

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 5168

To authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to Joseph M. Perez for acts of valor while serving as a member of the Army during the Vietnam War.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 8, 2023

Mr. MOYLAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the  
Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to Joseph M. Perez for acts of valor while serving as a member of the Army during the Vietnam War.

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. AUTHORIZATION OF AWARD OF MEDAL OF**  
4 **HONOR TO JOSEPH M. PEREZ FOR ACTS OF**  
5 **VALOR AS A MEMBER OF THE ARMY DURING**  
6 **THE VIETNAM WAR.**

7 (a) RECOGNITION OF ACTS OF VALOR.—Congress  
8 recognizes the following acts of valor by Joseph M. Perez:

1           (1) Joseph M. Perez distinguished himself by  
2           valorous actions against overwhelming odds while  
3           serving as a Sergeant in the Army, with Company  
4           C, 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infan-  
5           try Division, in South Vietnam.

6           (2) On May 26, 1967, during the Vietnam War,  
7           Sergeant Perez acted as the fire team leader with  
8           the Commanding Officer of Company C led an in-  
9           fantry unit conducting a search and destroy task  
10          near the Cambodian border. When the unit reached  
11          the top of a hill, they were suddenly under attack  
12          from a concealed sniper.

13          (3) During the initial phase of battle, Sergeant  
14          Perez and the unit took cover to assess and decide  
15          the strength of the enemy and determine the erec-  
16          tion of where the attack was coming from. The fire  
17          team returned fire, when the enemy launched a  
18          hand-grenade. Without hesitation or concern for his  
19          personal safety, Sergeant Perez absorbed the full le-  
20          thal explosion and shielded his fellow soldiers from  
21          the blast. The explosion caused Sergeant Perez to  
22          lose his right eye and severed his right hand.

23          (4) The fire team moved to relocate to a safer  
24          area, leaving Sgt Perez alone. Once Sgt Perez re-

1       gained consciousness, he crawled to safe ground  
2       twenty meters to be able to be treated by medics.

3               (5) Sergeant Perez’s personal leadership in in-  
4       tense close combat resulted in a major win for his  
5       battalion against overwhelming odds, though he lost  
6       his eye and hand and nearly lost his life, he saved  
7       the lives of three of his fire team members from  
8       death and serious injuries from the explosion.

9               (6) Sergeant Perez’s selfless devotion to duty,  
10      his extraordinary heroism, conspicuous gallantry and  
11      intrepidity, and numerous risks of his life above and  
12      beyond the call of duty, are all in keeping with the  
13      highest traditions of the Army, and reflect great  
14      credit on himself, the Armed Forces, and the United  
15      States.

16      (b) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-  
17      ings:

18              (1) When awarding him the Distinguished Serv-  
19      ice Cross, Sergeant Perez’s chain of command was  
20      unaware of the full extent of his valorous actions  
21      and the numerous risks he took for his soldiers, all  
22      above and beyond the call of duty.

23              (2) Although Sergeant Perez absorbed the le-  
24      thal explosion of a hand grenade, once he regained  
25      consciousness, he continued to move with his bat-

1       talion against devastating and overwhelming enemy  
2       fire.

3       (c) AUTHORIZATION.—Notwithstanding the time lim-  
4       itations specified in section 7274 of title 10, United States  
5       Code, or any other time limitation with respect to the  
6       awarding of certain medals to persons who served in the  
7       Armed Forces, the President is authorized to award the  
8       Medal of Honor, under section 7271 of such title, to Jo-  
9       seph M. Perez for the acts of valor described in subsection  
10      (d).

11      (d) ACTS OF VALOR DESCRIBED.—The acts of valor  
12      described in this subsection are the actions of Joseph M.  
13      Perez on May 26, 1967, while serving as a member of  
14      the Army during the Vietnam War, for which he was pre-  
15      viously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

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