

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3781

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

SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

Mr. CARBAJAL (for himself, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. RUIZ) 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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans’ Record Re-
5 construction Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR USE OF UNOF-**
7 **FICIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION TO DE-**
8 **TERMINE ELIGIBILITY OF MEMBERS AND**
9 **FORMER MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES**
10 **FOR BENEFITS AND DECORATIONS WHEN**
11 **THE SERVICE RECORDS ARE INCOMPLETE**
12 **BECAUSE OF DAMAGE TO THE OFFICIAL**
13 **RECORD.**

14 (a) GUIDELINES REQUIRED.—The Secretary of De-
15 fense shall develop guidelines regarding the use by the
16 Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary
17 of Veterans Affairs of unofficial sources of information,
18 including eyewitness statements, to determine the eligi-
19 bility of a member or former member of the Armed Forces
20 for benefits and decorations when the service records of
21 the member are incomplete because of damage to the
22 records as a result of the 1973 fire at the National Per-
23 sonnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri, or any sub-
24 sequent incident while the records were in the possession
25 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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