

## S 3202

Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012

**Congress:** 112 (2011–2013, Ended)

**Chamber:** Senate

**Policy Area:** Armed Forces and National Security

**Introduced:** May 17, 2012

**Current Status:** Became Public Law No: 112-260.

**Latest Action:** Became Public Law No: 112-260. (Jan 10, 2013)

**Law:** 112-260 (Enacted Jan 10, 2013)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/senate-bill/3202>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Murray, Patty [D-WA]

**Party:** Democratic • **State:** WA • **Chamber:** Senate

### Cosponsors (5 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Burr, Richard [R-NC]	R · NC		May 17, 2012
Sen. Nelson, Bill [D-FL]	D · FL		May 17, 2012
Sen. Rubio, Marco [R-FL]	R · FL		May 17, 2012
Sen. Heller, Dean [R-NV]	R · NV		Jun 13, 2012
Sen. Isakson, Johnny [R-GA]	R · GA		Jun 27, 2012

### Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Armed Services Committee	House	Referred To	Dec 20, 2012
Budget Committee	House	Referred To	Dec 20, 2012
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Discharged From	Dec 20, 2012
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Referred to	Jan 2, 2013

### Subjects & Policy Tags

#### Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

### Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
112 HR 6073	Related bill	<b>Jun 29, 2012:</b> Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

**(This measure has not been amended since it was passed by the Senate on December 19, 2012. The summary of that version is repeated here.)**

Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 - **Title I: Cemetery Matters** - (Sec. 101)

Authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to furnish a casket or urn of sufficient quality for a dignified burial for the burial in a national cemetery of a deceased veteran when the Secretary: (1) is unable to identify such veteran's next of kin, and (2) determines that sufficient resources for furnishing such casket or urn are not otherwise available. Prohibits the furnishing of such casket or urn in the case of a veteran convicted of a federal or state capital crime.

(Sec. 102) Directs the Secretary, with respect to the interment, funeral, memorial service, or ceremony (service) of a deceased veteran at a national cemetery, to ensure that: (1) the expressed wishes of the next of kin or other agent of such veteran are given deference when determining whether such service affects the safety and security of the cemetery and its visitors; (2) all appropriate public cemetery areas may be used by the family for contemplation, prayer, mourning, or reflection; and (3) during such service, the family may display any chosen religious or other symbols. Requires a report from the Secretary to the congressional veterans committees on the implementation of this section.

(Sec. 103) Requires the Secretary, in the case of a deceased veteran with no apparent next of kin and without sufficient resources to cover funeral and burial expenses, to ensure that the entity responsible for the body prior to transportation to a national cemetery for burial notifies the VA as to whether such veteran was cremated and steps taken to ensure that such veteran has no next of kin.

(Sec. 104) Directs the Secretary to cooperate with veterans service organizations to assist entities in possession of unclaimed or abandoned human remains in determining if any such remains are the remains of veterans or other individuals eligible for burial in a national cemetery. Requires the Secretary, upon a positive determination with respect to any such remains, to provide for and cover the transportation costs and funeral expenses of such veteran or individual.

(Sec. 105) Excludes from interment or memorialization in a national cemetery any person convicted of a tier III sex offender offense and sentenced to a minimum of life imprisonment.

(Sec. 106) Treats Clark Veterans Cemetery in the Republic of the Philippines as a permanent military cemetery in a foreign country for purposes of the purview of the American Battle Monuments Commission. Directs the Commission to restore, operate, and maintain such Cemetery in cooperation with the government of the Republic of the Philippines.

(Sec. 107) Directs the Secretary to report to the veterans committees on VA compliance with industry standards for caskets and urns.

**Title II: Health Care** - (Sec. 201) Directs the Secretary to: (1) establish and maintain an open burn pit registry for members deployed in a contingency operation in Iraq or Afghanistan who may have been exposed to toxic chemicals and fumes caused by open burn pits used for disposing solid waste, (2) include in such registry information necessary to ascertain and monitor the health effects of such exposure, (3) develop a public information campaign to inform eligible individuals about the registry, and (4) periodically notify such individuals of significant developments in the study and treatment of conditions associated with such exposure. Requires the Secretary to: (1) contract with an independent scientific organization to develop reports assessing the effectiveness of actions taken to collect and maintain information on the health effects of such exposure, and (2) submit such organization's initial and follow-up report to Congress.

(Sec. 202) Authorizes the Secretary to transport individuals to and from VA facilities in connection with vocational rehabilitation, counseling, examination, treatment, or care.

(Sec. 203) Extends through FY2016 the current \$90 limit on a VA pension paid to veterans residing in nursing homes when their nursing costs are paid through title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act.

(Sec. 204) Extends through 2016 the report requirement for the Special Committee on Post-Traumatic-Stress Disorder.

**Title III: Other Matters** - (Sec. 301) Directs the Secretary of Labor, during the two-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, to provide the Transition Assistance Program to veterans and their spouses at locations other than military installations in at least three and up to five states selected by the Secretary based on the highest rates of veteran unemployment. Requires: (1) a report from such Secretary to Congress for any year in which such training was provided, and (2) a one-time report from the Comptroller General on such training.

(Sec. 302) Requires that the principal office of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) be in the metropolitan area of Washington, DC, but allows the CAVC to sit any place within the United States. Requires judges in active service on the CAVC to: (1) have their official duty station at the principal office; and (2) reside within 50 miles of such metropolitan area. Provides an exception for recall-eligible retired CAVC judges.

(Sec. 303) Designates the VA facility in Carrollton, Georgia, as the "Trinka Davis Veterans Village."

(Sec. 304) Designates the VA facility in Sunrise, Florida, as the "William 'Bill' Kling Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic."

(Sec. 305) Designates the VA medical center in Spokane, Washington, as the "Mann-Grandstaff Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center."

(Sec. 306) Designates the VA community based outpatient clinic in Mansfield, Ohio, as the "David F. Winder Department of Veterans Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinic."

## Actions Timeline

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- **Jan 10, 2013:** Signed by President.
- **Jan 10, 2013:** Became Public Law No: 112-260.
- **Jan 2, 2013:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.
- **Jan 1, 2013:** Presented to President.
- **Dec 30, 2012:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H7442-7446)
- **Dec 30, 2012:** Mr. Miller (FL) moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill.
- **Dec 30, 2012:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on S. 3202.
- **Dec 30, 2012:** At the conclusion of debate, the chair put the question on the motion to suspend the rules. Mr. Miller (FL) objected to the vote on the grounds that a quorum was not present. Further proceedings on the motion were postponed. The point of no quorum was considered as withdrawn.
- **Dec 30, 2012:** Considered as unfinished business. (consideration: CR H7466-7467)
- **Dec 30, 2012:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 393 - 0 (Roll no. 651).(text: CR H7442-7445)
- **Dec 30, 2012:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 393 - 0 (Roll no. 651). (text: CR H7442-7445)
- **Dec 30, 2012:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Dec 20, 2012:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Dec 20, 2012:** Received in the House.
- **Dec 20, 2012:** Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and the Budget, 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.
- **Dec 19, 2012:** Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs discharged by Unanimous Consent.
- **Dec 19, 2012:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: CR S8231)
- **Dec 19, 2012:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.
- **Dec 19, 2012:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.
- **Jun 27, 2012:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 112-668.
- **May 17, 2012:** Introduced in Senate
- **May 17, 2012:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S3287)
- **May 17, 2012:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. (text of measure as introduced: CR S3287)