



**THE REPUBLICAN
STUDY COMMITTEE**

LIBERTY. OPPORTUNITY. SECURITY.
MARK WALKER, CHAIRMAN

1. [H.R. 5513 - Big Bear Land Exchange Act, as amended](#)
2. [H.R. 6108 - Preserving America's Battlefields Act, as amended](#)
3. [H.R. 3008 - George W. Bush Childhood Home Study Act](#)
4. [H.R. 6118 - To direct the Secretary of the Interior to annually designate at least one city in the United States as an American World War II Heritage City, and for other purposes, as amended](#)
5. [H.R. 6665 - Offshore Wind for Territories Act, as amended](#)
6. [H.Res. 792 - Urging the Secretary of the Interior to recognize the historical significance of Roberto Clemente's place of death near Piñones in Loíza, Puerto Rico, by adding it to the National Register of Historic Places, as amended](#)
7. [S. 245 - Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2017](#)
8. [S. 825 - Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium Land Transfer Act of 2017](#)
9. [S. 2511 - CENOTE Act of 2018, as amended](#)
10. [H.R. 6893 - Secret Service Overtime Pay Extension Act, as amended](#)
11. [House Amendment to S. 2248 - Veterans Benefit and Transition Act of 2018](#)

H.R. 5513 – Big Bear Land Exchange Act (Rep. Cook, R-CA)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration on December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules which requires a 2/3 majority for final passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[H.R. 5513](#) would require the Secretary of Agriculture to convey 73 acres of U.S. Forest Service land to the County of San Bernardino, California, in exchange for 71 acres of land.

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 5513 would cost less than \$500,000, subject to appropriation. The bill could affect direct spending, so paygo would apply, though the net effect would be negligible.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** No.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

H.R. 5513 would require the Secretary of Agriculture to convey 73 acres of U.S. Forest Service land to the County of San Bernardino, California, in exchange for 71 acres of land. The bill would require a cash equalization payment if the non-federal land is appraised at a higher value than the federal land.

The bill would require the county to pay for all conveyance costs.

Within three years of enactment, the bill would require the relocation of the [Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail](#).

Background: According to the committee [report](#), the county plans to build a new timber processing facility. The dangerous route to the current processing facility has resulted in several traffic accidents each year.

The report accompanying H.R. 5513 (H. Rept. 115-996) can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

H.R. 5513 was introduced on April 13, 2018, and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. The bill was marked-up on September 5, 2018, and reported by unanimous consent.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

A Statement of Administration Policy is not available.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

According to the sponsor: "Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8". No specific enumerating clause was cited.

H.R. 6108 —Preserving America's Battlefields Act (Rep. Hice, R-GA)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration December 10, 2018, under suspension of the rules, which requires a 2/3 majority for passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[H.R. 6108](#) would reauthorize the battlefield acquisition grant [program](#).

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 5706 would have an insignificant cost over the 2019-2023 period. Spending would be subject to appropriation.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** No.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

H.R. 6108 would authorize \$15 million each year through fiscal year 2025 for the battlefield acquisition grant [program](#), which provides federal funds to state and local governments to pay the federal share of costs of acquiring interests in eligible sites for their preservation and protection. The program requires the non-federal share of the total cost to be at least 50 percent.

The House Report (H. Rept. 115-1040) accompanying H.R. 6108 can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

H.R. 6108 was introduced on June 14, 2018, and was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. A mark-up session was held and the bill was reported by unanimous consent on September 27, 2018.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

No Statement of Administration Policy is available at this time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

According to the sponsor: Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: "The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.."

H.R. 3008 – George W. Bush Childhood Home Study Act (Rep. Conaway, R-TX)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration on December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules which requires a 2/3 majority for final passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[H.R. 3008](#) would require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the [George W. Bush Childhood Home](#), evaluating the feasibility and suitability of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System.

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 3008 would cost less than \$500,000, subject to appropriation.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** Some conservatives may be concerned this legislation could lead to an addition to the National Park System. The federal government's landholding constitutes over one-quarter of the U.S. landmass, and much of it is poorly managed. The National Park Service, in particular, suffers from a severe backlog of maintenance requirements on existing lands.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

H.R. 3008 would require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the [George W. Bush Childhood Home](#), evaluating the feasibility and suitability of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System.

