

NATIONAL WAR PERMANENT TRIBUTE HISTORICAL
DATABASE ACT

SEPTEMBER 18, 2002.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. HANSEN, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 2748]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 2748) to authorize the establishment of a national database for purposes of identifying, locating, and cataloging the many memorials and permanent tributes to America's veterans, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National War Permanent Tribute Historical Database Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) on November 13, 2000, Congress agreed to a resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need for cataloging and maintaining public memorials;

(2) there are many thousands of public memorials and permanent tributes throughout the United States and abroad that commemorate military conflicts of the United States and the service of individuals in the Armed Forces;

(3) many of these memorials suffer from neglect and disrepair, and many have been relocated or stored in facilities where the memorials are unavailable to the public and subject to further neglect and damage;

(4) there exists a need to collect and centralize information regarding the identification, location, and description of these memorials, as no such catalog is available to the public from either the Federal government or any nongovernmental entity; and

(5) Remembering Veterans Who Earned Their Stripes, a nonprofit corporation established as RVETS, Inc. under the laws of the State of Nevada, has already undertaken a unique and innovative program to catalog these memorials and has a unique methodology and capability to perform this research, having already obtained information on more than 8,000 memorials in 50 States.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF DATABASE.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—In order to locate, identify, and catalog the many thousands of permanent tributes that commemorate the military conflicts of the United States, and the service and sacrifice of individuals in the Armed Forces of the United States, and to make such information readily available for the educational benefit of the public, the Secretary of the Interior may establish and maintain a database known as the National War Permanent Tribute Historical Database.

(b) **CONTENT.**—The database shall contain information on—

- (1) the location, history, and background of the permanent tributes;
- (2) photographs and other information to enhance the understanding of the permanent tributes;
- (3) information about the veterans in whose honor the permanent tributes are dedicated; and
- (4) any other information the Secretary considers appropriate and necessary.

(c) **PUBLIC ACCESS.**—The database shall be made accessible to the public, through the Internet or by other means, in a format that permits the public to submit information on permanent tributes for the purpose of updating and expanding the database.

(d) **ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary of the Interior may seek the assistance of other Federal agencies and the States and their political subdivisions, tribal governments, public or private educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and individuals or other entities that the Secretary considers appropriate in carrying out this Act, and may enter into contracts and cooperative agreements to obtain information or services that assist in the development and implementation of the database.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

SEC. 5. REPORT.

Within 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall transmit to the Congress a report assessing the efficacy and desirability of establishing a permanent fund within the Treasury for the repair, restoration, and maintenance of the memorials identified and catalogued under section 3. The report shall include recommended criteria regarding appropriate recipients of expenditures from such a fund as well as proposed funding mechanisms and any other information considered by the Secretary to be relevant.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 2748 is to authorize the establishment of a national database for purposes of identifying, locating, and cataloging the many memorials and permanent tributes to America's veterans.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Title III of Public Law 105–511 contained a Sense of the Congress Resolution (H. Con. Res. 345) regarding the need for cataloging and maintaining public memorials commemorating military conflicts of the United States and the service of individuals in the U.S. Armed Forces. Also contained in PL 105–511 was language citing Remembering Veterans Who Earned Their Stripes (RVETS), a nonprofit disabled veterans organization that had undertaken a self-funded program to catalogue the memorials located in the United States that commemorate military conflicts of the United States and the service of individuals in the Armed Forces, and has already obtained information on more than 7,000 memorials in 50 States. To date, RVETS has catalogued over 8,500 memorials. The Resolution recommended that the Secretary of Interior collect and maintain information on public memorials that commemorate military conflicts of the United States, coordinate efforts at collecting and maintaining the information with similar efforts by other entities, such as RVETS, and make the information available to the public.

H.R. 2748 represents the continuation of the Sense of Congress Resolution. While the introduced version of H.R. 2748 had the Department of Veterans Affairs creating the database, the amended bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to establish, maintain, and make available to the public through the Internet, the National War Permanent Tribute Historical Database that would be comprised of existing information as well as that collected and maintained by RVETS and other veterans organizations.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 2748 was introduced on August 2, 2001, by Congressman David Dreier (R-CA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker. On August 20, 2001, the bill was referred to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands. On December 13, 2001, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill. On July 18, 2002, the Subcommittee met to mark up the bill. Congressman George Radanovich (R-CA) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute that made the following changes to the original text: (1) authorized the Secretary of the Interior to establish a memorial database within the Department of the Interior; (2) required the database to be accessible to the public through the Internet or other means, and (3) authorized the Secretary to seek assistance from other Federal, state and local agencies and private institutions in obtaining information for the database. Congressman Mark Udall (D-CO) offered an amendment to the Radanovich Amendment directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit a report to Congress assessing the physical condition of the permanent tributes identified under the bill. The Udall Amendment was adopted by voice vote. The Radanovich Amendment, as amended by the Udall Amendment, was adopted by voice vote. The bill as amended was then ordered favorably reported to the Full Committee by voice vote. On July 24, 2002, the Full Resources Committee met to consider the bill. Congressman Mark Udall (D-CO) offered an amendment directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit within three years after the date of enactment of this Act, a report assessing the efficacy and desirability of the establishment of a permanent fund within the Treasury for the repair, restoration, maintenance, and upkeep of the memorials identified and catalogued. The report shall include recommended criteria regarding appropriate recipients of expenditures from such a fund as well as proposed funding mechanisms and any other information deemed relevant by the Secretary. The amendment was adopted by unanimous consent. The bill, as amended, was then ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to authorize the establishment of a national database for purposes of identifying, locating, and cataloging the many memorials and permanent tributes to America's veterans.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, September 16, 2002.

Hon. JAMES V. HANSEN,
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 2748, the National War Permanent Tribute Historical Database Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

H.R. 2748—National War Permanent Tribute Historical Database Act

H.R. 2748 would authorize the Department of the Interior to establish and maintain a database of public memorials to military conflicts. The department would be authorized to enter into contracts and cooperative agreements to obtain information and services to develop the database, which would make available to the public information on the location and history of permanent memorials. Within three years of the legislation's enactment, the depart-

ment would report to the Congress on the feasibility of establishing a federal fund to repair, restore, or maintain the memorials that are listed in the database.

Based on information provided by the National Park Service (NPS) and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that it would cost around \$1.6 million over the next year or two to establish the memorial database. This amount would be used to design and develop the database. Up-front costs also would include marketing and publishing expenses to facilitate public use of the new database. We estimate that additional costs to maintain the database would be less than \$500,000 annually beginning in 2004, also assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Enacting H.R. 2748 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

This bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.

