

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3503

To establish a national Civilian Volunteer Service Reserve program, a national volunteer service corps ready for service in response to domestic or international emergencies.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 17, 2003

Mr. RANGEL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To establish a national Civilian Volunteer Service Reserve program, a national volunteer service corps ready for service in response to domestic or international emergencies.

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 “Civilian Volunteer
5 Service Reserve Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The changing threats and issues that face
2 the Nation require a new and innovative approach to
3 mobilizing the citizenry in times of need.

4 (2) The Civilian Volunteer Service Reserve pro-
5 gram offers a flexible approach to the needs of spe-
6 cific crises, such as natural disasters, incidents of
7 terrorism, or other emergencies at home or abroad.

8 (3) Citizenship entails responsibilities as well as
9 rights. The Civilian Volunteer Service Reserve pro-
10 gram will challenge all Americans to sacrifice for
11 their country.

12 (4) The Civilian Volunteer Service Reserve pro-
13 gram will make it possible to draw on the vast array
14 of skills and the ingenuity of ordinary Americans in
15 times of need.

16 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.**

17 The Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish
18 the Civilian Volunteer Service Reserve (referred to in this
19 Act as the “Civilian Reserve”), a national volunteer serv-
20 ice corps ready for service in response to domestic or inter-
21 national emergencies, or other circumstances determined
22 by the President pursuant to section 6.

23 **SEC. 4. GENERAL AUTHORITY.**

24 The Secretary of Homeland Security shall appoint a
25 Director and such other officers as the Secretary considers

1 appropriate to organize and administer the Civilian Re-
2 serve program consistent with the provisions of this Act.
3 The Secretary is authorized to promulgate regulations
4 necessary to carry out this Act.

5 **SEC. 5. ELIGIBILITY, COMMITMENT, AND REGISTRATION.**

6 (a) **ELIGIBILITY.**—All citizens and legal residents of
7 the United States over the age of 18 shall be eligible to
8 serve in the Civilian Reserve.

9 (b) **COMMITMENT.**—Individuals who volunteer with
10 the Civilian Reserve shall be enrolled for a 5-year period,
11 and shall be expected during such period to serve in full-
12 time active duty status for a total period of 6 months,
13 when called to such service under section 6. There shall
14 be no limit to the number of 5-year periods of service that
15 an individual may register to serve.

16 (c) **REGISTRATION.**—Registration for the Civilian Re-
17 serve shall be administered in a manner determined by
18 the Secretary of Homeland Security. At minimum, such
19 registration shall include—

20 (1) the applicant's name, address, telephone
21 number, Social Security number, and E-mail ad-
22 dress;

23 (2) the applicant's occupation, areas of study,
24 and skills; and

1 (3) the applicant's preference for local, na-
2 tional, or international service.

3 **SEC. 6. MOBILIZATION.**

4 (a) MOBILIZATION.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall have the
6 authority to issue a voluntary call to action by
7 issuing an executive order to mobilize certain mem-
8 bers of the Civilian Reserve to full-time active duty
9 status for a period not exceeding 6 months, in order
10 to meet the pressing needs of the Nation in times
11 of emergency, as determined by the President in
12 consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Secu-
13 rity.

14 (2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting members of
15 the Civilian Reserve to call to action pursuant to
16 paragraph (1), the President shall consider the rel-
17 evant skills required by the emergency, the geo-
18 graphic location of the volunteers, and the logistics
19 of such a mobilization.

20 (3) METHODOLOGY OF CALL TO ACTION.—To
21 the extent practicable, for a voluntary call to action
22 issued under paragraph (1), members of the Civilian
23 Reserve shall be contacted via telephone, E-mail,
24 and mail service.

1 (b) VOLUNTARY ACCEPTANCE OF CALL TO AC-
2 TION.—Members of the Civilian Reserve may choose to ac-
3 cept a call to action issued pursuant to subsection (a)(1)
4 and enter full-time active duty status for the period speci-
5 fied in such call to action, not exceeding 6 months. Mem-
6 bers of the Civilian Reserve may also decline such a call
7 to action, so long as such members remain committed to
8 serving in full-time active duty status for some period or
9 periods, not to exceed a total of 6 months, during their
10 5-year enrollment.

11 (c) MANDATORY SERVICE.—The President may,
12 under extreme circumstances, issue a mandatory mobiliza-
13 tion of members of the Civilian Reserve, requiring such
14 members to begin full-time active duty service for a period
15 not exceeding 6 months. Such mobilization may apply to
16 any members of the Civilian Reserve notwithstanding
17 whether such members have fulfilled their expected 6-
18 month period of service described in section 5(b) prior to
19 such mandatory mobilization. Exemptions from such man-
20 datory service shall be made for hardship due to family
21 or other circumstances, upon appeal by an individual
22 member of the Civilian Reserve.

23 **SEC. 7. FULL-TIME ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE AND BENEFITS.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Members of the Civilian Reserve
25 serving in full-time active duty status shall work side-by-

1 side with officers and agencies of the Federal, State, and
2 local governments, non-profit and non-governmental orga-
3 nizations, supplementing but not supplanting existing sys-
4 tems for responding to emergencies and other pressing
5 needs.

6 (b) TRANSPORTATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS.—The
7 Civilian Reserve program shall provide members serving
8 in full-time active duty status with any necessary trans-
9 portation and accommodations in order to facilitate such
10 service.

11 (c) STIPEND.—Members of the Civilian Reserve serv-
12 ing in full-time active duty status shall receive a stipend
13 in order to pay for necessary cost of living expenses, for
14 such period of full-time active duty status. The amount
15 of the stipend shall be determined by the Secretary of
16 Homeland Security.

17 (d) HEALTH INSURANCE.—Members of the Civilian
18 Reserve serving in full-time active duty status shall be eli-
19 gible for health insurance under a program to be estab-
20 lished, by regulation, by the Secretary of Homeland Secu-
21 rity.

22 (e) REEMPLOYMENT PROTECTION.—The Secretary
23 of Homeland Security shall promulgate regulations to pro-
24 vide reemployment protection and other benefits for mem-

1 bers of the Civilian Reserve who complete a period of full-
2 time active duty service.

3 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
5 retary of Homeland Security such sums as may be nec-
6 essary for fiscal years 2005 through 2009 to carry out
7 this Act.

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