

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in recognition of his service to the United States.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Ms. LUMMIS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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**A BILL**

To award a Congressional Gold Medal to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in recognition of his service to the United States.

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 “Everett Alvarez, Jr.  
5 Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Commander Everett Alvarez, Jr., (referred  
9 to in this section as “CDR Alvarez”) served with

1 distinction in the Vietnam War and made historic  
2 sacrifices for the United States as—

3 (A) the first United States pilot to be shot  
4 down and captured during the Vietnam War;  
5 and

6 (B) the second-longest-held prisoner of war  
7 in the history of the United States, surviving  
8 more than 8 ½ years in captivity.

9 (2) CDR Alvarez was born in Salinas, Cali-  
10 fornia, in 1937 and was the grandchild of Mexican  
11 immigrants.

12 (3) CDR Alvarez attended Salinas Union High  
13 School and Hartnell College and received a bachelor  
14 of science degree from Santa Clara University.

15 (4) In 1960, CDR Alvarez joined the Navy and  
16 was commissioned as Ensign.

17 (5) After receiving his commission, CDR Alva-  
18 rez attended flight training at the Naval Air Train-  
19 ing Command in Pensacola, Florida.

20 (6) In June 1961, CDR Alvarez was trans-  
21 ferred to the Naval Auxiliary Air Station in  
22 Kingsville, Texas, where he trained until December  
23 1961.

24 (7) CDR Alvarez was promoted to Lieutenant  
25 Junior Grade in April 1962.

1           (8) In June 1962, CDR Alvarez joined Attack  
2 Squadron 144, nicknamed the “Roadrunners”,  
3 which was deployed to the Gulf of Tonkin before the  
4 United States entered the Vietnam War in August  
5 1964.

6           (9) On August 5, 1964, while flying Operation  
7 Pierce Arrow from the USS Constellation near the  
8 Vietnam-China border, CDR Alvarez’s A-4 Skyhawk  
9 was shot down, and he was captured by a Viet-  
10 nameese fishing vessel.

11           (10) Upon capture, CDR Alvarez was taken to  
12 the Hòa Lò Prison in Hanoi, known to many former  
13 prisoners as the “Hanoi Hilton”.

14           (11) CDR Alvarez spent his first 13 months, 8  
15 days, and 5 hours in isolation.

16           (12) While at Hòa Lò, CDR Alvarez was re-  
17 peatedly beaten and tortured, was fed inedible  
18 meals, and suffered malnourishment.

19           (13) In September 1965, CDR Alvarez was  
20 moved to the “Briarpatch”, a prison camp west of  
21 Hanoi that had no electricity or running water.

22           (14) Despite torture and interrogation, CDR  
23 Alvarez remained loyal to the United States and as-  
24 sisted other American prisoners of war.

1           (15) CDR Alvarez, through his own actions, en-  
2           couraged and inspired fellow prisoners of war to “re-  
3           turn with honor”, which meant keeping their integ-  
4           rity in the face of torture and not cooperating with  
5           or divulging information to the enemy, so that they  
6           could return home having remained loyal to the  
7           United States.

8           (16) At great risk, CDR Alvarez helped spread  
9           the means of communication among fellow prisoners  
10          of war, including the tap code and the mute hand  
11          code, to keep up spirits and stay organized.

12          (17) On July 6, 1966, CDR Alvarez and 51  
13          other American prisoners of war were forced to  
14          march in the “Hanoi Parade” where he was abused  
15          and attacked by mobs.

16          (18) CDR Alvarez was released on February  
17          12, 1973, after spending 3,113 days, or 8 years and  
18          6 months, in captivity.

19          (19) Following his release and hospitalization,  
20          CDR Alvarez resumed his service in the Navy, re-  
21          turning to Naval Air Station Kingsville for refresher  
22          flight training.

23          (20) CDR Alvarez—

24                 (A) attended the Naval Postgraduate  
25          School in Monterey, California, and received a

1 master's degree in operations research and sys-  
2 tems analysis in 1976; and

3 (B) was inducted into the Alumni Hall of  
4 Fame of the Naval Postgraduate School on  
5 March 27, 2015.

6 (21) CDR Alvarez served in Program Manage-  
7 ment at the Naval Air Systems command in Wash-  
8 ington, DC, from October 1976 until his retirement.

9 (22) CDR Alvarez retired from the Navy on  
10 June 30, 1980, after a 20-year career in the Navy.

11 (23) In April 1981, President Ronald Reagan  
12 appointed CDR Alvarez as Deputy Director of the  
13 Peace Corps, where he served until 1982.

14 (24) In July 1982, President Reagan nomi-  
15 nated CDR Alvarez to be Deputy Administrator of  
16 the Veterans Administration, now known as the De-  
17 partment of Veterans Affairs, where he served until  
18 1986.

19 (25) CDR Alvarez earned his juris doctor from  
20 the George Washington University Law School in  
21 1983 and has been admitted to the District of Co-  
22 lumbia bar.

23 (26) In February 1987, President Reagan ap-  
24 pointed CDR Alvarez to the Board of Regents of the

1 Uniformed Services University of the Health  
2 Sciences, where he served for nearly 21 years.

3 (27) For his service, CDR Alvarez was awarded  
4 the Silver Star Medal, 2 Legions of Merit, the Dis-  
5 tinguished Flying Cross, 2 Bronze Star Medals, 2  
6 Purple Hearts, and the Prisoner of War Medal.

7 (28) On September 18, 2012, the United States  
8 Navy Memorial awarded CDR Alvarez the “Lone  
9 Sailor Award”.

10 (29) The people of the United States honor the  
11 sacrifices of CDR Alvarez and his service to the  
12 United States.

13 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

14 (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of  
15 the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-  
16 pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements  
17 for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a gold  
18 medal of appropriate design to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in rec-  
19 ognition of his service to the United States.

20 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the presen-  
22 tation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of  
23 the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the “Sec-  
24 retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable em-

1           blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by  
2           the Secretary.

3           (2) **IMAGE AND INSCRIPTION.**—The gold medal  
4           struck under paragraph (1) shall bear an image of,  
5           and the inscription of the name of, Everett Alvarez,  
6           Jr.

7           **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

8           The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
9           bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price  
10          sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor,  
11          materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

12          **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

13          (a) **NATIONAL MEDALS.**—Medals struck under this  
14          Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title  
15          31, United States Code.

16          (b) **NUMISMATIC ITEMS.**—For purposes of section  
17          5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck  
18          under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

19          **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF  
20                          SALE.**

21          (a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**—There is  
22          authorized to be charged against the United States Mint  
23          Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-  
24          essary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under  
25          this Act.

1           (b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the  
2 sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section  
3 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public  
4 Enterprise Fund.