

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 512

To title 38, United States Code, to permit veterans to grant access to their records in the databases of the Veterans Benefits Administration to certain designated congressional employees, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 12, 2017

Mr. YOHO (for himself, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. FLORES, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. HILL, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. KING of Iowa, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. MAST, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. BACON, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. EMMER, Mr. REED, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. HIMES, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. COLE, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. BERA, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. BARR, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. MESSER, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. ROYCE of California, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. BRAT, Mr. CRIST, Mr. FASO, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. PERRY, Mr. COOK, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. OLSON, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. SOTO, Mr. DUNN, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. HURD, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr.

NEWHOUSE, Mr. SIRES, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. COMER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. BOST, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. VALADAO, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. ISSA, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. DESANTIS, and Mr. ENGEL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To title 38, United States Code, to permit veterans to grant access to their records in the databases of the Veterans Benefits Administration to certain designated congressional employees, 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 “Working to Integrate
5 Networks Guaranteeing Member Access Now Act” or the
6 “WINGMAN Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. PROVISION OF ACCESS TO CASE-TRACKING INFOR-**
8 **MATION.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 59 of title 38, United
10 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
11 lowing:

12 **“§ 5906. Access of certain congressional employees to**
13 **veteran records**

14 “(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The Secretary shall provide
15 to each veteran who submits a claim for benefits under

1 the laws administered by the Secretary an opportunity to
2 permit a covered congressional employee employed in the
3 office of the Member of Congress representing the district
4 where the veteran resides to have access to all of the
5 records of the veteran in the databases of the Veterans
6 Benefits Administration.

7 “(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law,
8 upon receipt of the permission from the veteran under
9 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide read-only ac-
10 cess to such records to such a covered congressional em-
11 ployee in a manner that does not allow such employee to
12 modify the data contained in such records or in any part
13 of a database of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

14 “(3) A Member of Congress may designate not more
15 than two employees of the Member as covered congres-
16 sional employees.

17 “(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary may not im-
18 pose any requirement other than the requirements speci-
19 fied under subsection (e)(1) before treating an employee
20 as a covered congressional employee for purposes of this
21 section.

22 “(c) NONRECOGNITION.—A covered congressional
23 employee may not be recognized as an agent or attorney
24 under this chapter.

1 “(d) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—None of the
2 amounts made available to carry out this section may be
3 used to design, develop, or administer any training for
4 purposes of providing training to covered congressional
5 employees.

6 “(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 “(1) The term ‘covered congressional employee’
8 means a permanent, full-time employee of a Member
9 of Congress—

10 “(A) whose responsibilities include assist-
11 ing the constituents of the Member with issues
12 regarding departments or agencies of the Fed-
13 eral Government;

14 “(B) who satisfies the criteria required by
15 the Secretary for recognition as an agent or at-
16 torney under this chapter; and

17 “(C) who is designated by the Member of
18 Congress as a covered congressional employee
19 for purposes of this section.

20 “(2) The term ‘database of the Veterans Bene-
21 fits Administration’ means any database of the Vet-
22 erans Benefits Administration in which the records
23 of veterans relating to claims for benefits under the
24 laws administered by the Secretary are retained, in-
25 cluding information regarding medical records, com-

1 pensation and pension exams records, rating deci-
2 sions, statements of the case, supplementary state-
3 ments of the case, notices of disagreement, Form-
4 9, and any successor form.

5 “(3) The term ‘Member of Congress’ means a
6 Representative, a Senator, a Delegate to Congress,
7 or the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico.”.

8 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
9 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding
10 at the end the following new item:

 “5906. Access of certain congressional employees to veteran records.”.

11 (c) NO AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—No additional funds are au-
13 thorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
14 or the amendments made by this section. This sec-
15 tion and such amendments may only be carried out
16 using amounts otherwise authorized to be appro-
17 priated.

18 (2) AMOUNTS OTHERWISE AVAILABLE.—For
19 the period of fiscal years 2018 through 2021, not
20 more than \$10,000,000 may be made available to
21 carry out section 5906 of title 38, United States
22 Code, as added by subsection (a).

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