

A Bill to Strip Bill Cosby of the Presidential Medal of Freedom

Deadline for original cosponsors is NOON on Friday, January 8.

Dear Colleague:

I invite you to cosponsor a bill that will affirm a mechanism for the president to strip Bill Cosby of the Presidential Medal of Freedom and that will impose criminal penalties for anyone who wears or publicly displays a Presidential Medal of Freedom that has been revoked. [Last July, President Obama stated](#), "There's no precedent for revoking a medal... We don't have that mechanism." This legislation ensures there is a mechanism in place to strip Cosby, or anyone else found dishonorable, of the Medal of Freedom.

In recent months, more than 50 women have come forward and conveyed disturbing accounts of drugging and sexual assault by Cosby. The statute of limitations has expired for many of these incidents, and as a result, many of these women will never get their day in court.

On December 30, 2015, Montgomery County (PA) prosecutors [charged Cosby](#) with three counts of felony aggravated indecent assault for allegedly drugging and sexually assaulting a young woman without her consent in 2004. In the 20-page Affidavit of Probable Cause, county officials found that "the evidence here demonstrates that the victim's substantially impaired condition prevented her ability to consent, or even defend herself from Cosby's sexual assault." Prosecutors also noted that over the years "Cosby obtained seven separate prescriptions for Quaaludes that he did not personally ingest, nor ever intended to personally ingest."

The Presidential Medal of Freedom was established in 1963. This prestigious award is bestowed on recipients for "especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors." William Henry "Bill" Cosby, Jr. received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2002.

The shocking admissions of Cosby during a 2005 deposition, coupled with the harrowing accounts of more than 50 women of Cosby's sexual assault and drugging, make him unfit to retain our nation's highest civilian honor. According to the New York Daily News, court documents obtained by the Associated Press on Monday, July 7, 2015, revealed that "Cosby admitted under oath that he bought Quaaludes to dope the women he wanted to grope—and slipped the sedative to at least one lady and 'other people.'" During a deposition on September 29, 2005, a lawyer, Dolores Troiani, asked Cosby, "When you got the Quaaludes, was it in your mind that you were going to use these Quaaludes for young women that you wanted to have sex with?" and Cosby answered "Yes."

Cosby has admitted to drugging women in order to satisfy his sexual desires, and, therefore, the federal government should not recognize him with an honor like the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The Hollywood Studios Resort at Disney World removed a bronze bust of Cosby in July 2015, and three major universities—Brown, Fordham, and Marquette—have stripped Cosby of honorary degrees.

By allowing Cosby to keep his Medal of Freedom, America is sending the wrong message to future generations. It is true that there is a presumption of innocence in the American legal system, and rightly so. Our criminal justice system will ultimately determine whether Cosby serves jail time for the 2004 incident. But Cosby's admissions to drugging women in order to satisfy his sexual desires place him outside the bounds of whom we should admire in our society. To continue to honor him would be an affront to women nationwide, particularly those who were victims of his heinous acts.

Please join me in preserving the integrity of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. If you have questions or to add your support to the bill, please contact Will Gardner at 202-225-2315 or at will.gardner@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Gosar
Member of Congress