

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2727

To establish a pilot program to improve information sharing between the Department of Defense and designated relatives and friends of members of the Armed Forces regarding the experiences and challenges of military service, particularly during and after overseas deployments, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 14, 2019

Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. BANKS, and Mrs. DAVIS of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 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

A BILL

To establish a pilot program to improve information sharing between the Department of Defense and designated relatives and friends of members of the Armed Forces regarding the experiences and challenges of military service, particularly during and after overseas deployments, 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 “Sergeant Daniel
3 Somers Network of Support Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM TO IMPROVE INFORMATION SHAR-**
5 **ING BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**
6 **AND DESIGNATED RELATIVES AND FRIENDS**
7 **OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES RE-**
8 **GARDING THE EXPERIENCES AND CHAL-**
9 **LENGES OF MILITARY SERVICE.**

10 (a) PILOT PROGRAM DESCRIBED.—

11 (1) PURPOSE.—Not later than one year after
12 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
13 of Defense shall seek to enter into an agreement
14 with the American Red Cross to carry out a pilot
15 program under which—

16 (A) the American Red Cross—

17 (i) encourages a member of the
18 Armed Forces, upon the enlistment or ap-
19 pointment of such member, to designate up
20 to 15 persons to whom information regard-
21 ing the military service of such member
22 shall be disseminated using contact infor-
23 mation obtained under paragraph (5); and

24 (ii) provides such persons, within 30
25 days after the date on which such persons
26 were designated under clause (i), the op-

1 tion to elect to receive such information re-
2 garding military service; and

3 (B) the Secretary of Defense disseminates,
4 not less frequently than quarterly, such infor-
5 mation to such persons who elect to receive
6 such information under subparagraph (A)(ii).

7 (2) TYPES OF INFORMATION.—The types of in-
8 formation to be disseminated by the Secretary of
9 Defense to persons who elect to receive information
10 under the pilot program shall include information re-
11 garding—

12 (A) aspects of daily life and routine experi-
13 enced by members of the Armed Forces;

14 (B) the challenges and stresses of military
15 service, particularly during and after deploy-
16 ment as part of a contingency operation;

17 (C) the services available to members of
18 the Armed Forces and the dependents of such
19 members to cope with the experiences and chal-
20 lenges of military service;

21 (D) benefits administered by the Secretary
22 of Defense for members of the Armed Forces
23 and the dependents of such members;

24 (E) a toll-free telephone number through
25 which such persons who elect to receive infor-

1 mation under the pilot program may request in-
2 formation regarding the program; and

3 (F) such other information as the Sec-
4 retary of Defense, in consultation with members
5 of the Armed Forces and such persons who
6 elect to receive information under the pilot pro-
7 gram, determines to be appropriate.

8 (3) PRIVACY OF INFORMATION.—In carrying
9 out the pilot program under paragraph (1), the Sec-
10 retary of Defense may not disseminate information
11 under paragraph (2) in violation of laws and regula-
12 tions pertaining to the privacy of members of the
13 Armed Forces, including requirements pursuant
14 to—

15 (A) section 552a of title 5, United States
16 Code; and

17 (B) the Health Insurance Portability and
18 Accountability Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–
19 191).

20 (4) NOTICE AND MODIFICATIONS.—In carrying
21 out the pilot program under paragraph (1), the Sec-
22 retary of Defense shall, with respect to a member of
23 the Armed Forces—

1 (A) ensure that such member is notified of
2 the ability to modify designations made by the
3 member under paragraph (1)(A); and

4 (B) upon the request of a member, author-
5 ize the member to modify such designations at
6 any time.

7 (5) CONTACT INFORMATION.—In making a des-
8 igation under the pilot program, a member of the
9 Armed Forces shall provide necessary contact infor-
10 mation, specifically including an email address, to
11 facilitate the dissemination of information regarding
12 the military service of the member.

13 (6) OPT-OUT OF PROGRAM.—In carrying out
14 the pilot program under paragraph (1), the Sec-
15 retary of Defense shall, with respect to a person who
16 has elected to receive information under such pilot
17 program, cease disseminating such information to
18 that person upon request of such person.

19 (b) SURVEY AND REPORT ON PILOT PROGRAM.—

20 (1) SURVEY.—Not later than two years after
21 the date on which the pilot program commences, the
22 Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Amer-
23 ican Red Cross, shall administer a survey to persons
24 who elected to receive information under the pilot
25 program, for the purpose of receiving feedback re-

1 garding the quality of information disseminated
2 under this section, including whether such informa-
3 tion appropriately reflects the military career pro-
4 gression of members of the Armed Forces.

5 (2) REPORT.—Not later than three years after
6 the date on which the pilot program commences, the
7 Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congres-
8 sional defense committees a report on the pilot pro-
9 gram which includes—

10 (A) the results of the survey administered
11 under paragraph (1);

12 (B) a determination as to whether the pilot
13 program should be made permanent; and

14 (C) recommendations as to modifications
15 necessary to improve the program if made per-
16 manent.

17 (3) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES
18 DEFINED.—The term “congressional defense com-
19 mittees” has the meaning given that term in section
20 101 of title 10, United States Code.

21 (c) TERMINATION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—The pilot
22 program shall terminate upon submission of the report re-
23 quired by subsection (b)(2).

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