

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1911

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 22, 2003

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

AN ACT

To amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance cooperation and the sharing of resources between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE-DEPARTMENT OF**
2 **VETERANS AFFAIRS JOINT EXECUTIVE COM-**
3 **MITTEE.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE.—(1)
5 Chapter 3 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by
6 adding at the end the following new section:

7 **“§ 320. Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of**
8 **Defense Joint Executive Committee**

9 “(a) JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—(1) There is
10 established an interagency committee to be known as the
11 Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense
12 Joint Executive Committee (hereinafter in this section re-
13 ferred to as the ‘Committee’).

14 “(2) The Committee is composed of—

15 “(A) the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs
16 and such other officers and employees of the Depart-
17 ment of Veterans Affairs as the Secretary of Vet-
18 erans Affairs may designate; and

19 “(B) the Under Secretary of Defense for Per-
20 sonnel and Readiness and such other officers and
21 employees of the Department of Defense as the Sec-
22 retary of Defense may designate.

23 “(b) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.—(1) The Deputy
24 Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Under Secretary of
25 Defense shall determine the size and structure of the Com-

1 mittee, as well as the administrative and procedural guide-
2 lines for the operation of the Committee.

3 “(2) The two Departments shall supply appropriate
4 staff and resources to provide administrative support and
5 services. Support for such purposes shall be provided at
6 a level sufficient for the efficient operation of the Com-
7 mittee, including a subordinate Health Executive Com-
8 mittee, a subordinate Benefits Executive Committee, and
9 such other committees or working groups as considered
10 necessary by the Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary.

11 “(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—(1) The Committee shall
12 recommend to the Secretaries strategic direction for the
13 joint coordination and sharing efforts between and within
14 the two Departments under section 8111 of this title and
15 shall oversee implementation of those efforts.

16 “(2) The Committee shall submit to the two Secre-
17 taries and to Congress an annual report containing such
18 recommendations as the Committee considers appropriate.

19 “(d) FUNCTIONS.—In order to enable the Committee
20 to make recommendations in its annual report under sub-
21 section (c)(2), the Committee shall do the following:

22 “(1) Review existing policies, procedures, and
23 practices relating to the coordination and sharing of
24 resources between the two Departments.

1 “(2) Identify changes in policies, procedures,
2 and practices that, in the judgment of the Com-
3 mittee, would promote mutually beneficial coordina-
4 tion, use, or exchange of use of services and re-
5 sources of the two Departments, with the goal of im-
6 proving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of
7 the delivery of benefits and services to veterans,
8 service members, military retirees and their families
9 through an enhanced Department of Veterans Af-
10 fairs and Department of Defense partnership.

11 “(3) Identify and assess further opportunities
12 for the coordination and collaboration between the
13 Departments that, in the judgment of the Com-
14 mittee, would not adversely affect the range of serv-
15 ices, the quality of care, or the established priorities
16 for benefits provided by either Department.

17 “(4) Review the plans of both Departments for
18 the acquisition of additional resources, especially
19 new facilities and major equipment and technology,
20 in order to assess the potential effect of such plans
21 on further opportunities for the coordination and
22 sharing of resources.

23 “(5) Review the implementation of activities de-
24 signed to promote the coordination and sharing of
25 resources between the Departments.”.

1 (2) The table of sections at the beginning of such
2 chapter is amended by adding at the end the following
3 new item:

 “320. Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive
 Committee.”.

4 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—(1) Subsection (c)
5 of section 8111 of such title is repealed.

6 (2) Such section is further amended—

7 (A) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “subsection
8 (c)” and inserting “section 320 of this title”;

9 (B) in subsection (d)(1), by striking “Com-
10 mittee established in subsection (c)” and inserting
11 “Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of De-
12 fense Joint Executive Committee”;

13 (C) in subsection (e)(1), by striking “Com-
14 mittee under subsection (c)(2)” and inserting “De-
15 partment of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense
16 Joint Executive Committee with respect to health
17 care resources”; and

18 (D) in subsection (f)(2), by striking subpara-
19 graphs (B) and (C) and inserting the following:

20 “(B) The assessment of further opportunities
21 identified by the Department of Veterans Affairs-
22 Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee
23 under subsection (d)(3) of section 320 of this title

1 for the sharing of health-care resources between the
2 two Departments.

3 “(C) Any recommendation made by that com-
4 mittee under subsection (e)(2) of that section during
5 that fiscal year.”.

6 (c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (f) of
7 such section is further amended by inserting “(Public Law
8 107–314)” in paragraphs (3), (4)(A), (4)(B), and (5)
9 after “for Fiscal Year 2003”.

10 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—(1) If this Act is enacted be-
11 fore October 1, 2003—

12 (A) section 320 of title 38, United States Code,
13 as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on Octo-
14 ber 1, 2003; and

15 (B) the amendments made by subsections (b)
16 and (c) shall take effect on October 1, 2003, imme-
17 diately after the amendment made by section
18 721(a)(1) of the Bob Stump National Defense Au-
19 thorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law
20 107–314; 116 2589).

21 (2) If this Act is enacted on or after October 1, 2003,
22 the amendments made by this section shall take effect on
23 the date of the enactment of this Act.

Passed the House of Representatives May 21, 2003.

Attest:

JEFF TRANDAHL,

Clerk.