The bill would require that a report be submitted to Congress within three years of funds being made available for the study.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

H.R. 3008 was introduced on June 22, 2017, and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. The bill was marked-up on March 14, 2018, and reported by unanimous consent.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

A Statement of Administration Policy is not available.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

According to the sponsor: "Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article 1, Section 8". No specific enumerating clause was cited.

H.R. 6118 – To direct the Secretary of the Interior to annually designate at least one city in the United States as an “American World War II Heritage City”, as amended (Rep. Rouzer, D-LA)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration on December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules which requires a 2/3 majority for final passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[H.R. 6118](#) would allow the Secretary of the Interior to annually designate at least one city as an American World War II Heritage City

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 6118 would cost about \$1 million over the 2019-2023 period, subject to appropriation.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.
- Encroach into State or Local Authority? No.
- Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch? No.
- Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits? No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

H.R. 6118 would allow the Secretary of the Interior to annually designate at least one city as an American World War II Heritage City. Only one city in each state or territory may receive this designation.

The bill would establish an application and selection process for this designation.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

H.R. 6118 was introduced on June 14, 2018, and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. The bill was marked-up on September 26, 2018, and reported by unanimous consent.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

A Statement of Administration Policy is not available.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

According to the sponsor: “Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.” No specific enumerating clause was cited.

H.R. 6665 – Offshore Wind for Territories Act (Rep. Bordallo, D-GU)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration on December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules which requires a 2/3 majority for final passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[H.R. 6665](#) would the [Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act](#) (OCSLA) to the United States' territories and possessions, create a revenue sharing program for territories, establish the Coral Reef Conservation Fund, and rename the existing [Coral Reef Conservation Fund](#) as the Coral Reef Public-Private Partnership.

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 6665 would reduce net direct spending by \$14 million over the 2019-2028 period. The bill would also cost \$3 million over the 2019-2023 period, subject to appropriation. The bill would affect spending, so paygo would apply.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** The bill would establish the Coral Reef Conservation Fund to be used by the Secretary of Commerce to maintain the health of OCS coral reefs.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No. The bill would allow payments to territories without further appropriation by Congress using receipts from leases as a part of the revenue sharing program.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

H.R. 6665 would apply the [Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act](#) (OCSLA) to the United States' territories and possessions. Territories and possessions could not be included in a [National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program](#).

The bill would create a revenue sharing program for land located on the outer Continental Shelf (OCS) adjacent to a territory. Of the funds collected, 50 percent would be credited to the Treasury's miscellaneous receipts and 12.5 percent would be deposited in the Coral Reef Conservation Fund, established below. Territories would receive 37.5 percent, without further appropriation.

The bill would require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of conducting wind lease sales on an area of the OCS within the jurisdiction of the territories. The bill would require the secretary conduct at least one wind lease sale for each territory on an area of the OCS if the study finds that a wind lease sale is feasible.

The bill would establish the Coral Reef Conservation Fund to be used by the Secretary of Commerce to maintain the health of OCS coral reefs. The bill would rename the existing [Coral Reef Conservation Fund](#) as the Coral Reef Public-Private Partnership.

The report accompanying H.R. 6665 (H. Rept. 115-1029) can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

H.R. 6665 was introduced on August 10, 2018, and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. The bill was marked-up on September 5, 2018, and reported by unanimous consent.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

A Statement of Administration Policy is not available.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

According to the sponsor: "Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8, clause 18 and Article IV, Section 3, clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution."

H. Res. 792– Urging the Secretary of the Interior to recognize the historic significance of Roberto Clemente’s place of death near Piñones in Loiza, Puerto Rico, by adding it to the National Register of Historic Places (Rep. Serrano, D-NY)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration on December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules which requires a 2/3 majority for final passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[H. Res. 792](#) would request the Secretary of the Interior add the airplane crash site where Roberto Clemente died to the list of National Register of Historic Places.

