



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR  
July 24, 2018

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Jesse Arreguín and Councilmember Sophie Hahn

Subject: Support of the Chinese American World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution supporting H.R. 2358/S. 1050 – The Chinese American World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act. Send a copy of the Resolution to Senators Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris and Congresswoman Barbara Lee.

BACKGROUND

During World War II, 20,000 Chinese Americans served in the US armed forces – a sizable number given the fact that only 120,000 people of Chinese ancestry lived in the US at that time after 60 years of exclusion. Due to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the 40% of the soldiers who were immigrants had been denied the right to citizenship and denied both the right to vote and to testify in court. Despite the racism and prejudice that they experienced, these soldiers fought bravely in both combat and support services.

In recognition of their service, the US Congress and Senate have introduced identical bills, H.R. 2358 and S. 1050, to award the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor collectively to these soldiers. The medal would be displayed at the Smithsonian Museum so that visitors can learn about their contributions.

The same honor was given a few years ago to Japanese Americans, Native Americans, and Filipino Americans who served in World War II. It is estimated that only 1,000 Chinese American Veterans of World War II remain today.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No environmental impacts.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Jesse Arreguín      510-981-7100

Attachments:

1: Resolution

2: Text of H.R. 2358

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 2358/S. 1050 – THE CHINESE AMERICAN WORLD WAR II  
VETERANS CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

WHEREAS, Chinese Americans served on behalf of the United States in every conflict since the American Civil War; and

WHEREAS, more than 13,000 Chinese Americans served in all branches of the Army Ground Forces and Army Air Forces by the end of World War II despite the total population of Chinese Americans living in the United States was under 120,000; and; and

WHEREAS, Chinese American soldiers made significant contributions to the World War II efforts, as they served in all theaters in both combat and support roles, including in New Guinea, Iwo Jima, Philippines, North Africa, Italy, the Normandy D-Day Invasion, and the Battle of the Bulge; and

WHEREAS, nearly 25% of enlisted Chinese Americans served in the U.S. Army Air Force and many were assigned to the 14th Air Service Group, which was composed of primarily Chinese Americans based in the China-Burma-India theater providing effective communications, supply, transportation, and technical support to advance war efforts; and

WHEREAS, despite the valor, patriotism, and bravery exhibited by Chinese Americans, they faced blatant institutional racism and prejudice at home especially as The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 continued to restrict Chinese immigration to the United States; and

WHEREAS, approximately 40% of Chinese American soldiers were not native born citizens of the United States and were unable to naturalize until after 1943 when the Chinese Exclusion Act was finally repealed; and

WHEREAS, on May 4, 2017, United States House of Representatives Bill (H.R.) 2358 and Senate Bill (S.) 1050, “The Chinese American World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act”, were introduced in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Chinese American Veterans of World War II; and

WHEREAS, other historically overlooked military units, such as Filipino World War II veterans, Navajo Code Talkers, Monument Men have been already honored with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor awarded by Congress; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley City Council supports the recognition of all service members, particularly those marginalized by history; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional Gold Medal would serve as a symbol of gratitude for our country's indebtedness for the selfless sacrifices made in the face of enormous adversity; and

WHEREAS, the timing of the passage of the Congressional bills are crucial as many Chinese American World War II veterans are no longer alive to see this recognition and both Congressional bills have been stalled at their respective Committees.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that it hereby urges the United States Congress to expeditiously pass the bills to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Chinese American veterans who served in World War II.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to Senators Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris and Congresswoman Barbara Lee.

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2358

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 4, 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California (for himself, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ISSA, Mr. KINZINGER, Ms. LEE, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MENG, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. WAGNER, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

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 “Chinese American  
5 World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Chinese Americans served the United States  
4 in every conflict since the Civil War, and distin-  
5 guished themselves in World War II, serving in  
6 every theater of battle and every branch of service,  
7 earning citations for their heroism and honorable  
8 service, up to and including the Congressional Medal  
9 of Honor.

10 (2) Chinese nationals and Chinese Americans  
11 faced institutional discrimination in the United  
12 States since before World War II, limiting the size  
13 of their population and their ability to build thriving  
14 communities in America.

15 (3) The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the  
16 first Federal law that broadly restricted immigration  
17 and a specific nationality, making it illegal for Chi-  
18 nese laborers to immigrate to the United States, and  
19 limiting the Chinese population in America for over  
20 sixty years.

21 (4) Major court decisions such as the decisions  
22 in *Lum v. Rice* and *People v. Hall* found “yellow”  
23 races to be equal to African Americans with regard  
24 to “separate but equal” school facilities, and prohib-  
25 ited Chinese Americans, along with “Black, mulatto,

1 or Indian” persons, from testifying against White  
2 men.

3 (5) Chinese Americans were harassed, beaten,  
4 and murdered because of their ethnicity. The worst  
5 instances include the Chinese Massacre of 1871,  
6 where 17 Chinese immigrants in Los Angeles, Cali-  
7 fornia, were tortured and murdered; the Rock  
8 Spring Massacre of 1885 where White rioters killed  
9 28 Chinese miners and burned 75 of their homes in  
10 Rock Springs, Wyoming; and the Hells Canyon Mas-  
11 sacre of 1887 where 34 Chinese goldminers were  
12 ambushed and murdered in Hells Canyon, Oregon.

13 (6) There were only 78,000 Chinese Americans  
14 living on the United States mainland, with 29,000  
15 living in Hawaii, at the start of World War II as a  
16 result of Federal and State legislation and judicial  
17 decisions.

