

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1272

To establish the National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 2, 2007

Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. ISAKSON) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To establish the National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

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 “Yellow Ribbon Re-
5 integration Program Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL GUARD YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRA-**
7 **TION PROGRAM.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Defense, in
9 coordination with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau,
10 shall establish a national combat veteran reintegration

1 program to provide National Guard members and their
2 families with sufficient information, services, referral, and
3 proactive outreach opportunities throughout the entire de-
4 ployment cycle. This program shall be known as the Yel-
5 low Ribbon Reintegration Program.

6 (b) PURPOSE.—The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration
7 Program shall consist of informational events and activi-
8 ties for Reserve Component members, their families, and
9 community members through the four phases of the de-
10 ployment cycle:

- 11 (1) Pre-deployment.
- 12 (2) Deployment.
- 13 (3) Demobilization.
- 14 (4) Post-deployment-reconstitution.

15 (c) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary and National
16 Guard Bureau Chief shall consult with the following par-
17 ties during establishment of the program:

18 (1) The Adjutant General of the Minnesota Na-
19 tional Guard and officials associated with the State’s
20 “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon” Reintegration Pro-
21 gram.

22 (2) Adjutants General of the remaining 53
23 States and territories.

24 (d) ORGANIZATION.—

1 (1) EXECUTIVE AGENT.—The Secretary shall
2 designate the National Guard Bureau as the Depart-
3 ment of Defense executive agent for the Yellow Rib-
4 bon Reintegration Program.

5 (2) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE FOR RE-
6 INTEGRATION PROGRAMS.—

7 (A) IN GENERAL.—The National Guard
8 Bureau shall establish the Office for Reintegra-
9 tion Programs within the National Guard Bu-
10 reau Joint Staff. This office shall administer all
11 reintegration programs in coordination with
12 State National Guard organizations.

13 (B) OFFICE COMPOSITION.—The Office for
14 Reintegration Programs shall consist of six full-
15 time National Guard Bureau personnel to ad-
16 minister the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Pro-
17 gram. The office shall be responsible for coordi-
18 nation with existing National Guard family and
19 support programs. The Directors of the Army
20 National Guard and Air National Guard may
21 appoint liaison officers to work with the perma-
22 nent office staff. The office shall closely coordi-
23 nate with the Army National Guard and Air
24 National Guard Directorates for Manpower and
25 Personnel with respect to existing family sup-

1 port structure, mobilization schedules, training
2 schedules, training plans and programs, and
3 any other personnel issues.

4 (3) ADVISORY BOARD.—

5 (A) APPOINTMENT.—The Chief of the Na-
6 tional Guard Bureau shall appoint an advisory
7 board to analyze and report areas of success
8 and areas for necessary improvements. The ad-
9 visory board shall include, but is not limited to,
10 the Director of the Army National Guard, the
11 Director of the Air National Guard, the Assist-
12 ant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs,
13 an Adjutant General on a rotational basis as
14 determined by the Chief of the National Guard
15 Bureau, the Director of the National Guard
16 Bureau Manpower and Personnel Directorate
17 (J-1), and any other Department of Defense,
18 Federal Government agency, or outside organi-
19 zation as determined by the Chief of the Na-
20 tional Guard Bureau. The members of the advi-
21 sory board may designate representatives in
22 their stead.

23 (B) SCHEDULE.—The advisory board shall
24 meet on a schedule as determined by the Chief
25 of the National Guard Bureau.

1 (C) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—The ad-
2 visory board shall issue internal reports as nec-
3 essary and shall submit an initial report to the
4 Committees on Armed Services not later than
5 180 days after the end of a one-year period
6 from establishment of the Office for Reintegra-
7 tion Programs. This report shall contain—

8 (i) an evaluation of the reintegration
9 program's implementation by State Na-
10 tional Guard organizations;

11 (ii) an assessment of any unmet re-
12 source requirements;

13 (iii) an assessment of the reintegra-
14 tion program's inclusion of other Reserve
15 Component service members and the neces-
16 sity for further expansion to incorporate all
17 the Reserve Components; and

18 (iv) recommendations regarding closer
19 coordination between the Office of Re-
20 integration Programs and State National
21 Guard organizations.

22 The advisory board shall submit annual reports
23 to the Committees on Armed Services following
24 this initial report by the first week in March.

1 (4) ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTER FOR EXCEL-
2 LENCE IN REINTEGRATION.—The Chief shall estab-
3 lish a Center for Excellence in Reintegration. The
4 Center shall collect and analyze “lessons learned”
5 and suggestions from State National Guard organi-
6 zations with existing or developing reintegration pro-
7 grams. The Center shall also assist in developing
8 training aids and briefing materials and training
9 representatives from State National Guard organiza-
10 tions.

