

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3040

To require the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to develop guidelines regarding the use by the Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of unofficial sources of information to determine the eligibility of a member or former member of the Armed Forces for benefits and decorations when the member's service records are incomplete because of damage to the records, including records damaged by a 1973 fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 13, 2015

Mrs. CAPPS (for herself, Mr. LAMALFA, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COSTA, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. STEWART, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. YOHO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to develop guidelines regarding the use by the Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of unofficial sources of information to determine the eligibility of a member or former member of the Armed Forces for benefits and decorations when the member's service

records are incomplete because of damage to the records, including records damaged by a 1973 fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri.

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. DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR USE OF**
 4 **UNOFFICIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION TO**
 5 **DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY OF MEMBERS AND**
 6 **FORMER MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES**
 7 **FOR BENEFITS AND DECORATIONS WHEN**
 8 **THE SERVICE RECORDS ARE INCOMPLETE**
 9 **BECAUSE OF DAMAGE TO THE OFFICIAL**
 10 **RECORD.**

11 (a) GUIDELINES REQUIRED.—The Secretary of De-
 12 fense shall develop guidelines regarding the use by the
 13 Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary
 14 of Veterans Affairs of unofficial sources of information,
 15 including eyewitness statements, to determine the eligi-
 16 bility of a member or former member of the Armed Forces
 17 for benefits and decorations when the service records of
 18 the member are incomplete because of damage to the
 19 records as a result of the 1973 fire at the National Per-
 20 sonnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri, or any sub-
 21 sequent incident while the records were in the possession
 22 of the Department of Defense.

1 (b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary of Defense shall
2 prepare the guidelines in consultation with the Secretary
3 of Veterans Affairs, with respect to veterans benefits
4 under title 38, United States Code, whose eligibility deter-
5 minations depend on the use of service records maintained
6 by the Department of Defense.

7 (c) TIME FOR COMPLETION.—The Secretary of De-
8 fense shall complete development of the guidelines not
9 later than one year after the date of the enactment of this
10 Act.

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