

111TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4043

To amend title 10, United States Code, to recognize the spouses of members of the Armed Forces who are serving in combat or have served in combat through the presentation of an official lapel button.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 6, 2009

Ms. SHEA-PORTER (for herself and Mr. JONES) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To amend title 10, United States Code, to recognize the spouses of members of the Armed Forces who are serving in combat or have served in combat through the presentation of an official lapel button.

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 “Military Spouse Pin  
5       Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOGNITION OF**  
2 **SPOUSES OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED**  
3 **FORCES SERVING IN COMBAT.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PRESENTATION OF LAPEL  
5 BUTTON.—Chapter 57 of title 10, United States Code, is  
6 amended by inserting after section 1126 the following new  
7 section:

8 **“§ 1126a. Spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel button:**  
9 **eligibility and presentation**

10 “(a) DESIGN AND ELIGIBILITY.—A lapel button, to  
11 be known as the spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel button,  
12 shall be designed, as approved by the Secretary of De-  
13 fense, to identify and recognize the spouse of a member  
14 of the armed forces who is serving in a combat zone for  
15 a period of more than 30 days.

16 “(b) PRESENTATION.—Under regulations to be pre-  
17 scribed by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary con-  
18 cerned shall present one spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel  
19 button without cost to the spouse of a member described  
20 in subsection (a) as soon as practicable after the member  
21 completes 30 days of service in a combat zone.

22 “(c) LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF BUTTONS.—(1)  
23 Not more than one spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel but-  
24 ton may be presented to the spouse of a member, regard-  
25 less of the number of times the member serves in a combat  
26 zone.

1       “(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), if subsequent  
 2 service by a member in a combat zone occurs while the  
 3 member is married to a different spouse, a spouse-of-a-  
 4 combat-veteran lapel button shall be presented to the cur-  
 5 rent spouse under this section.

6       “(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), if a spouse-of-  
 7 a-combat-veteran lapel button presented under this section  
 8 has been lost, destroyed, or rendered unfit for use without  
 9 fault or neglect on the part of the spouse to whom it was  
 10 furnished, the Secretary concerned may replace the lapel  
 11 button upon application and payment of an amount suffi-  
 12 cient to cover the cost of manufacture and presentation.

13       “(d) EXCEPTION TO TIME PERIOD REQUIREMENT.—  
 14 The 30-day periods specified in subsections (a) and (b)  
 15 do not apply if the member is killed or wounded in the  
 16 combat zone before the expiration the period.

17       “(e) COMBAT ZONE DEFINED.—The term ‘combat  
 18 zone’ has the meaning given that term in section 112(c)(2)  
 19 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.”.

20       (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
 21 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting  
 22 after the item relating to section 1126 the following new  
 23 item:

“1126a. Spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel button: eligibility and presentation.”.

24       (c) PRESENTATION TO SPOUSES OF VETERANS OF  
 25 EARLIER CONFLICTS.—

1           (1) AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary of Defense  
2       shall make the spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel but-  
3       ton authorized by section 1126a of title 10, United  
4       States Code, as added by subsection (a), available to  
5       the spouse (including a surviving spouse) of any  
6       member of the Armed Forces who served in a com-  
7       bat zone for a period of more than 30 days during  
8       World War II, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam  
9       Conflict, or any other period of armed hostilities in  
10      which the United States was engaged before the  
11      date of the enactment of this Act. The Secretary  
12      shall provide a mechanism by which a spouse or sur-  
13      viving spouse of a combat veteran, or a person act-  
14      ing on behalf of a spouse or surviving spouse of a  
15      combat veteran, to apply to the Secretary of Defense  
16      for a spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel button.

17           (2) NOTIFICATION OF CERTAIN MEMBERS.—  
18      Not later than 60 days after the date of the enact-  
19      ment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall no-  
20      tify members of the Armed Forces who served in a  
21      combat zone for a period of more than 30 days since  
22      September 11, 2001, of the availability of the  
23      spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel button under this  
24      subsection.

1           (3) LIMITATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS.—Sub-  
2       sections (c) and (d) of section 1126a of title 10,  
3       United States Code, shall apply with respect to the  
4       presentation of the spouse-of-a-combat-veteran lapel  
5       button under this subsection.

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