



The Health Records Enhancement Act of 2025

Led in the Senate by: Senator Peter Welch (D-Vt.)

Introduced in the House by: Representatives Raul Ruiz (D-CA-25); Gus Bilirakis (R-FL-12)

Background: In many cases, the health records of the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) do not fully and accurately reflect a veteran's overall health history, especially as it relates to conditions observed by veterans' caretakers and loved ones, such as memory problems, fatigue, and respiratory illness. This is problematic for deceased veterans, whose health records can remain static because additional health information—such as late-emerging conditions—may be known only to loved ones or designated caregivers familiar with a veterans' condition.

Authorizing a designated caregiver or immediate family member to add observed health conditions and other relevant data would help fill this information gap to ensure that historical records for deceased veterans include the full spectrum of their health experiences. This would in turn preserve vital information for medical review, research, and historical accountability.

Legislation: The *Health Records Enhancement Act* will improve data collection on burn pit and toxic substance exposure by directing the VA and the DoD to help families and approved individuals to provide supplemental information to the health records of deceased veterans. The bill will allow designated individuals to submit additions to a veterans' health records to ensure that vital posthumous health information is captured while maintaining the integrity of the original entries.

This enhancement will facilitate and better inform providers on future health care decisions, provide clearer insight into the health challenges faced by veterans, and support ongoing research into veteran health outcomes. In so doing, the *Health Records Enhancement Act* both honors the service of deceased veterans and ensures that their health histories remain as complete and accurate as possible.

Supporting Organizations:

The *Health Records Enhancement Act* is supported by Burn Pits 360 and the FealGood Foundation.