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119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 11000

To amend title 38, United States Code, to promote the establishment of veterans cemeteries, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 11, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to promote the establishment of veterans cemeteries, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Veterans Cemetery Access Modernization Act''.

SEC. 2. VETERANS CEMETERIES: PRIORITY IN GRANTS TO ESTABLISH; REPORTS; PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH NATIONAL CEMETERIES.

(a) PRIORITY IN GRANTS TO STATES, COUNTIES, AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF VETERANS' CEMETERIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2408 of title 38, United States Code, is amended, in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3)(A) In determining whether to make a grant under paragraph (1) for the purpose of establishing a veterans' cemetery, the Secretary shall give priority to an application in which the proposed site of the cemetery is a site described in subparagraph (B).

''(B) A site described in this subparagraph is located—

''(i)(I) in a State that contains an area described in subparagraph (C); and

''(II) within 75 miles driving distance of a center of population in such area; or

''(ii)(I) outside the State in which an area described in subparagraph (C) is located; and

''(II) within 35 miles driving distance of a center of population in such area.

''(C) An area described in this subparagraph is an area in the United States in which reside more than 10,000 veterans described in subparagraph (D).

''(D) A veteran described in this subparagraph is a veteran—

''(i) who is eligible for interment in a national cemetery under section 2402 of this title; and

''(ii) who does not reside within 75 miles driving distance of an open—

''(I) national cemetery under the control of the National Cemetery Administration under section 2402 of this title; or

''(II) veterans' cemetery owned by a State or county.''.

(2) EXEMPTION OF GRANTS TO TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—Such section is further amended in subsection (g)(2) by inserting '', except that paragraph (3) of subsection (a) shall not apply to an application for a grant by a tribal organization'' before the period at the end.

(3) CENTER OF POPULATION DEFINED.—Such section is further amended in subsection (l) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) The term 'center of population' means the center of population of a census tract delineated by

the United States Bureau of the Census in the most recent decennial census.''.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Section 2408 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (l), as amended, as subsection (m); and

(B) by inserting, after subsection (k), the following new subsection (l):

''(l)(1) Not less frequently than once every two years, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and publish on a publicly accessible website of the Department, a report that identifies each area described in subsection (a)(3)(C).

''(2) A report under this subsection shall include the following elements:

''(A) The number of veterans described in subsection (a)(3)(D) that reside in each such area.

''(B) The location of the cemetery described in subsection (a)(3)(D)(ii) that is closest to each such area.

''(C) The average driving distance to each such cemetery from a center of population in such area.

''(3) This subsection shall cease to be effective on the day that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of the Veterans Cemetery Access Modernization Act.''.

(2) DUE DATE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit the first report under subsection (l) of such section, as amended by this subsection, not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH NATIONAL CEMETERIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2404 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j)(1) Not less than once annually, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and publish on a publicly accessible website of the Department, a report containing proposals of the Secretary to establish not fewer than three new national cemeteries—

''(A) each of which—

''(i) is located in an area identified in the most recent report under section 2408(l) of this title; and

''(ii) has not been the subject of a proposal included in a previous report under this subsection; and

''(B) one of which shall be located in such an area in which reside fewer than 25,000 veterans described in section 2408(a)(3)(D) of this title, if the Secretary identifies such an area.

''(2) A proposal under paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

''(A) The location of the proposed national cemetery.

''(B) The number of veterans described in section 2408(a)(3)(D) of this title who reside within 75 miles driving distance of the proposed national cemetery.

''(C) The estimated cost to the United States to establish the proposed national cemetery.

''(3) The Secretary shall select locations for proposed national cemeteries under this subsection in the descending order of priority on the following bases:

''(A) Locations in areas with the greatest average driving distance reported under section 2408(l)(2)(C) of this title.

''(B) Locations in areas that have the greatest number of veterans described in section 2408(a)(3)(D) of this title.

''(4) In preparing proposals under this subsection, the Secretary may consult with State, local, and Tribal entities.

''(5) This subsection shall cease to be effective on the day that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of the Veterans Cemetery Access Modernization Act.''.

(2) DUE DATE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit the first report under subsection (j) of such section, as amended by paragraph (1), not later than one year after the day on which the Secretary submits the first report under section 2408(l) of such title, as amended by this Act.

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