



Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Congressional Gold Medal

THE BIPARTISAN DEFENDERS OF BATAAN AND CORREGIDOR CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL S.1079 / H.R. 3603

Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Congressional Gold Medal Act, S.1079 and H.R. 3603, is a **bipartisan** and **bicameral** bill to bestow a collective Congressional Gold Medal to servicemembers from the United States and the Philippines who bravely defended Bataan and Corregidor during World War II. These troops, who **hailed from over 40 different states** and the Philippines, endured one of the most harrowing prisoner of war experiences in history, to include the infamous “Bataan Death March.”

THEIR STORY

On December 8, 1941, hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese bombers attacked U.S. military stations in the Philippines. Despite being cut off from supply lines and reinforcements, thousands of American and Filipino forces mounted a courageous, months-long defense of the Bataan Peninsula and, subsequently, Corregidor Island in Manila Bay.

On April 9, 1942, Japanese forces captured approximately 75,000 troops from both the United States and the Philippines. Many of these servicemembers were forced to endure the torturous Bataan Death March to prison camps throughout the Philippines. The marchers endured intense tropical heat without food, water, or medical care. An estimated **10,000 men died**—including thousands of Filipinos and hundreds of Americans—from starvation, exhaustion, and abuse.

Survivors of the Bataan Death March were later held captive in Japanese prison camps where they were subject to inhumane conditions. These men endured continued mistreatment, malnutrition, lack of medical care, and horrific conditions resulting in exceedingly high death rates. Their liberation finally came in 1945 after years of suffering.

THE TIME IS NOW

In honor of the **80th anniversary of the initial defense of Bataan and Corregidor**, we seek to recognize the courage, tenacity, and perseverance these troops displayed throughout the entire ordeal. There are few from this Greatest Generation left to honor, so the time to act is now.

COSPONSOR

Senator Heinrich welcomes your support for this important legislation. Any questions can be directed towards Claire Wengrod Claire_Wengrod@heinrich.senate.gov or Jon Seagle Jonathan_Seagle@heinrich.senate.gov.