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 6901 would cost up to \$2 million. The bill could affect direct spending, so paygo would apply, though the net changes in direct spending would not be significant.

The bill does not authorize additional funds to carry out the provisions.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.
- Encroach into State or Local Authority? No.
- Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch? No.
- Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits? No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

H. Res. 792 would request the Secretary of the Interior add the airplane crash site where Roberto Clemente died to the list of [National Register of Historic Places](#).

[Roberto Clemente](#) was a professional baseball player from Puerto Rico. Throughout his 18-year career, Clemente received many awards and honors for his play including, four National League batting titles, the 1966 NL Most Valuable Player Award and 12 straight Gold Glove Awards. Following his sudden death in a plane crash, Clemente was elected into the Hall of Fame in 1973.

The report accompanying H. Res. 792 (H. Rept. 115-988) can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

H.R. 6901 was introduced on March 20 2018, and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. The bill was marked-up on September 27, 2018, and reported by unanimous consent.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

A Statement of Administration Policy is not available.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

Constitutional authority statements are not required for House Resolutions.

S. 245 — Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2017 (Rep. Hoeven, R-ND)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration on December 10, 2018, under suspension of the rules, which requires a 2/3 majority for passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[S. 245](#) would make changes to federal energy programs on tribal lands.

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) implementing S. 245 would cost \$1 million, subject to appropriation.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** No.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

S. 245 would amend the [Energy Policy Act of 1992](#) to require the Secretary of the Interior to consult with Indian tribes before approving a well spacing program, and provide technical assistance for planning energy resource development programs.

The bill would allow grants to be provided to intertribal organizations under the Department of Energy Indian energy education planning and management assistance program.

The bill would amend the Department of Energy loan guarantee program to allow a tribal energy development organization to provide a loan guarantee and would require the Secretary of Energy to issue regulations to carry out the program.

The bill would amend the circumstances when a tribe may enter into a lease or business agreement for the purpose of energy resource development on tribal land.

The bill would require the secretary to provide notice to the tribe of a completed tribal energy resource agreement within 60 days. The bill would also make changes to the approval, disapproval, and effective date procedures of tribal energy resource agreements.

The bill would require the secretary to make funds that were not expended by the department as a result of a tribe carrying out activities pursuant to a tribal resource agreement available to the tribe through an annual written funding agreement.

The bill would require the secretary to approve applications for certification of a tribal energy development organization if certain requirements are met.

The bill would require the secretary to collaborate with the directors of the National Laboratories in making the resources of the Department of Energy available for tribal energy activities.

The bill would require the Secretary of the Interior to submit a report to Congress on the activities for energy development on Indian Land.

The bill would require the Federal Regulatory Commission to give tribes preference for preliminary hydroelectric licenses. States and municipalities currently also receive this preference.

The bill would create a demonstration projects for tribes and Alaska Natives to promote biomass energy production on Indian forest land.

The bill would make changes to the grant [program](#) that provides funding for direct home weatherization to tribes. The bill would allow direct funding requested by a tribal organization and approved by the Secretary of Energy. If the tribal organization requesting the grant is a tribally designated housing entity that has operated without material audit exceptions, the organization would be required to presume the low-income members would be equally or better served by making a grant directly to the organization instead of making a grant to the state.

The bill would enact provisions related to the fair market value appraisal of energy resources on trust or restricted lands.

The bill would no longer require leases for the development of mineral resources to receive secretarial approval, under certain circumstances. The bill would also allow business and agricultural leases to be up to 99 years. Current [law](#) only allows for these leases to be up to 75 years.

The bill would require money held by the Department of the Interior as a result of the conveyance of Indian land to be held in the trust fund system for the tribe.

The House Report (H. Rept. 115-1057) accompanying S. 245, can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

S. 245 was introduced in the Senate on January 30, 2017, passed by unanimous consent on November 29, 2017, and was sent to the House. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. A mark-up was held and the bill was reported by unanimous consent.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

No Statement of Administration Policy is available at this time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

A constitutional authority statement is not required for bills that originate in the Senate.

