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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to memorial affairs, and for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. PAPPAS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee  
on \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A BILL**

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to memorial affairs, 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 “Veterans’ Burial Im-  
5       provement Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. PERMANENT AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN BURIAL**  
2 **BENEFITS FOR SPOUSES AND CHILDREN**  
3 **WHO PREDECEASE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED**  
4 **FORCES SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY.**

5 (a) PROVISION OF HEADSTONES AND MARKERS.—

6 Section 2306(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is  
7 amended—

8 (1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “if such  
9 death occurs before September 30, 2032”; and

10 (2) in subparagraph (C), by striking “if such  
11 death occurs before September 30, 2032”.

12 (b) INTERMENT IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES.—Sec-  
13 tion 2402(a)(5) of title 38, United States Code, is amend-  
14 ed by striking “if such death occurs before September 30,  
15 2032”.

16 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROVISION**  
17 **OF TRANSPORTATION FOR DECEASED VET-**  
18 **ERANS.**

19 (a) TRANSPORTATION OF DECEASED VETERANS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2308 of title 38,  
21 United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

22 **“§ 2308. Transportation of deceased veterans for bur-**  
23 **ial**

24 **“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may pay, in addi-**  
25 **tion to any amount paid under this chapter, the cost of**

1 transportation of a deceased veteran for burial in accord-  
2 ance with this section.

3 “(b) TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCE.—(1) In the  
4 case of the transportation of a covered deceased veteran  
5 for burial in a covered veterans’ cemetery, the Secretary  
6 may pay a transportation allowance of \$745 (as increased  
7 from time to time under paragraph (3).

8 “(2) In the case of a covered deceased veteran who  
9 did not die in a State and for whom the actual cost of  
10 transporting the veteran from the place of death to the  
11 covered cemetery exceeds the amount of the transportation  
12 allowance in effect under paragraph (1), the Secretary  
13 may also pay an additional amount equal to the difference  
14 between such transportation allowance and the actual cost  
15 of transporting the veteran. The amount of any payment  
16 under this paragraph may not exceed the difference be-  
17 tween such transportation allowance and the actual cost  
18 of transporting the veteran to the national cemetery near-  
19 est the veteran’s last place of residence in which burial  
20 space is available.

21 “(3) With respect to any fiscal year, the Secretary  
22 shall provide a percentage increase (rounded to the near-  
23 est dollar) in the amount of the transportation allowance  
24 payable under paragraph (1) that is equal to the percent-  
25 age by which—

1           “(A) the Consumer Price Index (all items,  
2           United States city average) for the 12-month period  
3           ending on the June 30 preceding the beginning of  
4           the fiscal year for which the increase is made, ex-  
5           ceeds

6           “(B) such Consumer Price Index for the 12-  
7           month period preceding the 12-month period de-  
8           scribed in subparagraph (A).

9           “(c) DEATHS IN COVERED FACILITIES.—(1) Except  
10          as provided in paragraph (2), in the case of a veteran who  
11          dies in a covered facility located in a State, the Secretary  
12          shall pay the actual cost to transport the body to the place  
13          of burial, if the place of burial is located in the same or  
14          any other State.

15          “(2) In the case of a veterans who is eligible for pay-  
16          ment under both paragraph (1) and subsection (b), the  
17          amount payable under paragraph (1) may not exceed the  
18          difference between the amount of the transportation allow-  
19          ance in effect under subsection (b)(1) and the actual cost  
20          of transporting the veteran to the place of burial.

21          “(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22                  “(1) The term ‘covered deceased veteran’ means  
23                  any of the following deceased veterans:

24                          “(A) A veteran who dies as the result of a  
25                          service-connected disability.

1           “(B) A veteran who dies while in receipt of  
2           disability compensation (or who but for the re-  
3           ceipt of retirement pay or pension under this  
4           title, would have been entitled to compensation).

5           “(C) A veteran whom the Secretary deter-  
6           mines is eligible for funeral expenses under this  
7           chapter by virtue of the Secretary determining  
8           that the veteran has no next of kin or other  
9           person claiming the body of such veteran and  
10          that there are not available sufficient resources  
11          to cover burial and funeral expenses for the vet-  
12          eran.

13          “(2) The term ‘covered facility’ means—

14               “(A) a facility of the Department (as de-  
15               fined in section 1701(3) of this title) to which  
16               the deceased veteran was properly admitted for  
17               hospital, nursing home, or domiciliary care  
18               under section 1710 or 1711(a) of this title; or

19               “(B) an institution at which the deceased  
20               veteran was, at the time of death, receiving—

21                       “(i) hospital care in accordance with  
22                       sections 1703A, 8111, and 8153 of this  
23                       title;

24                       “(ii) nursing home care under section  
25                       1720 of this title; or

1 “(iii) nursing home care for which  
2 payments are made under section 1741 of  
3 this title.

