

107<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 3271

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct veterans outreach programs known as Stand Down events and to establish a pilot program to provide for an annual Stand Down event in each State.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 8, 2001

Mr. WU (for himself, Ms. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SHOWS, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Ms. LEE, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. EVANS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HONDA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. FILNER, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. GUTKNECHT, and Ms. MCCOLLUM) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct veterans outreach programs known as Stand Down events and to establish a pilot program to provide for an annual Stand Down event in each State.

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 “Bruce Vento Stand  
5       Down Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS, COMMENDATION, AND PURPOSE.**

2 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

3 (1) veterans outreach activities known as  
4 “Stand Down events” have proven to be an effective  
5 form of outreach and a successful way to provide as-  
6 sistance to those veterans, frequently homeless, who  
7 have most often not otherwise used or availed them-  
8 selves of existing service delivery functions; and

9 (2) Stand Down events have been most effective  
10 when managed by a committee composed of rep-  
11 resentatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs,  
12 other agencies (Federal, State, or local), veteran  
13 service organizations, and homeless service providers  
14 and such shared leadership brings to this partner-  
15 ship access to diverse resources with which to carry  
16 out those events.

17 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS CONCERNING DEPART-  
18 MENT OF DEFENSE SUPPORT.—It is the sense of Con-  
19 gress that the several branches of the Armed Forces and  
20 the National Guard—

21 (1) have provided valuable support and services  
22 to establish and maintain the delivery of services to  
23 veterans at Stand Down events; and

24 (2) should continue to do so to the extent that  
25 their various missions, responsibilities, and roles per-  
26 mit.

1 (c) COMMENDATION OF VETERANS' ORGANIZA-  
2 TIONS.—Congress hereby—

3 (1) commends and recognizes national and local  
4 veterans' organizations, which have provided valu-  
5 able support and services to veterans at Stand Down  
6 events and have been instrumental to the success of  
7 such events, for their outstanding contributions to  
8 those events; and

9 (2) strongly encourages those organizations to  
10 continue to provide volunteers and resources for  
11 those events.

12 (d) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to author-  
13 ize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs—

14 (1) to provide assistance to meet the needs of  
15 all veterans at Stand Down events; and

16 (2) to work with veterans service organizations  
17 and other not-for-profit organizations to determine  
18 the best means for organizing and carrying out  
19 Stand Down events.

20 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AUTHORIZA-**  
21 **TION FOR STAND DOWN EVENTS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—(1) Subchapter VII of chapter 17  
23 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at  
24 the end the following new section:

1 **“§ 1775. Stand Down events**

2 “(a) The Secretary may (directly or in conjunction  
3 with a governmental or other entity)—

4 “(1) carry out Stand Down events; and

5 “(2) in connection with any Stand Down event,  
6 whether carried out by the Secretary or by another  
7 sponsoring entity—

8 “(A) provide outreach services;

9 “(B) use or provide any property and re-  
10 sources of the Department that the Secretary  
11 determines are not otherwise reasonably needed  
12 by the Department; and

13 “(C) provide any other benefit or service of  
14 the Department that the Secretary considers  
15 appropriate.

16 “(b) For purposes of this section:

17 “(1) The term ‘Stand Down event’ means an  
18 event to provide target veterans with one to three  
19 days of safety and security, access to assistance such  
20 as food, shelter, clothing, benefits certification, and  
21 health care, and any other form of assistance that  
22 the Secretary considers appropriate.

23 “(2) The term ‘target veteran’ means a veteran  
24 who is without a home, unemployed, experiencing  
25 health or social adjustment challenges, or otherwise  
26 in need of assistance.

1       “(c) The Secretary shall establish and implement a  
2 pilot program under which the Secretary shall carry out  
3 (directly or in conjunction with a governmental or other  
4 entity) at least one Stand Down event in each State during  
5 each calendar year. The Secretary may carry out (or oth-  
6 erwise participate in) as many additional Stand Down  
7 events during any year as the Secretary determines to be  
8 needed.

9       “(d) Not later than February 1 of each year, the Sec-  
10 retary shall submit to the Congress a report containing—

11               “(1) for the preceding year, a description of the  
12 implementation of the pilot program established  
13 under subsection (c);

14               “(2) the Secretary’s recommendations, if any,  
15 for legislation regarding the pilot program; and

16               “(3) any other matter that the Secretary con-  
17 siders appropriate regarding Stand Down events.”.

18       (2) The table of sections at the beginning of such  
19 chapter is amended by adding at the end the following  
20 new item:

“1775. Stand Down events.”.

21       (b) EFFECTIVE DATES.—(1) Subsection (c) of sec-  
22 tion 1775 of title 38, United States Code, as added by  
23 subsection (a), shall take effect beginning with 2002.

1           (2) The first report under subsection (d) of such sec-  
2 tion shall be submitted not later than February 1, 2003.

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