S. 825 — Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium Land Transfer Act of 2017 (Sen. Murkowski, R-AK)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration December 10, 2018, under suspension of the rules, which requires a 2/3 majority for passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[S. 825](#) would require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to convey 19.07 acres in Sitka, Alaska to the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing S. 825 would not have a significant effect on the federal budget.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** No.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

S. 825 would require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to convey 19.07 acres in Sitka, Alaska to the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium. The conveyance must be made by warranty deed, and may not require consideration from the consortium, impose any terms on the consortium, or allow for any reversionary interest of the U.S. in the property.

The consortium would not be liable for contamination resulting from the presence of environmental contamination that is already present on the property at the time of conveyance.

The House Report (H. Rept. 115-619) accompanying S. 825 can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

S. 825 was introduced in the Senate on April 4, 2017. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on September 29, 2017, and the bill was sent to the House. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. A markup was held on December 13, 2017, and the bill was reported by unanimous consent.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

No Statement of Administration Policy is available at this time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

A statement of constitutional authority is not required for bills that originate in the Senate.

H.R. 6893 — Secret Service Overtime Pay Extension Act (Rep. Russell, R-OK)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Expected to be considered on December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules, which requires 2/3 majority for final passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[H.R. 6893](#) would remove limits on overtime pay for Secret Service Agents who will provide protective services in the 2019 and 2020 calendar years.

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that enacting the bill would cost \$17 million over the 2019-2021 period.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** No.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

H.R. 6893 would remove limits on overtime pay for Secret Service Agents who will provide protective services in the 2019 and 2020 calendar years.

This legislation would also require the Director of the Secret Service to, in 2020 and 2021, provide a report to Congress on: (1) the number of agents receiving premium pay; (2) the amount of premium pay paid above the limitation; (3) the mean and median amount of premium pay paid; (4) the greatest amount paid above the premium pay limitation and the number of personnel receiving that amount; (5) the total number of personnel not fully compensated due to premium pay limitations; (6) the total amount of premium pay that would have been paid were it not for limitations; and (7) a list of Secret Service agents who received premium pay during the calendar year and then separated from the Secret Service.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

H.R. 6893 was introduced on September 25, 2018, and was referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, where it was reported by voice vote on September 27, 2018.

Similar legislation was passed and enacted as law earlier this Congress. H.R. 3731, the Secret Service Recruitment and Retention Act of 2018, passed by voice vote on December 5, 2017.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

A Statement of Administration Policy is not available at this time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

According to the sponsor: "Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18--To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department of Officer thereof."

S. 2511 – Commercial Engagement Through Ocean Technology Act of 2018 (Sen. Wicker, R-MS)

FLOOR SCHEDULE:

Scheduled for consideration on December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules which requires a 2/3 majority for final passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY:

[S. 2511](#) would codify practices related to the National Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) acquisition of unmanned maritime systems for oceanic research. The bill would require NOAA to assess commercially available unmanned maritime systems and centralize NOAA's acquisition of unmanned maritime systems. centralize NOAA's acquisition of unmanned maritime systems.

COST:

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing S. 2511 would cost \$5 million over the 2019-2023 period, subject to appropriation. The bill could affect direct spending, so paygo would apply, but the net effect would be negligible.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** The bill would require NOAA to establish an Unmanned Maritime Systems Ocean Technology Coordinating Committee. **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** No.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** No.

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

S. 2511 would require the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to direct the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) and the Office of Marine and Aviation Operation (OMAO) to coordinate NOAA's research and acquisition of marine systems and to consider the use of unmanned maritime systems.

The bill would require NOAA to establish an Unmanned Maritime Systems Ocean Technology Coordinating Committee.

The bill would require NOAA to: (1) coordinate with the Navy to leverage expertise in the development of and operational transition of unmanned maritime systems; (2) seek to utilize naval unmanned systems test or training ranges; and, (3) coordinate a memorandum of understanding with the Navy.

NOAA would be required to carry out this bill's activities at a location where the Navy and NOAA are co-located.

