

110TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 5148

To amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from collecting certain debts owed to the United States by members of the Armed Forces and veterans who die as a result of an injury incurred or aggravated on active duty in a combat zone, and for other purposes.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 28, 2008

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

---

## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from collecting certain debts owed to the United States by members of the Armed Forces and veterans who die as a result of an injury incurred or aggravated on active duty in a combat zone, 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. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Combat Veterans Debt  
5       Elimination Act of 2008”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON COLLECTION OF CERTAIN IN-**  
2 **DEBTEDNESS OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED**  
3 **FORCES AND VETERANS WHO DIE OF INJURY**  
4 **INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED IN SERVICE ON**  
5 **ACTIVE DUTY IN A COMBAT ZONE.**

6 (a) PROHIBITION.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 53 of title 38,  
8 United States Code, is amended by inserting after  
9 section 5302 the following new section:

10 **“§ 5302A. Prohibition on collection of indebtedness:**  
11 **certain debts of members of the Armed**  
12 **Forces and veterans who die of injury in-**  
13 **curred or aggravated on active duty in a**  
14 **combat zone**

15 “(a) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary may not collect  
16 all or any part of an amount owed to the United States  
17 by a member of the Armed Forces or veteran described  
18 in subsection (b) under any program under the laws ad-  
19 ministered by the Secretary, other than a program re-  
20 ferred to in subsection (c).

21 “(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—A member of the  
22 Armed Forces or veteran described in this subsection is  
23 any member or veteran who dies as a result of an injury  
24 incurred or aggravated while serving in a theater of com-  
25 bat operations (as determined by the Secretary in con-  
26 sultation with the Secretary of Defense) in a war or in

1 combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities  
 2 (as that term is defined in section 1712A(a)(2)(B) of this  
 3 title) after September 11, 2001.

4 “(c) INAPPLICABILITY TO HOUSING AND SMALL  
 5 BUSINESS BENEFIT PROGRAMS.—The prohibition in sub-  
 6 section (a) shall not apply to any amounts owed the  
 7 United States under any program carried out under chap-  
 8 ter 37 of this title.”.

9 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
 10 tions at the beginning of chapter 53 of such title is  
 11 amended by inserting after the item relating to sec-  
 12 tion 5302 the following new item:

“5302A. Prohibition on collection of indebtedness: certain debts of members of  
 the Armed Forces and veterans who die of injury incurred or  
 aggravated on active duty in a combat zone.”.

13 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
 14 this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment  
 15 of this Act, and shall apply with respect to collections of  
 16 indebtedness of members of the Armed Forces and vet-  
 17 erans who die on or after September 11, 2001.

○