

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6073

To amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that deceased veterans with no known next of kin can receive a dignified burial, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 29, 2012

Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. MACK, Mr. ROSS of Florida, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that deceased veterans with no known next of kin can receive a dignified burial, and for other purposes.

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 “Dignified Burial of
5 Veterans Act of 2012”.

1 **SEC. 2. FURNISHING CASKETS AND URNS FOR DECEASED**
2 **VETERANS WITH NO KNOWN NEXT OF KIN.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2306 of title 38, United
4 States Code, is amended—

5 (1) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as
6 subsections (g) and (h), respectively;

7 (2) by inserting after subsection (e) the fol-
8 lowing new subsection (f):

9 “(f) The Secretary shall furnish a casket or urn, of
10 such quality as the Secretary considers appropriate for a
11 dignified burial, for burial in a national cemetery of a de-
12 ceased veteran described in section 2414(b) of this title.”;
13 and

14 (3) in subsection (h), as redesignated by para-
15 graph (1), by adding at the end the following new
16 paragraph:

17 “(4) A casket or urn may not be furnished
18 under subsection (f) for burial of a person described
19 in section 2411(b) of this title.”.

20 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (f) and (h)(4) of
21 section 2306 of title 38, United States Code, as added by
22 subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enact-
23 ment of this Act and shall apply with respect to deaths
24 occurring on or after such date.

1 **SEC. 3. IMPROVED COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DEPART-**
2 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND MEDICAL**
3 **EXAMINERS AND FUNERAL DIRECTORS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 24 of title 38, United
5 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
6 lowing new section:

7 **“§ 2414. Communication between Department of Vet-**
8 **erans Affairs and medical examiners and**
9 **funeral directors**

10 “(a) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—With respect to
11 each deceased veteran described in subsection (b) who is
12 transported to a national cemetery for burial, the Sec-
13 retary shall ensure that the local medical examiner, fu-
14 neral director, county service group, or other entity re-
15 sponsible for the body of the deceased veteran before such
16 transportation submits to the Secretary the following in-
17 formation:

18 “(1) Whether the deceased veteran was cre-
19 mated.

20 “(2) The steps taken to ensure that the de-
21 ceased veteran has no next of kin.

22 “(b) DECEASED VETERAN DESCRIBED.—A deceased
23 veteran described in this subsection is a deceased veteran
24 whom the Secretary determines—

25 “(1) that there is no next of kin or other person
26 claiming the body of the deceased veteran; and

1 “(2) does not have sufficient resources to cover
2 burial and funeral expenses.

3 “(c) DETERMINATION OF SUFFICIENT RE-
4 SOURCES.—If the Secretary is unable to make a reason-
5 able determination of the amount of the resources of a
6 deceased veteran under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary
7 shall deem such resources to be an amount that is not
8 sufficient to cover burial and funeral expenses.”.

9 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
10 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting
11 after the item relating to section 2413 the following new
12 item:

 “2414. Communication between Department of Veterans Affairs and medical ex-
 aminers and funeral directors.”.

13 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 2414 of title 38,
14 United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take
15 effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall
16 apply with respect to deaths occurring on or after the date
17 that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this
18 Act.

19 **SEC. 4. REPORT ON COMPLIANCE OF DEPARTMENT OF**
20 **VETERANS AFFAIRS WITH INDUSTRY STAND-**
21 **ARDS FOR CASKETS AND URNS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
23 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
24 erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’

1 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-
2 fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the com-
3 pliance of the Department of Veterans Affairs with indus-
4 try standards for caskets and urns.

5 (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection
6 (a) shall include the following:

7 (1) A description of industry standards for cas-
8 kets and urns.

9 (2) An assessment of compliance with such
10 standards at National Cemeteries administered by
11 the Department with respect to caskets and urns
12 used for the interment of those eligible for burial at
13 such cemeteries.

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