

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1218

To require the review of the service of certain members of the Armed Forces during World War I to determine if such members should be awarded the Medal of Honor, to authorize the award of the Medal of Honor based on the results of the review, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 11, 2019

Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. DUCKWORTH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To require the review of the service of certain members of the Armed Forces during World War I to determine if such members should be awarded the Medal of Honor, to authorize the award of the Medal of Honor based on the results of the review, and for other purposes.

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 “World War I Valor  
5 Medals Review Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. REVIEW ON AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR TO**  
2 **CERTAIN WORLD WAR I VETERANS.**

3 (a) REVIEW REQUIRED.—Each Secretary concerned  
4 shall review the service records of each World War I vet-  
5 eran described in subsection (b) under the jurisdiction of  
6 such Secretary who is recommended for such review by  
7 the Valor Medals Review Task Force referred to in sub-  
8 section (c), or another veterans service organization, in  
9 order to determine whether such veteran should be award-  
10 ed the Medal of Honor for valor during World War I.

11 (b) COVERED WORLD WAR I VETERANS.—The  
12 World War I veterans whose service records are to be re-  
13 viewed under subsection (a) are the following:

14 (1) Any African American war veteran, Asian  
15 American war veteran, Hispanic American war vet-  
16 eran, Jewish American war veteran, or Native Amer-  
17 ican war veteran who was awarded the Distinguished  
18 Service Cross or the Navy Cross for an action that  
19 occurred between April 6, 1917, and November 11,  
20 1918.

21 (2) Any African American war veteran, Asian  
22 American war veteran, Hispanic American war vet-  
23 eran, Jewish American war veteran, or Native Amer-  
24 ican war veteran who was awarded the Croix de  
25 Guerre with Palm (that is, awarded at the Army  
26 level or above) by the Government of France for an

1 action that occurred between April 6, 1917, and No-  
2 vember 11, 1918.

3 (3) Any African American war veteran, Asian  
4 American war veteran, Hispanic American war vet-  
5 eran, Jewish American war veteran, or Native Amer-  
6 ican war veteran who was recommended for a Medal  
7 of Honor for an action that occurred from April 6,  
8 1917, to November 11, 1918.

9 (c) CONSULTATIONS.—In carrying out the review  
10 under subsection (a), each Secretary concerned shall con-  
11 sult at least once each fiscal year quarter with the Valor  
12 Medals Review Task Force, jointly established by the  
13 United States Foundation for the Commemoration of the  
14 World Wars (in consultation with the United States World  
15 War One Centennial Commission) and the George S. Robb  
16 Centre for the Study of the Great War, and with such  
17 other veterans service organizations as such Secretary  
18 considers appropriate, until the conclusion of the review.

19 (d) RECOMMENDATION BASED ON REVIEW.—If a  
20 Secretary concerned determines, based upon the review  
21 under subsection (a), that the award of the Medal of  
22 Honor to a covered World War I veteran is warranted,  
23 such Secretary shall submit to the President a rec-  
24 ommendation that the President award the Medal of  
25 Honor to that veteran.

1 (e) AUTHORITY TO AWARD MEDAL OF HONOR.—The  
 2 Medal of Honor may be awarded to a World War I veteran  
 3 in accordance with a recommendation of a Secretary con-  
 4 cerned under subsection (d).

5 (f) WAIVER OF TIME LIMITATIONS.—An award of  
 6 the Medal of Honor may be made under subsection (e)  
 7 without regard to—

8 (1) section 7274 or 8298 of title 10, United  
 9 States Code, as applicable; and

10 (2) any regulation or other administrative re-  
 11 striction on—

12 (A) the time for awarding the Medal of  
 13 Honor; or

14 (B) the awarding of the Medal of Honor  
 15 for service for which a Distinguished Service  
 16 Cross or Navy Cross has been awarded.

17 (g) DEFINITIONS.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—In this section:

19 (A) The term “Secretary concerned”  
 20 means—

21 (i) the Secretary of the Army, in the  
 22 case of members of the Armed Forces who  
 23 served in the Army between April 6, 1917,  
 24 and November 11, 1918; and

1 (ii) the Secretary of the Navy, in the  
2 case of members of the Armed Forces who  
3 served in the Navy or the Marine Corps  
4 between April 6, 1917, and November 11,  
5 1918.

6 (B) The term “African American war vet-  
7 eran” means any person who served in the  
8 United States Armed Forces between April 6,  
9 1917, and November 11, 1918, and who identi-  
10 fied himself as of African descent on his mili-  
11 tary personnel records.

12 (C) The term “Asian American war vet-  
13 eran” means any person who served in the  
14 United States Armed Forces between April 6,  
15 1917, and November 11, 1918, and who identi-  
16 fied himself racially, nationally, or ethnically as  
17 originating from a country in Asia on his mili-  
18 tary personnel records.

19 (D) The term “Hispanic American war  
20 veteran” means any person who served in the  
21 United States Armed Forces between April 6,  
22 1917, and November 11, 1918, and who identi-  
23 fied himself racially, nationally, or ethnically as  
24 originating from a country where Spanish is an

1 official language on his military personnel  
2 records.

3 (E) The term “Jewish American war vet-  
4 eran” mean any person who served in the  
5 United States Armed Forces between April 6,  
6 1917, and November 11, 1918, and who identi-  
7 fied himself as Jewish on his military personnel  
8 records.

9 (F) The term “Native American war vet-  
10 eran” means any person who served in the  
11 United States Armed Forces between April 6,  
12 1917, and November 11, 1918, and who identi-  
13 fied himself as a member of a federally recog-  
14 nized tribe within the modern territory of the  
15 United States on his military personnel records.

16 (2) APPLICATION OF DEFINITIONS OF ORI-  
17 GIN.—If the military personnel records of a person  
18 do not reflect the person’s membership in one of the  
19 groups identified in subparagraphs (B) through (F)  
20 of paragraph (1) but historical evidence exists that  
21 demonstrates the person’s Jewish faith held at the  
22 time of service, or that the person identified himself  
23 as of African, Asian, Hispanic, or Native American  
24 descent, the person may be treated as being a mem-  
25 ber of the applicable group by the Secretary con-

1       cerned (in consultation with the organizations re-  
2       ferred to in subsection (c)) for purposes of this sec-  
3       tion.

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