The bill would allow NOAA and the Navy to use the [National Oceanic Partnership Program](#) to provide interagency coordination for the advancement of unmanned maritime systems.

NOAA would be allowed to coordinate and co-locate with an academic institution to provide research and development opportunities, provide training in unmanned maritime systems as part of an academic program or support testing or training in respect to unmanned maritime systems, under environmental conditions.

The bill would allow NOAA to consult the private sector to support the commercialization of unmanned maritime systems.

NOAA would be required to assess commercially available unmanned maritime systems for potential use by NOAA.

The bill would require NOAA to centralize NOAA's acquisition of unmanned maritime systems to meet the data requirements identified by OAR and OMAO.

The bill would allow NOAA to enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Navy that allows NOAA to accept decommissioned unmanned maritime systems from the Navy, develop policies to share systems, or provide for other cost efficient ways of acquiring unmanned maritime systems.

The bill would require NOAA to submit a report to Congress every four years on the usage of unmanned maritime systems for NOAA's mission.

This bill would not authorize additional funds for the purposes of this bill.

The report accompanying S. 2511 (S. Rept. 1115-291) can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

S. 2511 was introduced in the Senate on March 7, 2018. On August 23, 2018, the bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent. The bill was received in the House and was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

A Statement of Administration Policy is not available.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

Constitutional authority statements are not required for bills that originate in the Senate.

House Amendment to S. 2248 – Veterans Benefit and Transition Act of 2018 (Rep. Roe, R-TN)

FLOOR SCHEDULE: December 10, 2018, under a suspension of the rules, which requires a 2/3 majority for passage.

TOPLINE SUMMARY: [The House Amendment to S. 2248](#) would make certain changes to education benefits provided to veterans; would provide additional assistance to the spouses of deceased veterans; would provide certain financial relief to veterans and their spouses; provide certain assistance to veterans whom are transitioning from active duty service to retirement; would make certain departmental administrative changes at the VA in order to curb waste and abuse; would provide for the construction and renovation of certain medical facilities; and provide additional medical benefits to veterans.

COST:

A Congressional Budget Office (CBO) cost estimate is not available at this time.

Rule 28(a)(1) of the Rules of the Republican Conference prohibit measures from being scheduled for consideration under suspension of the rules without an accompanying cost estimate. Rule 28(b) provides that the cost estimate requirement may be waived by a majority of the Elected Leadership.

CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS:

- **Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?** This legislation would increase benefits provided to veterans and extend certain programs offered to veterans.
- **Encroach into State or Local Authority?** No.
- **Delegate Any Legislative Authority to the Executive Branch?** Certain provisions under titles of this legislation would delegate flexibility for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to implement programs provided for in this legislation.
- **Contain Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?** This legislation would authorize the construction of four medical facilities at specified locations, three of which were included in the [President's Budget Request](#). Under the [House Rules](#), "the term "congressional earmark" means a provision or report language included primarily at the request of a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, or Senator providing, authorizing or recommending a specific amount of discretionary budget authority, credit authority, or other spending authority for a contract, loan, loan guarantee, grant, loan authority, or other expenditure with or to an entity, or targeted to a specific State, locality or Congressional district, other than through a statutory or administrative formula driven or competitive award process."

DETAILED SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

[The House Amendment to S. 2248](#) would make certain changes to education benefits provided to veterans; would provide additional assistance to the spouses of deceased veterans; would provide certain financial relief to veterans and their spouses; provide certain assistance to veterans whom are transitioning from active duty service to retirement; would make certain departmental

administrative changes at the VA in order to curb waste and abuse; would provide for the construction and renovation of certain medical facilities; and provide additional medical benefits to veterans.

TITLE I – EDUCATION

This title would make changes to education benefits provided to veterans who have served in the Guard or Reserve.

This title would provide changes to electronic notification of housing payments from the VA.

This title would require that a school or training program – approved by GI benefits – not apply a late fee, denial of access to facilities, or any other penalty on a veteran due to a late payment of tuition/fees by the VA.

This title would provide protections to veterans that are enrolled in certain schools if the VA makes a late payment.

This title would provide additional flexibility for calculation of monthly housing stipends.

