Canteen was honored by the United States Army with the presentation of the Meritorious Wartime Service Award by the Secretary of War.

(12) In 2004, the 108th Congress passed a resolution recognizing the heroic efforts of those who made enormous sacrifices to make the North Platte Canteen a success during World War II.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design to the individuals and communities who volunteered or donated items to the North

Platte Canteen in North Platte, Nebraska, during World War II.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation described in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) LINCOLN COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM.—Following the presentation described in subsection (a), the gold medal shall be given to the Lincoln County Historical Museum in North Platte, Nebraska, where the medal shall be available for display as appropriate and made available for research.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

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

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals

struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.