



**S. 474 – To award a Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D.**

**Floor Situation**

S. 474 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation passed the Senate by unanimous consent on March 27, 2007.

The House passed an identical version of this legislation, H.R. 1154, by voice vote on September 17, 2007.

S. 474 is expected to be considered by the House of Representatives on October 2, 2007.

**Summary**

S. 474 awards a Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D, an authority on vascular disease and medicine.

**Background**

Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D. was born on September 7, 1908 in Lake Charles, Louisiana. By the age of 23, while still in medical school, he invented a roller pump for blood transfusions, which later became a major component of the heart-lung machine used in the first successful open-heart operation.

He volunteered during World War II and joined the Surgeon General's staff. He eventually rose to the rank of Colonel and Chief of the Surgical Consultants Division. Through his research and knowledge he helped pave the way for the development of mobile army surgical hospitals or MASH units, earning him the Legion of Merit in 1945.

In 1964, Dr. DeBakey performed the first successful coronary bypass. This paved the way for surgeons world-wide to offer hope to thousands of patients who might otherwise succumb to heart disease.

Also in 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Dr. DeBakey to the position of Chairman of the President's Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke, leading to the creation of Regional Medical Programs.

Two years later, Dr. DeBakey made medical history again, when he was the first to successfully use a partial artificial heart to solve the problems of a patient who could not be weaned from a heart-lung machine following open-heart surgery.

In 1968, Dr. DeBakey supervised the first successful multi-organ transplant, in which a heart, both kidneys, and lung were transplanted from a single donor into 4 separate recipients.

In 1969, President Lyndon B. Johnson bestowed Dr. DeBakey with the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction.

In 1985, President Ronald Reagan conferred on him the National Medal of Science.

Since then he has received numerous accolades and awards both in the United States and worldwide.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest award Congress can bestow upon a group or individual.

**Cost**

At the time of printing the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) had not scored this legislation.

**Staff Contact**

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