4 “(3) The term ‘covered veterans’ cemetery’  
5 means a veterans’ cemetery—

6 “(A) in which a covered veteran is eligible  
7 to be buried; and

8 “(B) that—

9 “(i) in the case of deaths occurring  
10 before January 5, 2024—

11 “(I) is owned by a State; or

12 “(II) is on trust land owned by,  
13 or held in trust for, a tribal organiza-  
14 tion; or

15 “(ii) in the case of deaths occurring  
16 on or after January 5, 2024—

17 “(I) is a national cemetery;

18 “(II) is owned by a State; or

19 “(III) is on trust land owned by,  
20 or held in trust for, a tribal organiza-  
21 tion.”.

22 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
23 tions at the beginning of chapter 23 of such title is  
24 amended by striking the item relating to section  
25 2308 and inserting the following new item:

“2308. Transportation of deceased veterans for burial.”.

1 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such title is fur-  
2 ther amended—

3 (1) by striking paragraph (1) of section  
4 2303(a) and inserting the following new paragraph  
5 (1):

6 “(1) When a veteran described in paragraph (2) dies,  
7 the Secretary shall pay the actual cost (not to exceed \$700  
8 (as increased from time to time under subsection (c))) of  
9 the burial and funeral or, within such limits, may make  
10 contracts for such services without regard to the laws re-  
11 quiring advertisement for proposals for supplies and serv-  
12 ices for the Department.”; and

13 (2) in section 101(20), by striking “section  
14 2303” and inserting “sections 2303 and 2308”.

15 **SEC. 4. PROVISION OF GROUP BURIAL MARKERS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2306 of title 38, United  
17 States Code, is further amended—

18 (1) by redesignating subsection (k) as sub-  
19 section (l); and

20 (2) by inserting after subsection (j) the fol-  
21 lowing new subsection (k):

22 “(k)(1) Under such regulations as the Secretary may  
23 prescribe, in lieu of a headstone or marker for an indi-  
24 vidual described in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection  
25 (a), the Secretary may furnish a group headstone or mark-

1 er at a burial location containing the remains of multiple  
2 such individuals.

3 “(2) If the Secretary furnishes a group headstone or  
4 marker under paragraph (1) for a group of individuals de-  
5 scribed in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection (a) at  
6 a burial location containing the remains of multiple such  
7 individuals, the Secretary may not furnish a new or re-  
8 placement burial or memorial headstone or marker for any  
9 individual whose remains are determined to be interred at  
10 that burial location.

11 “(3) In the case of an individual who is interred at  
12 a burial location marked by a group headstone or marker  
13 under paragraph (1), but for whom the Secretary provided  
14 an individual headstone or marker before the date of the  
15 enactment of this subsection, such individual headstone or  
16 marker may remain in place after the placement of the  
17 group headstone or marker.

18 “(4) The Secretary may provide a group headstone  
19 or marker under paragraph (1) at a burial location that  
20 is not unmarked, if the Secretary determines that a group  
21 headstone or marker at that burial location would assist  
22 visitors in understanding or appreciating the significance  
23 of the burial location.

24 “(5) Any group headstone or marker provided under  
25 this subsection shall be provided in coordination with, and



1 with the approval of, the owner of the property on which  
2 the burial location is located.

3 “(6) Subject to any required consultation with, and  
4 approval by, an appropriate historical preservation author-  
5 ity, the Secretary shall make all determinations regarding  
6 the appearance of a group headstone or marker provided  
7 under paragraph (1), including the size of, the material  
8 used for, and the content of the inscription on the marker.

9 “(7) A group headstone or marker furnished under  
10 paragraph (1) may not include in the inscription the name  
11 of a person described in section 2411(b) of this title.”.

12 (b) NONELIGIBILITY OF PARENTS OF CERTAIN DE-  
13 CEASED VETERANS.—Subsection (a)(2) of such section is  
14 amended by striking “and (6)” and inserting “(6), and  
15 (9)”.

16 **SEC. 5. BURIAL OR INTERMENT OF CERTAIN ADDITIONAL**  
17 **PERSON IN CEMETERIES THAT ACCEPT DE-**  
18 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PLOT OR**  
19 **INTERMENT ALLOWANCE.**

20 Section 2303(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code  
21 is amended—

22 (1) in subparagraph (A)—

23 (A) in clause (ii), by striking “or” at the  
24 end;

1 (B) in clause (iii), by striking “and” and  
2 inserting “or”; and

3 (C) by adding at the end the following new  
4 clause:

5 “(iv) veterans who were discharged or  
6 released from service under conditions  
7 other than dishonorable and who would be  
8 eligible for burial in a national cemetery  
9 but for the minimum active duty service  
10 requirements under section 5303A of this  
11 title and the spouses and dependent chil-  
12 dren of such veterans; and”; and

13 (2) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking the pe-  
14 riod and inserting “; and”.