

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 641

To award a congressional gold medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 16, 2005

Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. CORNYN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To award a congressional gold medal to Michael Ellis
DeBakey, M.D.

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. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D., was born on
6 September 7, 1908 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to
7 Shaker and Raheeja DeBakey.

8 (2) Dr. DeBakey, at the age of 23 and still a
9 medical student, reported a major invention, a roller
10 pump for blood transfusions, which later became a

1 major component of the heart-lung machine used in
2 the first successful open-heart operation.

3 (3) Even though Dr. DeBakey had already
4 achieved a national reputation as an authority on
5 vascular disease and had a promising career as a
6 surgeon and teacher, he volunteered for military
7 service during World War II, joining the Surgeon
8 General's staff and rising to the rank of Colonel and
9 Chief of the Surgical Consultants Division.

10 (4) As a result of this first-hand knowledge of
11 military service, Dr. DeBakey made numerous rec-
12 ommendations for the proper staged management of
13 war wounds, which led to the development of mobile
14 army surgical hospitals or MASH units, and earned
15 Dr. DeBakey the Legion of Merit in 1945.

16 (5) After the war, Dr. DeBakey proposed the
17 systematic medical follow-up of veterans and rec-
18 ommended the creation of specialized medical cen-
19 ters in different areas of the United States to treat
20 wounded military personnel returning from war, and
21 from this recommendation evolved the Veterans Af-
22 fairs Medical Center System and the establishment
23 of the Commission on Veterans Medical Problems of
24 the National Research Council.

1 (6) In 1948, Dr. DeBakey joined the Baylor
2 University College of Medicine, where he developed
3 the first surgical residency program in the City of
4 Houston, and today, guided by Dr. DeBakey's vi-
5 sion, the College is one of the most respected health
6 science centers in the Nation.

7 (7) In 1953, Dr. DeBakey performed the first
8 successful procedures to treat patients who suffered
9 aneurysms leading to severe strokes, and he later de-
10 veloped a series of innovative surgical techniques for
11 the treatment of aneurysms enabling thousands of
12 lives to be saved in the years ahead.

13 (8) In 1964, Dr. DeBakey triggered the most
14 explosive era in modern cardiac surgery, when he
15 performed the first successful coronary bypass, once
16 again paving the way for surgeons world-wide to
17 offer hope to thousands of patients who might other-
18 wise succumb to heart disease.

19 (9) Two years later, Dr. DeBakey made med-
20 ical history again, when he was the first to success-
21 fully use a partial artificial heart to solve the prob-
22 lems of a patient who could not be weaned from a
23 heart-lung machine following open-heart surgery.

24 (10) In 1968, Dr. DeBakey supervised the first
25 successful multi-organ transplant, in which a heart,

1 both kidneys, and lung were transplanted from a
2 single donor into 4 separate recipients.

3 (11) In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson
4 appointed Dr. DeBakey to the position of Chairman
5 of the President's Commission on Heart Disease,
6 Cancer and Stroke, leading to the creation of Re-
7 gional Medical Programs established "to encourage
8 and assist in the establishment of regional coopera-
9 tive arrangements among medical schools, research
10 institutions, and hospitals, for research and train-
11 ing".

12 (12) In the mid-1960's, Dr. DeBakey pioneered
13 the field of telemedicine with the first demonstration
14 of open-heart surgery to be transmitted overseas by
15 satellite.

16 (13) In 1969, Dr. DeBakey was elected the
17 first President of Baylor College of Medicine.

18 (14) In 1969, President Lyndon B. Johnson be-
19 stowed on Dr. DeBakey the Presidential Medal of
20 Freedom with Distinction, and in 1985, President
21 Ronald Reagan conferred on him the National Medal
22 of Science.

23 (15) Working with NASA engineers, he refined
24 existing technology to create the DeBakey Ventric-
25 ular Assist Device, one-tenth the size of current

1 versions, which may eliminate the need for heart
2 transplantation in some patients.

3 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

4 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of
5 the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem-
6 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements
7 for the presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold
8 medal of appropriate design, to Michael Ellis DeBakey,
9 M.D., in recognition of his many outstanding contribu-
10 tions to the Nation.

11 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the
12 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary
13 of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Sec-
14 retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems,
15 devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Sec-
16 retary.

17 **SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

18 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
19 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 2
20 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at
21 a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,
22 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses,
23 and the cost of the gold medal.

1 **SEC. 4. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

2 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-
3 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter
4 51 of title 31, United States Code.

5 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections
6 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals
7 struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic
8 items.

9 **SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**
10 **SALE.**

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

16 (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the
17 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section
18 3 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public
19 Enterprise Fund.

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