

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 628

To title 38, United States Code, to permit veterans to grant access to their records in the databases of the Veterans Benefits Administration to certain designated congressional employees, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 16, 2019

Mr. YOHO (for himself, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. BOST, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. HICE of Georgia, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. HIMES, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. PERRY, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. SIRES, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CRIST, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. EMMER, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. MITCHELL, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. BARR, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. FLORES, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. OLSON, Mrs. LURIA, Mr. WALTZ, and Mr. GRIFFITH) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To title 38, United States Code, to permit veterans to grant access to their records in the databases of the Veterans Benefits Administration to certain designated congressional employees, and for other purposes.

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 “Working to Integrate
5 Networks Guaranteeing Member Access Now Act” or the
6 “WINGMAN Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. PROVISION OF ACCESS TO CASE-TRACKING INFOR-**
8 **MATION.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 59 of title 38, United
10 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
11 lowing new section:

12 **“§ 5906. Access of certain congressional employees to**
13 **veteran records**

14 “(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The Secretary shall provide
15 to each veteran who submits a claim for benefits under
16 the laws administered by the Secretary an opportunity to
17 permit a covered congressional employee employed in the
18 office of the Member of Congress representing the district
19 where the veteran resides to have access to all of the
20 records of the veteran in the databases of the Veterans
21 Benefits Administration.

22 “(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law,
23 upon receipt of permission from the veteran under para-
24 graph (1), the Secretary shall provide read-only access to
25 such records to such a covered congressional employee in

1 a manner that does not allow such employee to modify
2 the data contained in such records or in any part of a
3 database of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

4 “(3) A Member of Congress may designate not more
5 than two employees of the Member as covered congress-
6 sional employees.

7 “(b) COVERED CONGRESSIONAL EMPLOYEES.—(1)
8 In this section, a covered congressional employee is a per-
9 manent, full-time employee of a Member of Congress—

10 “(A) whose responsibilities include assisting the
11 constituents of the Member with issues regarding de-
12 partments or agencies of the Federal Government;

13 “(B) who satisfies the criteria required by the
14 Secretary for recognition as an agent or attorney
15 under this chapter; and

16 “(C) who is designated by a Member of Con-
17 gress as a covered congressional employee for pur-
18 poses of this section.

19 “(2) The Secretary may not impose any requirement
20 other than the requirements under paragraph (1) before
21 treating an employee as a covered congressional employee
22 for purposes of this section.

23 “(c) NONRECOGNITION.—A covered congressional
24 employee may not be recognized as an agent or attorney
25 under this chapter.

1 “(d) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—None of the
2 amounts made available to carry out this section may be
3 used to design, develop, or administer any training for
4 purposes of providing training to covered congressional
5 employees.

6 “(e) NO AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—No
7 additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to
8 carry out this section. This section may only be carried
9 out using amounts otherwise authorized to be appro-
10 priated, of which, during the period of fiscal years 2019
11 through 2022, not more than \$10,000,000 may be obli-
12 gated or expended for such purpose.

13 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 “(1) The term ‘database of the Veterans Bene-
15 fits Administration’ means any database of the Vet-
16 erans Benefits Administration in which the records
17 of veterans relating to claims for benefits under the
18 laws administered by the Secretary are retained, in-
19 cluding information regarding medical records, com-
20 pensation and pension exams records, rating deci-
21 sions, statements of the case, supplementary state-
22 ments of the case, notices of disagreement, Form-
23 9, and any successor form.

1 “(2) The term ‘Member of Congress’ means a
2 Representative, a Senator, a Delegate to Congress,
3 or the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico.”.

4 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
5 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding
6 at the end the following new item:

“5906. Access of certain congressional employees to veteran records.”.

