

wide scope of scientific inquiry, including clinical research, health systems and outcomes research, and nursing education research;

Whereas nurses provide culturally and ethnically competent care and are educated to be sensitive to the regional and community customs of individuals needing care;

Whereas nurses are well-positioned to provide leadership to eliminate health care disparities that exist in the United States;

Whereas nurses are the cornerstone of the public health infrastructure, promoting healthy lifestyles and educating communities on disease prevention and health promotion;

Whereas nurses are strong allies to Congress as the nurses help inform, educate, and work closely with legislators to improve the education, retention, recruitment, and practice of all nurses and, more importantly, the health and safety of the patients for whom the nurses care;

Whereas strengthening nursing workforce development programs at all levels, including the number of doctorally prepared faculty members, and providing education to the nurse research scientists who can discover new nursing care models to improve the health status of the diverse population of the United States, are needed;

Whereas nurses touch the lives of the people of the United States from birth to the end of life; and

Whereas nursing has been voted as the most honest and ethical profession in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Nurses Week, as founded by the American Nurses Association;

(2) recognizes the significant contributions of nurses to the health care system in the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Nurses Week with appropriate recognition, ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate the importance of nurses to the everyday lives of patients.

**AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED**

SA 216. Mr. ALEXANDER (for Mr. GRASSLEY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 419, to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.

**TEXT OF AMENDMENTS**

**SA 216.** Mr. ALEXANDER (for Mr. GRASSLEY) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 419, to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the "Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act of 2017".

**SEC. 2. REPORTS.**

Section 1205 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting "Rules, regulations, and procedures issued under this part may include regulations based on standards developed by another Federal agency for programs related to public safety officer death or disability claims." before the last sentence;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting "(1)" before "In making"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(2) In making a determination under section 1201, the Bureau shall give substantial weight to the evidence and all findings of fact presented by a State, local, or Federal administrative or investigative agency regarding eligibility for death or disability benefits.

"(3) If the head of a State, local, or Federal administrative or investigative agency, in consultation with the principal legal officer of the agency, provides a certification of facts regarding eligibility for death or disability benefits, the Bureau shall adopt the factual findings, if the factual findings are supported by substantial evidence."; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(e)(1)(A) Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Bureau shall make available on the public website of the Bureau information on all death, disability, and educational assistance claims submitted under this part that are pending as of the date on which the information is made available.

"(B) Not less frequently than once per week, the Bureau shall make available on the public website of the Bureau updated information with respect to all death, disability, and educational assistance claims submitted under this part that are pending as of the date on which the information is made available.

"(C) The information made available under this paragraph shall include—

"(i) for each pending claim—

"(I) the date on which the claim was submitted to the Bureau;

"(II) the State of residence of the claimant;

"(III) an anonymized, identifying claim number; and

"(IV) the nature of the claim; and

"(ii) the total number of pending claims that were submitted to the Bureau more than 1 year before the date on which the information is made available.

"(2) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Bureau shall publish on the public website of the Bureau a report, and shall update such report on such website not less than once every 180 days thereafter, containing—

"(A) the total number of claims for which a final determination has been made during the 180-day period preceding the report;

"(B) the amount of time required to process each claim for which a final determination has been made during the 180-day period preceding the report;

"(C) as of the last day of the 180-day period preceding the report, the total number of claims submitted to the Bureau on or before that date for which a final determination has not been made;

"(D) as of the last day of the 180-day period preceding the report, the total number of claims submitted to the Bureau on or before the date that is 1 year before that date for which a final determination has not been made;

"(E) for each claim described in subparagraph (D), a detailed description of the basis for delay;

"(F) as of the last day of the 180-day period preceding the report, the total number of claims submitted to the Bureau on or before that date relating to exposure due to the September 11th, 2001, terrorism attacks for which a final determination has not been made;

"(G) as of the last day of the 180-day period preceding the report, the total number of claims submitted to the Bureau on or before the date that is 1 year before that date relat-

ing to exposure due to the September 11th, 2001, terrorism attacks for which a final determination has not been made;

"(H) for each claim described in subparagraph (G), a detailed description of the basis for delay;

"(I) the total number of claims submitted to the Bureau relating to exposure due to the September 11th, 2001, terrorism attacks for which a final determination was made during the 180-day period preceding the report, and the average award amount for any such claims that were approved;

"(J) the result of each claim for which a final determination was made during the 180-day period preceding the report, including the number of claims rejected and the basis for any denial of benefits;

"(K) the number of final determinations which were appealed during the 180-day period preceding the report, regardless of when the final determination was first made;

"(L) the average number of claims processed per reviewer of the Bureau during the 180-day period preceding the report;

"(M) for any claim submitted to the Bureau that required the submission of additional information from a public agency, and for which the public agency completed providing all of the required information during the 180-day period preceding the report, the average length of the period beginning on the date the public agency was contacted by the Bureau and ending on the date on which the public agency submitted all required information to the Bureau;

"(N) for any claim submitted to the Bureau for which the Bureau issued a subpoena to a public agency during the 180-day period preceding the report in order to obtain information or documentation necessary to determine the claim, the name of the public agency, the date on which the subpoena was issued, and the dates on which the public agency was contacted by the Bureau before the issuance of the subpoena; and

"(O) information on the compliance of the Bureau with the obligation to offset award amounts under section 1201(f)(3), including—

"(i) the number of claims that are eligible for compensation under both this part and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund of 2001 (49 U.S.C. 40101 note; Public Law 107-42) (commonly referred to as the 'VCF');

"(ii) for each claim described in clause (i) for which compensation has been paid under the VCF, the amount of compensation paid under the VCF;

"(iii) the number of claims described in clause (i) for which the Bureau has made a final determination; and

"(iv) the number of claims described in clause (i) for which the Bureau has not made a final determination.

"(3) Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, and 2 years thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

"(A) conduct a study on the compliance of the Bureau with the obligation to offset award amounts under section 1201(f)(3); and

"(B) submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under subparagraph (A) that includes an assessment of whether the Bureau has provided the information required under subparagraph (B)(ix) of paragraph (2) of this subsection in each report required under that paragraph.

"(4) In this subsection, the term 'nature of the claim' means whether the claim is a claim for—

"(A) benefits under this subpart with respect to the death of a public safety officer;

"(B) benefits under this subpart with respect to the disability of a public safety officer; or

"(C) education assistance under subpart 2."