

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1282

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish national cemeteries for geographically underserved populations of veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 18, 2003

Mr. GRAHAM of Florida (for himself, Mr. NELSON of Florida, and Mr. SESSIONS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish national cemeteries for geographically underserved populations of veterans, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CEMETERIES**
4 **FOR GEOGRAPHICALLY UNDERSERVED POP-**
5 **ULATIONS OF VETERANS.**

6 (a) IDENTIFICATION OF UNDERSERVED BURIAL
7 SERVICE AREAS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall
8 identify the 10 burial service areas in the United States
9 that, as determined by the Secretary, are most in need

1 of a new national cemetery in order to ensure that 90 per-
2 cent of the veterans who reside in each such service area
3 live within 75 miles of a national cemetery.

4 (b) BURIAL SERVICE AREA.—For purposes of this
5 section, the term “burial service area” means a service
6 area for burial in national cemeteries that is established
7 by the Secretary utilizing the most current population
8 data available to the Secretary as of the date of the enact-
9 ment of this Act, which service area—

- 10 (1) has a radius of approximately 75 miles;
11 (2) contains a minimum population of veterans
12 of approximately 170,000 veterans; and
13 (3) is not served as of the date of the enact-
14 ment of this Act by a national cemetery or State
15 cemetery for veterans.

16 (c) ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CEMETERIES.—
17 The Secretary shall establish, in accordance with chapter
18 24 of title 38, United States Code, a national cemetery
19 in each burial service area identified under subsection (a)
20 in order to serve the burial needs of veterans and their
21 families.

22 (d) ADVANCE PLANNING.—(1) The Secretary shall
23 carry out in fiscal year 2004 such activities as the Sec-
24 retary considers appropriate for advance planning for the
25 establishment of national cemeteries under subsection (c).

1 (2) Amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2004 for the
2 advance planning fund in the Construction, Major
3 Projects account shall be available for activities under
4 paragraph (1).

5 (e) REPORTS.—(1) Not later than 120 days after the
6 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall sub-
7 mit to Congress a report on the establishment of national
8 cemeteries under subsection (c). The report shall set forth
9 the following:

10 (A) Each burial service area identified by the
11 Secretary under subsection (a) to require the estab-
12 lishment of a national cemetery under subsection
13 (c).

14 (B) A schedule for the establishment of each
15 such national cemetery.

16 (C) An estimate of the costs of the establish-
17 ment of each such national cemetery.

18 (D) The amount to be obligated under sub-
19 section (d) during fiscal year 2004 for advance plan-
20 ning required under that subsection.

21 (2) Not later than one year after the date of the re-
22 port under paragraph (1), and annually thereafter until
23 the completion of each national cemetery required by sub-
24 section (c), the Secretary shall submit to Congress an up-

- 1 date of the report under that paragraph (as previously up-
- 2 dated, if at all, under this paragraph).