TITLE II – MEMORIAL AFFAIRS

This title would provide authorization for the VA to provide headstones and markers to eligible spouses and dependents in tribal veteran cemeteries.

This title would require the VA to inter deceased spouses and dependents of active-duty servicemembers in national cemeteries through September 30, 2024.

TITLE III – CIVIL RELIEF

This title would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to allow the spouse of a servicemember who dies on active duty to terminate a residential lease within one year of the servicemember's death without penalty.

This title would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to allow the spouse of a servicemember to elect to use the same state of residence as the servicemember for state or local tax purposes regardless of when or where the two individuals were married.

This title would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to allow the spouse of a servicemember to elect to use the same residence as the servicemember for state and local voting purposes.

This title would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to allow a servicemember to terminate a commercial mobile, telephone exchange, Internet access, or multichannel video programming service contract at any time after the date the servicemember receives military orders to relocate for at least 90 days to a location that does not support such service contract.

TITLE IV – TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

This title would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study to identify community-based programs that: 1) provide transition assistance to such members; and 2) operated by nonprofit entities.

TITLE V – DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

Under current law, the VA may make purchases up to \$10,000 using government purchase cards, rather than awarding contracts. This title would require the Secretary to revoke the purchase card approval authority from any employee who is found to have knowingly misused such a card. This title would define what constitutes a misuse.

This title would require the Secretary to make changes to their technology systems to allow a claimant to review and revise their information about dependents electronically.

This title would require that not later than 30 days after the enactment of this legislation, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs must submit to the Congress certain documents concerning the Electronic Health Record Modernization Program. Additionally, this title would require quarterly reporting and updates to the Congress regarding the Electronic Health Record Modernization Program.

This title would make changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs notice system relating to debt collection activities. Additionally, this title would require reporting to the Congress relating to progress updates of the changes required by this title.

TITLE VI – MEDICAL FACILITIES

This title would authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out medical facility projects in fiscal year 2019 at specified locations and in an amount for each project:

- Construction of a community living center and renovation of domiciliary and outpatient facilities in Canandaigua, New York in an amount not to exceed \$351,980,000
 - This funding was [included](#) in the President’s Budget Request.
- Renovation of space for a simulation training education center in North Chicago, Illinois, in an amount not to exceed \$15,980,000
 - This funding was [included](#) in the President’s Budget Request.
- Construction of a surgical intensive care unit and renovation to expand the operating room suite in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in an amount not to exceed \$29,461,000
 - This funding was [included](#) in the President’s Budget Request.
- Construction of a new medical facility in Louisville, Kentucky, in an amount not to exceed \$450,000,000
 - This facility is currently under construction, has received appropriations and future requests for funding are anticipated in FY 2020, however, the [President’s Budget](#) did NOT request FY 2019 funding.

This title would authorize the amount to be appropriated to the Secretary for Fiscal Year 2019.

This title would require that each director of a medical facility submit, to their respective network directors, plans as to how that facility can be approved. Further, this title would specify requirements for such plan submissions to be sent to the Congress.

TITLE VII – OTHER MATTERS

This title would provide a three-year extension of [Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs](#). Additionally, this section would clarify and expand the definition of homeless veterans who are eligible for assistance under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration program.

This title would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to correct problems with its medical-surgical formulary using input from individuals who have medical expertise relevant to the items for which the employee conducts such an analysis or makes such decisions.

This title would require reporting to the Congress on the feasibility and advisability of expanding access to dental care for eligible veterans.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

S. 2248 was originally introduced as A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide certain burial benefits for spouses and children of veterans who are buried in tribal cemeteries, and for other purposes on December 19 , 2017, and was referred to the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs. The bill passed the Senate on March 1, 2018, by unanimous consent.

The House Amendment to S. 2248 is offered in the nature of a substitute to S. 2248.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

No stated Administration position available at this time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY:

A constitutional authority statement is not required for bills that originate in the Senate.

NOTE: *RSC Legislative Bulletins are for informational purposes only and should not be taken as statements of support or opposition from the Republican Study Committee.*