

Union Calendar No. 59

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1911

[Report No. 108-115, Part I]

To amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance cooperation and the sharing of resources between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 1, 2003

Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. EVANS, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. RODRIGUEZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

MAY 19, 2003

Additional sponsor: Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ

MAY 19, 2003

Reported from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

MAY 19, 2003

Referral to the Committee on Armed Services extended for a period ending not later than May 19, 2003

MAY 19, 2003

Committee on Armed Services discharged; committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance cooperation and the sharing of resources between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

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. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE-DEPARTMENT OF**
 4 **VETERANS AFFAIRS JOINT EXECUTIVE COM-**
 5 **MITTEE.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE.—(1)
 7 Chapter 3 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by
 8 adding at the end the following new section:

9 **“§ 320. Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of**
 10 **Defense Joint Executive Committee**

11 “(a) JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—(1) There is
 12 established an interagency committee to be known as the
 13 Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense
 14 Joint Executive Committee (hereinafter in this section re-
 15 ferred to as the ‘Committee’).

16 “(2) The Committee is composed of—

17 “(A) the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs
 18 and such other officers and employees of the Depart-
 19 ment of Veterans Affairs as the Secretary of Vet-
 20 erans Affairs may designate; and

1 “(B) the Under Secretary of Defense for Per-
2 sonnel and Readiness and such other officers and
3 employees of the Department of Defense as the Sec-
4 retary of Defense may designate.

5 “(b) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.—(1) The Deputy
6 Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Under Secretary of
7 Defense shall determine the size and structure of the Com-
8 mittee, as well as the administrative and procedural guide-
9 lines for the operation of the Committee.

10 “(2) The two Departments shall supply appropriate
11 staff and resources to provide administrative support and
12 services. Support for such purposes shall be provided at
13 a level sufficient for the efficient operation of the Com-
14 mittee, including a subordinate Health Executive Com-
15 mittee, a subordinate Benefits Executive Committee, and
16 such other committees or working groups as considered
17 necessary by the Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary.

18 “(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—(1) The Committee shall
19 recommend to the Secretaries strategic direction for the
20 joint coordination and sharing efforts between and within
21 the two Departments under section 8111 of this title and
22 shall oversee implementation of those efforts.

23 “(2) The Committee shall submit to the two Secre-
24 taries and to Congress an annual report containing such
25 recommendations as the Committee considers appropriate.

1 “(d) FUNCTIONS.—In order to enable the Committee
2 to make recommendations in its annual report under sub-
3 section (c)(2), the Committee shall do the following:

4 “(1) Review existing policies, procedures, and
5 practices relating to the coordination and sharing of
6 resources between the two Departments.

7 “(2) Identify changes in policies, procedures,
8 and practices that, in the judgment of the Com-
9 mittee, would promote mutually beneficial coordina-
10 tion, use, or exchange of use of services and re-
11 sources of the two Departments, with the goal of im-
12 proving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of
13 the delivery of benefits and services to veterans,
14 service members, military retirees and their families
15 through an enhanced Department of Veterans Af-
16 fairs and Department of Defense partnership.

17 “(3) Identify and assess further opportunities
18 for the coordination and collaboration between the
19 Departments that, in the judgment of the Com-
20 mittee, would not adversely affect the range of serv-
21 ices, the quality of care, or the established priorities
22 for benefits provided by either Department.

23 “(4) Review the plans of both Departments for
24 the acquisition of additional resources, especially
25 new facilities and major equipment and technology,

1 in order to assess the potential effect of such plans
2 on further opportunities for the coordination and
3 sharing of resources.

4 “(5) Review the implementation of activities de-
5 signed to promote the coordination and sharing of
6 resources between the Departments.”.

7 (2) The table of sections at the beginning of such
8 chapter is amended by adding at the end the following
9 new item:

“320. Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive
Committee.”.

10 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—(1) Subsection (c)
11 of section 8111 of such title is repealed.

12 (2) Such section is further amended—

13 (A) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “subsection
14 (c)” and inserting “section 320 of this title”;

15 (B) in subsection (d)(1), by striking “Com-
16 mittee established in subsection (c)” and inserting
17 “Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of De-
18 fense Joint Executive Committee”;

19 (C) in subsection (e)(1), by striking “Com-
20 mittee under subsection (c)(2)” and inserting “De-
21 partment of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense
22 Joint Executive Committee with respect to health
23 care resources”; and

1 (D) in subsection (f)(2), by striking subpara-
2 graphs (B) and (C) and inserting the following:

3 “(B) The assessment of further opportunities
4 identified by the Department of Veterans Affairs-
5 Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee
6 under subsection (d)(3) of section 320 of this title
7 for the sharing of health-care resources between the
8 two Departments.

9 “(C) Any recommendation made by that com-
10 mittee under subsection (e)(2) of that section during
11 that fiscal year.”.

12 (c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (f) of
13 such section is further amended by inserting “(Public Law
14 107–314)” in paragraphs (3), (4)(A), (4)(B), and (5)
15 after “for Fiscal Year 2003”.

16 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—(1) If this Act is enacted be-
17 fore October 1, 2003—

18 (A) section 320 of title 38, United States Code,
19 as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on Octo-
20 ber 1, 2003; and

21 (B) the amendments made by subsections (b)
22 and (c) shall take effect on October 1, 2003, imme-
23 diately after the amendment made by section
24 721(a)(1) of the Bob Stump National Defense Au-

1 thorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law
2 107–314; 116 2589).

3 (2) If this Act is enacted on or after October 1, 2003,
4 the amendments made by this section shall take effect on
5 the date of the enactment of this Act.

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