18 (7) Despite the anti-Chinese discrimination at  
19 the time, as many as 20,000 Chinese Americans  
20 served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War  
21 II. Approximately forty percent (40 percent) of those  
22 who served were not United States citizens due to  
23 the laws that denied U.S. citizenship for persons of  
24 Chinese descent.

1 (8) Chinese Americans, although small in num-  
2 bers, made important contributions to the World  
3 War II effort.

4 (9) Of the total Chinese Americans serving, ap-  
5 proximately 25 percent served in the U.S. Army Air  
6 Force/Corps, with some sent to the China-Burma-  
7 India (CBI) theater with the 14th Air Service  
8 Group.

9 (10) The remainder served in all branches of  
10 the U.S. Armed Forces in all four theaters of war.

11 (11) The first all Chinese-American group was  
12 the 14th Air Service Group, 859th Signal Corps in  
13 the CBI theater which enabled extensive and effec-  
14 tive operations against the Japanese military in  
15 China.

16 (12) Chinese Americans are widely acknowl-  
17 edged for their role in the Army's 14th Air Force,  
18 23rd Fighter Group, widely known as the Flying Ti-  
19 gers.

20 (13) The Flying Tigers eventually established  
21 American air superiority in China and supported  
22 cargo flights from India to China over "The Hump".

23 (14) Chinese Americans assigned to the CBI  
24 theater made transoceanic journeys through hostile



1 territories, and were subject to enemy attack while  
2 at sea and in the air.

3 (15) In the Pacific Theater, Chinese Americans  
4 were in ground, air, and ocean combat and support  
5 roles throughout the Pacific including New Guinea,  
6 Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, Iwo Jima, Okinawa,  
7 Philippines, Marianas, and Aleutian Islands.

8 (16) Throughout the Pacific and CBI theaters,  
9 they performed vital functions in translating; coordi-  
10 nating National Chinese and American combat oper-  
11 ations; servicing and repairing aircraft and arma-  
12 ments; training National Chinese troops and sailors;  
13 delivering medical care; providing signal and commu-  
14 nication support; gathering and analyzing intel-  
15 ligence; participating in ground and air combat; and  
16 securing and delivering supplies.

17 (17) Chinese Americans also served in combat  
18 and support roles in the European and African thea-  
19 ters, serving in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, the Nor-  
20 mandy D-Day invasion which liberated Western Eu-  
21 rope, and the Battle of the Bulge, occupying West-  
22 ern Germany while helping to liberate Central Eu-  
23 rope.

24 (18) Chinese Americans flew bomber missions,  
25 served in infantry units and combat ships in the

1 Battle of the Atlantic, including aboard Merchant  
2 Marines convoys vulnerable to submarine and air at-  
3 tacks.

4 (19) Chinese-American women left traditional  
5 domestic duties for patriotic service, serving as  
6 translators who interpreted Japanese documents  
7 containing military plans.

8 (20) Many Chinese-American women served in  
9 the Women's Army Corps (WACs), the Army Air  
10 Force, and the United States Naval Reserve Wom-  
11 en's Reserve (WAVES), and some became pilots, air  
12 traffic controllers, flight trainers, weather fore-  
13 casters, occupational therapists, and nurses.

14 (21) Captain Francis B. Wai is the only Chi-  
15 nese American serving in World War II to have been  
16 awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor, the high-  
17 est military award given by our Nation. His post-  
18 humous Distinguished Service Medal, awarded in  
19 1944 was upgraded in 2000 to a Congressional  
20 Medal of Honor.

21 (22) Chinese Americans also earned Combat In-  
22 fantry Badges, Purple Hearts, Bronze Stars, Silver  
23 Stars, Distinguished Service Medals and Distin-  
24 guished Flying Medals. Units with Chinese Ameri-

1 cans were also awarded unit citations for valor and  
2 bravery.

3 (23) The United States remains forever in-  
4 debted to the bravery, valor, and dedication that the  
5 Chinese American Veterans of World War II dis-  
6 played. Their commitment and sacrifice dem-  
7 onstrates a highly uncommon and commendable  
8 sense of patriotism and honor in the face of dis-  
9 crimination.

10 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

11 In this Act—

12 (1) the term “Chinese American Veterans of  
13 World II” includes individuals of Chinese ancestry  
14 who served—

15 (A) honorably at any time during the pe-  
16 riod December 7, 1941, and ending December  
17 31, 1946; and

18 (B) in an active duty status under the  
19 command of the United States Armed Forces;  
20 and

21 (2) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary  
22 of the Treasury.

23 **SEC. 4. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

24 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The President pro tem-  
25 pore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Rep-

1 representatives shall make appropriate arrangements for the  
2 award, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of  
3 appropriate design to the Chinese American Veterans of  
4 World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service  
5 during World War II.

6 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the  
7 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary shall  
8 strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and  
9 inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary.

10 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the  
12 gold medal in honor of the Chinese American Vet-  
13 erans of World War II, the gold medal shall be given  
14 to the Smithsonian Institution, where it shall be  
15 available for display as appropriate and made avail-  
16 able for research.

17 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
18 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should  
19 make the gold medal received under paragraph (1)  
20 available for display elsewhere, particularly at other  
21 locations associated with the Chinese American Vet-  
22 erans of World II or with World War II.

23 (d) DUPLICATE MEDALS.—Under regulations that  
24 the Secretary may promulgate, the Secretary may strike  
25 and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck

1 under this Act, at a price sufficient to cover the cost of  
2 the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machin-  
3 ery, and overhead expenses.

4 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDAL.**

5 (a) NATIONAL MEDAL.—The gold medal struck  
6 under this Act shall be a national medal for the purposes  
7 of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

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

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