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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Freedom House Ambulance Service, in recognition of its dedicated service to the Pittsburgh community and contributions to the field of emergency medical services.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**A BILL**

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Freedom House Ambulance Service, in recognition of its dedicated service to the Pittsburgh community and contributions to the field of emergency medical services.

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 “Freedom House Ambu-  
5 lance Service Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Freedom House Ambulance Service was the  
2 first emergency medical service in the United States  
3 to be staffed by paramedics with medical training  
4 beyond basic first aid.

5           (2) In the mid-1960s before Freedom House  
6 was founded, ambulance service in the United States  
7 was typically provided by either the police or a local  
8 funeral home. These services offered little more than  
9 transportation and people were dying unnecessarily  
10 from treatable illnesses and injuries due to a stark  
11 lack of pre-hospital care.

12          (3) In 1965, Freedom House Enterprises was  
13 founded to provide economic stimulation to the peo-  
14 ple of Pittsburgh, specifically those in the predomi-  
15 nantly Black Hill District, where a majority of the  
16 residents fell well below the poverty line. The goal of  
17 Freedom House Enterprises was to create job train-  
18 ing and employment opportunities for area residents  
19 and to provide training and employment opportuni-  
20 ties for those deemed “unemployable” by the city  
21 welfare offices.

22          (4) In 1965, Philip Hallen, President of the  
23 Maurice Falk Medical Fund, a former ambulance  
24 driver, and Chairman of the OEO Health Com-  
25 mittee, envisioned a transformative model for emer-

1       gency medical care that combined social justice with  
2       medical innovation. He collaborated with Morton  
3       Coleman from the University of Pittsburgh’s Grad-  
4       uate School of Social Work, James McCoy, Presi-  
5       dent of Freedom House Enterprises, Inc., and Dr.  
6       Peter Safar, known as the “Father of CPR”, Med-  
7       ical Director of Freedom House Ambulance, Pro-  
8       fessor and Chair of Anesthesiology at the University  
9       of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, to launch Freedom  
10      House Ambulance.

11           (5) The formal training curriculum was devel-  
12      oped by Dr. Peter Safar and Gerald Esposito, inte-  
13      grating hospital rotations, field training, and clinical  
14      instruction. Dr. Nancy Caroline, who was later hired  
15      as medical director of Freedom House Ambulance,  
16      led the development of the first national paramedic  
17      textbook, *Emergency Care in the Streets: A Manual*  
18      for Paramedics, and served as an advisor to Presi-  
19      dent Gerald Ford on emergency medical systems.  
20      Dr. Donald M. Benson was the service’s first med-  
21      ical advisor and played a key role in the program’s  
22      initial success.

23           (6) Robert J. Zepfel served as the dedicated di-  
24      rector of Freedom House. Councilman Mitchell J.  
25      Brown, an original Freedom House paramedic and

1 former military medic, operations director for Free-  
2 dom House, hired and mentored future EMS lead-  
3 ers, such as retired Assistant Chief John Moon, rec-  
4 ognized as the first non-physician to perform endo-  
5 tracheal intubation in the field, who is a preeminent  
6 advocate for Freedom House Ambulance and excel-  
7 lence in pre-hospital emergency care.

8 (7) Addie Johnson and Pearl Porter were the  
9 first women to complete training at Freedom House.  
10 Other known living members include Darnela Wil-  
11 son, George McCary III, Larry Underwood, David  
12 Lindell, Bill Raynovich, William McDoodle, John  
13 Franklin, and Ruth Johnson, who continue to serve  
14 as custodians of the Freedom House legacy.

15 (8) Despite its proven success, Freedom House  
16 Ambulance was defunded in 1975 amid political op-  
17 position and racial tension. Nonetheless, its training  
18 model, clinical data, and innovations directly influ-  
19 enced the National Highway Traffic Safety Adminis-  
20 tration's EMS standards and the national adoption  
21 of advanced life-support ambulance systems.

22 (9) Freedom House Ambulance operated from  
23 Presbyterian–University Hospital, now known as  
24 UPMC Presbyterian, serving Pittsburgh's Hill Dis-  
25 trict and neighboring communities with professional,

1 lifesaving pre-hospital care at a time when no com-  
2 parable system existed. Freedom House empowered  
3 its trainees, many of whom were previously unem-  
4 ployed or underemployed, with professional certifi-  
5 cation and dignity in service, demonstrating that eq-  
6 uitable access to education and opportunity  
7 strengthens both individuals and communities.

8 (10) Freedom House members consistently de-  
9 livered superior medical outcomes and established  
10 the model for the modern paramedic system now  
11 recognized across the United States.

12 (11) The Freedom House Ambulance Service  
13 remains a cornerstone of American medical and civil  
14 rights history, representing courage, excellence, and  
15 the enduring power of community-driven innovation.

16 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

17 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of  
18 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-  
19 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements  
20 for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a single  
21 gold medal of appropriate design in commemoration of  
22 Freedom House Ambulance Service, in recognition of its  
23 dedicated service to the Pittsburgh community and con-  
24 tributions to the field of emergency medical services

1 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the  
2 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary  
3 of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the  
4 “Secretary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable em-  
5 blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the  
6 Secretary.

7 (c) NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HIS-  
8 TORY AND CULTURE.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the  
10 gold medal under subsection (a), the gold medal  
11 shall be given to the National Museum of African  
12 American History and Culture of the Smithsonian  
13 Institution, where it shall be available for display as  
14 appropriate and made available for research.

15 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
16 Congress that the National Museum of African  
17 American History and Culture should make the gold  
18 medal received under paragraph (1) available for  
19 display elsewhere, particularly at other appropriate  
20 locations associated with the Freedom House Ambu-  
21 lance Service.

22 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

23 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
24 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3 at

1 a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,  
2 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

3 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

4 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medal struck pursuant  
5 to this Act is a national medal for purposes of chapter  
6 51 of title 31, United States Code.

7 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections  
8 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals  
9 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic  
10 items.

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

13 (a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is  
14 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint  
15 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-  
16 essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck pursuant  
17 to this Act.

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