

Duckworth, Cochran, Hirono introduce bipartisan bill to recognize service, sacrifice of Chinese-American Veterans during WWII

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Despite discrimination and being initially turned away by the military, an estimated 13,000 Chinese Americans fought in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Thad Cochran (R-MS) and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) today announced a bipartisan effort to recognize the significant contributions and sacrifices of the more than 13,000 Chinese-American Veterans who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. The Senators introduced legislation (S.1050) to authorize the award of the highest civilian honor

Congress can bestow—a Congressional Gold Medal—to the dedicated Chinese-American Veterans of World War II, including the approximately 50 Chinese-American WWII Veterans who call Illinois home.

“Despite facing outright discrimination, more than 13,000 brave Chinese Americans volunteered to risk their lives to protect their fellow Americans from our enemies during World War II,” said Duckworth. “Their unwavering commitment to their country even after being initially turned away should be recognized, and I’m proud to join Senators Cochran and Hirono in pushing for this brave group of Veterans to be honored with a Congressional Gold Medal.”

“This legislation would honor a group of World War II veterans who, like many minorities, overcame discrimination to serve their country bravely and honorably. I hope the Congress will act favorably on this proposal to commemorate the service of these Chinese American veterans,” Cochran said.

"In the face of discrimination and adversity, the Chinese American veterans of World War II served our nation with valor, bravery, and commitment," said Hirono. "Holding positions in every branch of the Armed Services, Chinese Americans played a critical role in our nation's war efforts. This bill would recognize their dedicated service to our country."

Companion legislation (HR.2358) has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Representatives Ed Royce (R-CA), Ted Lieu (D-CA), and Grace Meng (D-NY). Congressional Gold Medal legislation must be co-sponsored by at least two thirds of the House of Representatives and at least two thirds of the United States Senate to be considered.

Since the American Revolution, Congress has issued gold medals to express its gratitude on behalf of the entire nation for distinguished achievements. The medal has been awarded to Veterans who served admirably in military conflicts as well as to civilians whose contributions have had a lasting impact on American history and culture.