

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2244

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist in the identification of unclaimed and abandoned human remains to determine if any such remains are eligible for burial in a national cemetery, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 28, 2012

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BEGICH) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assist in the identification of unclaimed and abandoned human remains to determine if any such remains are eligible for burial in a national cemetery, 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 Missing in
5 America Act of 2012”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 Congress recognizes the tireless work and dedication
8 of the members of the Missing in America Project, in con-

1 junction with numerous veterans service organizations, in
 2 identifying the unclaimed remains of veterans.

3 **SEC. 3. IDENTIFICATION OF UNCLAIMED AND ABANDONED**
 4 **HUMAN REMAINS.**

5 (a) IDENTIFICATION OF UNCLAIMED OR ABANDONED
 6 HUMAN REMAINS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
 7 shall cooperate with veterans service organizations to as-
 8 sist entities in possession of unclaimed or abandoned
 9 human remains in determining if any such remains are
 10 the remains of veterans or other individuals eligible for
 11 burial in a national cemetery.

12 (b) BURIAL OF UNCLAIMED OR ABANDONED HUMAN
 13 REMAINS.—If the Secretary determines that any un-
 14 claimed or abandoned human remains are the remains of
 15 a person who is eligible for burial in an open national cem-
 16 etery under the control of the National Cemetery Adminis-
 17 tration under section 2402 of title 38, United States Code,
 18 the Secretary shall provide for the burial of the remains
 19 and cover the cost of the burial of the remains and the
 20 cost of preparing the remains and transporting them to
 21 the place of burial, if the Secretary determines, with re-
 22 spect to the remains—

23 (1) that there is no next of kin or other person
 24 claiming the remains; and

1 (2) that there are not available other sufficient
2 resources to cover burial and funeral expenses.

3 (c) CREATION OF NATIONAL DATABASE.—The Sec-
4 retary shall establish a database in which the Secretary
5 shall enter the names of any veteran or other individual
6 identified pursuant to subsection (a). The Secretary shall
7 ensure that the database is publicly accessible.

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