11 (5) STATE DEPLOYMENT CYCLE SUPPORT
12 TEAMS.—The Office for Reintegration Programs
13 shall employ 270 full-time employees to administer
14 the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program at the
15 State level. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau
16 shall assign State Deployment Cycle Support Team
17 members based on State need, geographical disper-
18 sion, and military population. The Office for Re-
19 integration Programs is encouraged to employ
20 wounded service members and returning combat vet-
21 erans whenever possible. The primary function of
22 team members should be—

23 (A) developing and managing the re-
24 integration curriculum;

1 (B) contracting and recruiting for nec-
2 essary service providers; and

3 (C) ensuring that providers' skills adapt to
4 the unique military nature of the reintegration
5 program.

6 (e) PROGRAM.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Office for Reintegration
8 Programs shall analyze the demographics, placement
9 of State Family Assistance Centers (FAC), and
10 FAC resources before a mobilization alert is issued
11 to affected State National Guard organizations. The
12 Office of Reintegration Programs shall consult with
13 affected State National Guard organizations fol-
14 lowing the issuance of a mobilization alert and im-
15 plement the reintegration events in accordance with
16 the Reintegration Program phase model.

17 (2) PRE-DEPLOYMENT PHASE.—The Pre-De-
18 ployment Phase shall constitute the time from first
19 notification of mobilization until deployment of the
20 mobilized National Guard unit. Events and activities
21 shall focus on providing education and ensuring the
22 readiness of service members, families, and commu-
23 nities for the rigors of a combat deployment and
24 shall include the following:

25 (A) Service member readiness.

1 (B) Marriage counseling.

2 (C) Youth counseling.

3 (D) Family counseling.

4 (E) Single service member counseling.

5 (F) Information on resources available to
6 service members and families.

7 (G) Introduction to the Military OneSource
8 program.

9 (H) Department of Veterans Affairs re-
10 sources.

11 (I) Small business planning.

12 (J) Financial planning and education.

13 (3) DEPLOYMENT PHASE.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Deployment Phase
15 shall constitute the period from deployment of
16 the mobilized National Guard unit until the
17 unit arrives at a demobilization station inside
18 the continental United States. Events and serv-
19 ices provided shall focus on the challenges and
20 stress associated with separation and having a
21 service member in a combat zone. Events and
22 services include support activities listed in sub-
23 paragraph (B) and reintegration preparation
24 activities listed in subparagraph (C). Informa-
25 tion sessions should utilize State National

1 Guard resources in coordination with the Em-
2 ployer Support of Guard and Reserve Office,
3 Transition Assistance Advisors, and the State
4 Family Programs Director.

5 (B) SUPPORT ACTIVITIES.—

6 (i) Youth counseling.

7 (ii) Family counseling.

8 (iii) Community outreach.

9 (iv) Continued contact with spouses
10 and parents.

11 (v) Information on resources available
12 to family members, to include access to
13 Military OneSource and child care.

14 (vi) TRICARE and healthcare.

15 (vii) Military pay and allowances.

16 (C) REINTEGRATION PREPARATION ACTIVI-
17 TIES.—

18 (i) FAMILY INFORMATION SES-
19 SIONS.—Family information sessions
20 should prepare family members for the
21 homecoming of their service member and
22 to inform them on what they can do to
23 make this transition as easy as possible.
24 The sessions are designed to increase the
25 family member's knowledge of the re-

1 integration process and to provide re-
2 sources to them as they go through the
3 steps of reintegration. Information sessions
4 should be offered at locations and times so
5 as to accommodate as many family mem-
6 bers as possible.

7 (ii) COMMUNITY INFORMATION SES-
8 SIONS.—The Community information ses-
9 sions should educate community leaders,
10 clergy, schools, employers, mental health
11 professionals, and family readiness groups
12 (FRG) about the challenges of reintegra-
13 tion, and what they can do to assist com-
14 bat veterans and their families to success-
15 fully reintegrate back into the community.
16 Information sessions should be offered at
17 locations and times so as to accommodate
18 as many participants as possible.

19 (4) DEMOBILIZATION PHASE.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Demobilization
21 Phase shall constitute the period from arrival of
22 the National Guard unit at the demobilization
23 station until its departure for home station. In
24 the interest of returning service members as
25 soon as possible to their home stations, re-

1 integration briefings during the Demobilization
2 Phase shall be minimized. State Deployment
3 Cycle Support Teams are encouraged, however,
4 to assist demobilizing service members in enroll-
5 ing in the Department of Veterans Affairs sys-
6 tem using form 1010EZ during the Demobiliza-
7 tion Phase. State Deployment Cycle Support
8 Teams may provide other events from the Ini-
9 tial Reintegration Activity as determined by the
10 State National Guard organizations. Remaining
11 events shall be conducted during the Post-De-
12 ployment-Reconstitution Phase.

