

Garamendi's Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act Heads to President's Desk



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Press Release

WASHINGTON, DC- Today, Congressman John Garamendi's (D-CA) "Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020" ([H.R.5671](#)) passed Congress and is heading to the President's desk to be signed into law. Representatives Don Young (R-AK) and Susan W. Brooks (R-IN) joined the legislation as original cosponsors, and U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) sponsored the companion legislation in the Senate. This bipartisan legislation will award a Congressional Gold Medal, one of the highest honors in the United States, to American Merchant Mariners who supplied our armed forces during World War II.

"Throughout the Second World War, our armed forces relied on the Merchant Marine to ferry supplies, cargo and personnel into both theaters of operation, and they paid a heavy price in service to their country," **said Congressman Garamendi**. "The Merchant Marine suffered the highest per capita casualty rate in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. An estimated 8,300 mariners lost their lives, and another 12,000 were wounded, to make sure our servicemembers could keep fighting. Yet, these Mariners who put their lives on the line were not even given veteran status until 1988."

"I had the opportunity to meet with three World War II Merchant Mariners in my office. These mariners put their lives on the line for this country, braving German and Japanese submarines in their Liberty Ships as they delivered critical supplies to our servicemembers in

the European and Pacific theaters. Unfortunately, their sacrifice is commonly overlooked. A Congressional Gold Medal would give them the recognition they deserve, and I'm pleased that this bill is poised to be signed into law to give these veterans and their families the honor and respect they are owed. Thank you to Senator Murkowski (R-AK) for championing this legislation in the Senate and for her partnership," **Garamendi concluded.**

The Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act was introduced in the Senate simultaneously by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK).

Congressman Garamendi's "Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020" ([H.R.5671](#)) has passed the House and Senate and is heading to the President's desk for signature.