

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3278

To amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is informed of the interment of unclaimed deceased veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 29, 2015

Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. COOK, Ms. HAHN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. PETERS) 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 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is informed of the interment of unclaimed deceased veterans, 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 Dignified
5 Burial Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. INFORMATION CONCERNING INTERMENTS OF UN-**
2 **CLAIMED DECEASED VETERANS.**

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

6 **“§ 2415. Information concerning interments of un-**
7 **claimed deceased veterans**

8 “(a) SCHEDULED INTERMENT.—At the same time
9 that the Secretary confirms to a covered entity the eligi-
10 bility of an unclaimed deceased veteran to burial benefits,
11 the Secretary shall request from the covered entity the
12 scheduled date of the interment of the unclaimed deceased
13 veteran. If the covered entity does not provide to the Sec-
14 retary such a scheduled date, the Secretary shall repeat
15 such request during each period not exceeding 30 days,
16 as determined appropriate by the Secretary, beginning on
17 the date on which the Secretary makes such initial request
18 and ending on the date on which the Secretary confirms
19 either such scheduled date or the date on which the vet-
20 eran was interred.

21 “(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than March 1 of
22 each year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees
23 on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and
24 the Senate a report on unclaimed deceased veterans who
25 were interred after the 30-day period following the date
26 on which the Secretary made an initial request regarding

1 such veteran under subsection (a). Such report shall in-
2 clude—

3 “(1) during the year prior to the year in which
4 the report is submitted, the number of unclaimed de-
5 ceased veterans in each State covered by a request
6 made under subsection (a); and

7 “(2) of the number of veterans described in
8 paragraph (1)—

9 “(A) the number of veterans who were not
10 interred during such 30-day period; and

11 “(B) the number of veterans for whom a
12 scheduled interment date was provided by the
13 covered entity to the Secretary but the inter-
14 ment did not occur as so scheduled.

15 “(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 “(1) The term ‘burial benefits’ means benefits
17 provided by the Secretary under chapter 23 of this
18 title with respect to funeral expenses, the furnishing
19 of a casket or urn, or transportation.

20 “(2) The term ‘covered entity’ means a local
21 coroner, medical examiner, public administrator, fu-
22 neral director, county veterans service officer, vet-
23 erans service organization, or other entity who take
24 responsibility for burial arrangements of an un-
25 claimed deceased veteran.

1 “(3) The term ‘unclaimed deceased veteran’
2 means a deceased veteran with respect to whom the
3 Secretary determines that there is no next of kin or
4 other person claiming the body of the deceased vet-
5 eran.”.

6 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
7 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting
8 after the item relating to section 2414 the following new
9 item:

“2415. Information concerning interments of unclaimed deceased veterans.”.