13 (B) INITIAL REINTEGRATION ACTIVITY.—

14 The purpose of this reintegration program is to
15 educate service members about the resources
16 that are available to them and to connect serv-
17 ice members to service providers who can assist
18 them in overcoming the challenges of reintegra-
19 tion. The Initial Reintegration Activity should
20 include, but is not limited to—

- 21 (i) informing service members of their
22 veterans' benefits;
- 23 (ii) assisting with unemployment and
24 enrollment in employment transition serv-
25 ices;

1 (iii) a driver safety briefing given by
2 qualified law enforcement officials;

3 (iv) identification of high-risk service
4 members and establishment of plans for
5 follow-on care;

6 (v) identification of service members
7 requiring follow-on health care;

8 (vi) legal briefings and legal assist-
9 ance; and

10 (vii) an opportunity for sexual assault
11 victims to confidentially report such
12 crimes.

13 (5) POST-DEPLOYMENT-RECONSTITUTION
14 PHASE.—

15 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Post-Deployment-
16 Reconstitution Phase shall constitute the period
17 from arrival at home station until 180 days fol-
18 lowing demobilization. Activities and services
19 provided shall focus on reconnecting service
20 members with their families and communities
21 and providing resources and information nec-
22 essary for successful reintegration. Reintegra-
23 tion events shall begin with elements of the Ini-
24 tial Reintegration Activity program that were
25 not completed during the Demobilization Phase.

1 (B) 30-DAY, 60-DAY, AND 90-DAY RE-
2 INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES.—The State National
3 Guard organizations shall hold reintegration ac-
4 tivities at the 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day inter-
5 val following demobilization. These activities
6 shall focus on reconnecting service members
7 and family members with the service providers
8 from Initial Reintegration Activity to ensure
9 service members and their families understand
10 what benefits they are entitled to and what re-
11 sources are available to help them overcome the
12 challenges of reintegration. The Reintegration
13 Activities should also provide a forum for serv-
14 ice members and families to address negative
15 behaviors related to combat stress and transi-
16 tion. One of the Reintegration Activities shall
17 be for service members only to conduct a thor-
18 ough Post-Deployment Health Re-Assessment
19 (PDHRA) of combat veterans and provide any
20 remaining medical or dental services. Activities,
21 events, and services provided at the 30-day, 60-
22 day, and 90-day Reintegration Activities shall
23 include, but not be limited to—

24 (i) PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES.—

1 (I) Battlemind Training II for
2 service members and their families.

3 (II) Prevention and Relationship
4 Enhancement Program (PREP) Mar-
5 riage Enrichment Workshop to focus
6 on assisting service members to recon-
7 nect with their spouses.

8 (III) Single service member chal-
9 lenges workshop.

10 (IV) Parenting workshop to as-
11 sist service members to reconnect with
12 their children.

13 (V) Local services station pro-
14 gram with representatives from legal,
15 TRICARE, Education Services, the
16 Department of Veterans Affairs, State
17 Veterans Centers, State Workforce of-
18 fices, chaplain's office, County Vet-
19 erans Service Officers, Military
20 OneSource, State tax officials, State
21 Youth Programs, and National Guard
22 unit administration offices.

23 (VI) Anger management work-
24 shop.

25 (VII) Substance abuse workshop.

1 (VIII) Gambling abuse workshop.

2 (IX) Law enforcement briefing.

3 (X) TRICARE and Military
4 OneSource representatives.

5 (XI) PDHRA with on-site sup-
6 port from Department of Veterans Af-
7 fairs Medical Centers, State veterans'
8 office representatives, and case man-
9 agers provided by the Department of
10 Defense.

11 (XII) Periodic Health Assess-
12 ment (PHA), if not provided during
13 the Demobilization Phase.

14 (XIII) Hearing audiogram, if not
15 provided during the Demobilization
16 Phase.

17 (XIV) Dental examination, if not
18 provided during the Demobilization
19 Phase.

20 (XV) Tuberculosis test.

21 (XVI) Reintegration program as-
22 sessment.

23 (XVII) Completion of any pend-
24 ing personnel or administrative ac-
25 tions.

1 (ii) SERVICE MEMBER PAY.—Service
2 members shall receive appropriate pay for
3 days spent attending the Reintegration Ac-
4 tivities.

5 (C) MONTHLY INDIVIDUAL REINTEGRA-
6 TION PROGRAM.—The Office for Reintegration
7 Programs, in coordination with State National
8 Guard organizations, shall offer a monthly re-
9 integration program for individual service mem-
10 bers released from active duty or formerly in a
11 medical hold status. The program shall focus on
12 the special needs of this service member subset
13 and the Office for Reintegration Programs shall
14 develop an appropriate program of services and
15 information.

16 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the
17 purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized
18 to be appropriated \$23,000,000 for subsection (d) and
19 such sums as may be necessary for subsection (e).

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