

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 512

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 14, 2017

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

AN ACT

To amend 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Working to Integrate
3 Networks Guaranteeing Member Access Now Act” or the
4 “WINGMAN Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. PROVISION OF ACCESS TO CASE-TRACKING INFOR-**
6 **MATION.**

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

10 **“§ 5906. Access of certain congressional employees to**
11 **veteran records**

12 “(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The Secretary shall provide
13 to each veteran who submits a claim for benefits under
14 the laws administered by the Secretary an opportunity to
15 permit a covered congressional employee employed in the
16 office of the Member of Congress representing the district
17 where the veteran resides to have access to all of the
18 records of the veteran in the databases of the Veterans
19 Benefits Administration.

20 “(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law,
21 upon receipt of the permission from the veteran under
22 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide read-only ac-
23 cess to such records to such a covered congressional em-
24 ployee in a manner that does not allow such employee to
25 modify the data contained in such records or in any part
26 of a database of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

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

4 “(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary may not im-
5 pose any requirement other than the requirements speci-
6 fied under subsection (e)(1) before treating an employee
7 as a covered congressional employee for purposes of this
8 section.

9 “(c) NONRECOGNITION.—A covered congressional
10 employee may not be recognized as an agent or attorney
11 under this chapter.

12 “(d) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—None of the
13 amounts made available to carry out this section may be
14 used to design, develop, or administer any training for
15 purposes of providing training to covered congressional
16 employees.

17 “(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

18 “(1) The term ‘covered congressional employee’
19 means a permanent, full-time employee of a Member
20 of Congress—

21 “(A) whose responsibilities include assist-
22 ing the constituents of the Member with issues
23 regarding departments or agencies of the Fed-
24 eral Government;

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

4 “(C) who is designated by the Member of
5 Congress as a covered congressional employee
6 for purposes of this section.

7 “(2) The term ‘database of the Veterans Bene-
8 fits Administration’ means any database of the Vet-
9 erans Benefits Administration in which the records
10 of veterans relating to claims for benefits under the
11 laws administered by the Secretary are retained, in-
12 cluding information regarding medical records, com-
13 pensation and pension exams records, rating deci-
14 sions, statements of the case, supplementary state-
15 ments of the case, notices of disagreement, Form-
16 9, and any successor form.

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

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

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

23 (c) NO AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—No
24 additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to
25 carry out this section or the amendments made by this

1 section. This section and such amendments may only be
2 carried out using amounts otherwise authorized to be ap-
3 propriated, of which, during the period of fiscal years
4 2018 through 2021, not more than \$10,000,000 may be
5 obligated or expended for such purpose.

Passed the House of Representatives February 13,
2017.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.