

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

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

To posthumously award a congressional gold medal to Constance Baker  
Motley.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

\_\_\_\_\_ (legislative day, \_\_\_\_\_), \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO,  
Ms. SMITH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. COONS) introduced the following  
bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To posthumously award a congressional gold medal to  
Constance Baker Motley.

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 “Congressional Tribute  
5 to Constance Baker Motley Act of 2022”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Constance Baker Motley was born in 1921,  
2           in New Haven, Connecticut, the daughter of immi-  
3           grants from the Caribbean island of Nevis.

4           (2) In 1943, Constance Baker Motley grad-  
5           uated from New York University with a Bachelor of  
6           Arts degree in economics.

7           (3) Upon receiving a law degree from Columbia  
8           University in 1946, Constance Baker Motley became  
9           a staff attorney at the National Association for the  
10          Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense and  
11          Educational Fund, Inc. (in this Act referred to as  
12          the “LDF”), and fought tirelessly for 2 decades  
13          alongside Thurgood Marshall and other leading civil  
14          rights lawyers to dismantle segregation throughout  
15          the United States.

16          (4) Constance Baker Motley was the only fe-  
17          male attorney on the LDF legal team that won the  
18          landmark desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of*  
19          *Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

20          (5) Constance Baker Motley argued 10 major  
21          civil rights cases before the Supreme Court, winning  
22          all but one, including the case brought on behalf of  
23          James Meredith challenging the refusal of the Uni-  
24          versity of Mississippi to admit him.

1           (6) Constance Baker Motley's only loss before  
2           the United States Supreme Court was in *Swain v.*  
3           *Alabama*, 380 U.S. 202 (1965), a case in which the  
4           Supreme Court refused to proscribe race-based pe-  
5           remptory challenges in cases involving African-Amer-  
6           ican defendants, and which was later reversed in  
7           *Batson v. Kentucky*, 476 U.S. 79 (1986), on  
8           grounds that were largely asserted by Constance  
9           Baker Motley in the *Swain* case.

10           (7) In 1964, Constance Baker Motley became  
11           the first African-American woman elected to the  
12           New York State Senate.

13           (8) In 1965, Constance Baker Motley became  
14           the first African-American woman, and the first  
15           woman, to serve as president of the Borough of  
16           Manhattan.

17           (9) Constance Baker Motley, in her capacity as  
18           an elected public official in New York, continued to  
19           fight for civil rights, dedicating herself to the revital-  
20           ization of the inner city and improvement of urban  
21           public schools and housing.

22           (10) In 1966, Constance Baker Motley was ap-  
23           pointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson as a judge  
24           on the United States District Court for the Southern  
25           District of New York.

1           (11) The appointment of Constance Baker Mot-  
2           ley made her the first African-American woman, and  
3           only the fifth woman, appointed and confirmed for  
4           a Federal judgeship.

5           (12) In 1982, Constance Baker Motley was ele-  
6           vated to Chief Judge of the United States District  
7           Court for the Southern District of New York, the  
8           largest Federal trial court in the United States.

9           (13) Constance Baker Motley assumed senior  
10          status in 1986, and continued serving on the United  
11          States District Court for the Southern District of  
12          New York with distinction for nearly 2 decades.

13          (14) Constance Baker Motley passed away on  
14          September 28, 2005, and is survived by her son,  
15          Joel W. Motley III, 3 grandchildren, and nieces and  
16          nephews in Connecticut and in other States.

17          (15) September 14, 2021, was the 100th anni-  
18          versary of the birth of Constance Baker Motley.

19 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

20          (a) **PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.**—The President  
21          pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House  
22          of Representatives are authorized to make appropriate ar-  
23          rangements for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of  
24          Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design in com-  
25          memoration of Constance Baker Motley, in recognition of

1 her enduring contributions and service to the United  
2 States.

3 (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purpose of the  
4 presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary  
5 of the Treasury (in this Act referred to as the “Sec-  
6 retary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems,  
7 devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Sec-  
8 retary.

9 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

10 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
11 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price  
12 sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor, mate-  
13 rials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and  
14 the cost of the gold medal.

15 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL MEDALS.**

16 (a) NATIONAL MEDAL.—The medal struck under sec-  
17 tion 3 is a national medal for purposes of chapter 51 of  
18 title 31, United States Code.

19 (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section  
20 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all duplicate medals  
21 struck under section 4 shall be considered to be numis-  
22 matic items.

1 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF**  
2 **SALE.**

3 (a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**—There is  
4 authorized to be charged against the United States Mint  
5 Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be nec-  
6 essary to pay for the cost of the medals struck under this  
7 Act.

8 (b) **PROCEEDS OF SALE.**—Amounts received from the  
9 sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 4 shall be  
10 deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise  
11 Fund.