

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 704

To provide for free mailing privileges for personal correspondence and parcels sent to members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 27, 2009

Mr. KING of New York (for himself and Mr. BILIRAKIS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To provide for free mailing privileges for personal correspondence and parcels sent to members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.

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 “Supply Our Soldiers
5 Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. POSTAL BENEFITS PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS OF**
7 **THE ARMED FORCES.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, in con-
9 sultation with the United States Postal Service, shall pro-

1 vide for a program under which postal benefits shall be
2 provided to qualified individuals in accordance with suc-
3 ceeding provisions of this Act.

4 (b) QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL.—For purposes of this
5 Act, the term “qualified individual” means an individual
6 who is—

7 (1) a member of the Armed Forces of the
8 United States on active duty (as defined in section
9 101 of title 10, United States Code); and

10 (2)(A) serving in Iraq or Afghanistan; or

11 (B) hospitalized at a facility under the jurisdic-
12 tion of the Armed Forces of the United States as a
13 result of a disease or injury incurred as a result of
14 service in Iraq or Afghanistan.

15 (c) POSTAL BENEFITS DESCRIBED.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The postal benefits provided
17 under this Act shall consist of such coupons or other
18 similar evidence of credit (whether in printed, elec-
19 tronic, or other format, and hereinafter in this Act
20 referred to as “vouchers”) as the Secretary of De-
21 fense (in consultation with the Postal Service) shall
22 determine, entitling the bearer or user to make
23 qualified mailings free of postage.

1 (2) QUALIFIED MAILING.—For purposes of this
2 Act, the term “qualified mailing” means the mailing
3 of a single mail piece which—

4 (A) is described in subparagraph (A) or
5 (B) of paragraph (3);

6 (B) is sent from within an area served by
7 a United States post office; and

8 (C) is addressed to a qualified individual.

9 (3) MAIL DESCRIBED.—Mail described in this
10 paragraph is—

11 (A) any first-class mail (including any
12 sound- or video-recorded communication) not
13 exceeding 13 ounces in weight and having the
14 character of personal correspondence; and

15 (B) parcel post not exceeding 15 pounds in
16 weight.

17 (4) LIMITATIONS.—

18 (A) NUMBER.—An individual shall be eligi-
19 ble for 1 voucher for each month in which such
20 individual is a qualified individual.

21 (B) USE.—Any such voucher may not be
22 used—

23 (i) for more than a single qualified
24 mailing; or

25 (ii) after the earlier of—

1 (I) the expiration date of such
2 voucher, as designated by the Sec-
3 retary of Defense; or

4 (II) the last day of the 1-year pe-
5 riod referred to in section 4.

6 (5) COORDINATION RULE.—Postal benefits
7 under this Act shall be in addition to, and not in lieu
8 of, any reduced rates of postage or other similar
9 benefits which might otherwise be available by or
10 under law, including any rates of postage resulting
11 from the application of section 3401(b) of title 39,
12 United States Code.

13 (d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 30 days after the
14 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense
15 (in consultation with the Postal Service) shall prescribe
16 any regulations necessary to carry out this Act, includ-
17 ing—

18 (1) procedures by which vouchers will be pro-
19 vided or made available in timely manner to persons
20 duly identified by qualified individuals to receive
21 those vouchers; and

22 (2) procedures to ensure that the number of
23 vouchers provided or made available with respect to
24 any qualified individual complies with subsection
25 (c)(4)(A).

1 **SEC. 3. FUNDING.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
3 priated to the Department of Defense a sum determined
4 by the Department of Defense to be equal to the expenses
5 incurred by the Department in providing the benefits de-
6 scribed in section 2(c).

7 (b) TRANSFERS TO POSTAL SERVICE.—

8 (1) BASED ON ESTIMATES.—The Department
9 of Defense shall transfer to the Postal Service, out
10 of any amount so appropriated and in advance of
11 each calendar quarter during which postal benefits
12 under this Act may be used, an amount equal to the
13 amount of postal benefits that the Department of
14 Defense estimates will be used during such quarter,
15 reduced or increased (as the case may be) by any
16 amounts by which the Department finds that a de-
17 termination under this section for a prior quarter
18 was greater than or less than the amount finally de-
19 termined for such quarter.

20 (2) BASED ON FINAL DETERMINATION.—A
21 final determination of the amount necessary to cor-
22 rect any previous determination under this section,
23 and any transfer of amounts between the Postal
24 Service and the Department of Defense based on
25 that final determination, shall be made not later

1 than 6 months after the end of the 1-year period re-
2 ferred to in section 4.

3 (c) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—All estimates and
4 determinations under this section of the amount of postal
5 benefits under this Act used in any period shall be made
6 by the Department of Defense in consultation with the
7 Postal Service.

8 **SEC. 4. DURATION.**

9 The postal benefits under this Act shall apply with
10 respect to mail matter sent during the 1-year period begin-
11 ning on the date on which the regulations under section
12 2(d) take effect.

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