

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4255

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide assistance to the Paralympic Program of the United States Olympic Committee, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 4, 2007

Mr. FILNER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide assistance to the Paralympic Program of the United States Olympic Committee, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “United States Olympic
5 Committee Paralympic Program Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
8 ings:

1 (1) In 1998, Congress enacted the Olympic and
2 Amateur Sports Act Amendments of 1998, which
3 amended chapter 2205 of title 36, United States
4 Code, which included a statement that the purpose
5 of the Act was “to encourage and provide assistance
6 to amateur athletic programs and competition for
7 amateur athletes with disabilities, including, where
8 feasible, the expansion of opportunities for meaning-
9 ful participation by such amateur athletes in pro-
10 grams of athletic competition for able-bodied ama-
11 teur athletes”.

12 (2) The United States Olympic Committee
13 manages and administers the Paralympic Program
14 for physically disabled athletes.

15 (3) In 2005, the United States Olympic Com-
16 mittee entered into a memorandum of understanding
17 with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to expand the
18 Paralympic Program to provide special training and
19 rehabilitation to physically disabled members of the
20 Armed Forces and veterans as part of their rehabili-
21 tation and return to an active lifestyle.

22 (4) The Paralympic Program has a significant
23 positive effect on the quality of life of members of
24 the Armed Forces and veterans with physical dis-
25 abilities, including helping to improve the mobility,

1 vitality, physical, psychological, and social well-being
2 of physically disabled members of the Armed Forces
3 and veterans who participate in the program and re-
4 ducing the incidence of secondary medical conditions
5 in those participants.

6 (5) Because of Operation Iraqi Freedom and
7 Operation Enduring Freedom, the number of phys-
8 ically disabled members of the Armed Forces and
9 veterans has increased substantially and it is there-
10 fore necessary to expand the scope and size of the
11 United States Olympic Committee's Paralympic Pro-
12 gram to provide rehabilitative services through
13 sports to physically disabled members of the Armed
14 Forces and veterans.

15 (b) PURPOSE.—The purposes of this Act are as fol-
16 lows:

17 (1) To provide support to the United States
18 Olympic Committee for the Paralympic Program to
19 increase the participation of physically disabled
20 members of the Armed Forces and veterans in
21 sports as part of their rehabilitation.

22 (2) To promote the life-long health of members
23 of the Armed Forces and veterans with service-con-
24 nected disabilities through regular participation in
25 physical activity and sports.

1 (3) To provide training and support to local or-
2 ganizations to provide paralympic sports training to
3 physically disabled members of the Armed Forces
4 and veterans in their own communities.

5 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROVISION**
6 **OF ASSISTANCE TO UNITED STATES OLYMPIC**
7 **COMMITTEE PARALYMPIC PROGRAM.**

8 (a) PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.—Sub-
9 chapter II of chapter V of title 38, United States Code,
10 is amended by inserting after section 521 the following
11 new section:

12 **“§ 521A. Assistance for the United States Olympic**
13 **Committee’s Paralympic Program**

14 “(a) AUTHORIZATION TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE.—
15 The Secretary may make a grant to the United States
16 Olympic Committee to plan, develop, manage, and imple-
17 ment the Paralympic Program for veterans and members
18 of the Armed Forces.

19 “(b) OVERSIGHT BY UNDER SECRETARY FOR
20 HEALTH.—As a condition of receiving a grant under this
21 section, the United States Olympic Committee shall per-
22 mit the Under Secretary for Health to conduct such over-
23 sight of the use of grant funds as the Under Secretary
24 determines is appropriate.

1 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—(1) The United States Olym-
2 pic Committee, with the assistance and cooperation of the
3 Secretary and the heads of other appropriate Federal and
4 State departments and agencies, shall use a grant under
5 this section to recruit, support, encourage, schedule, facili-
6 tate, supervise, and implement the activities described in
7 paragraph (3) for veterans and members of the Armed
8 Forces with physical disabilities, either directly or by sup-
9 porting a program described in paragraph (2).

10 “(2) A program described in this paragraph is a com-
11 munity-based paralympic sport program, including such a
12 program that promotes basic physical activity, games,
13 recreation, training, and competition, that—

14 “(A) is approved by the Secretary; and

15 “(B) provides services and activities for vet-
16 erans and members of the Armed Forces with phys-
17 ical disabilities and may provide such services and
18 activities for individuals with physical disabilities
19 who are not veterans or members of the Armed
20 Forces.

21 “(3) Activities described in this paragraph are—

22 “(A) instruction and competition in paralympic
23 sports;

24 “(B) training and technical assistance to pro-
25 gram administrators, coaches, recreational thera-

1 pists, instructors, Department employees, and other
2 appropriate individuals; and

3 “(C) coordination, Paralympic classification of
4 athletes, athlete assessment, sport-specific training
5 techniques, program development, program specific
6 medical and personal care support, sports equip-
7 ment, supplies, program evaluation, and other activi-
8 ties related to the implementation and operation of
9 the program.

10 “(d) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—If a program
11 described in subsection (e)(2) provides services or activi-
12 ties for individuals with physical disabilities who are not
13 veterans or members of the Armed Forces, funds provided
14 to the program through the United States Olympic Com-
15 mittee under this section may not be used for such services
16 and activities.

17 “(e) OUTREACH REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary
18 shall inform all veterans with physical disabilities about
19 the existence of the Paralympic Program and shall provide
20 for, facilitate, and encourage participation of such vet-
21 erans.

22 “(f) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall ensure ac-
23 cess to and use of appropriate Department facilities by
24 all individuals participating in the Paralympic Program.

1 “(g) APPLICATION REQUIREMENT.—Before the Sec-
2 retary may make a grant to the United States Olympic
3 Committee under this section, the United States Olympic
4 Committee shall submit to the Secretary an application
5 that describes the activities to be carried out with the
6 grant, including information on specific measurable goals
7 and objectives to be achieved using grant funds.

8 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
9 is authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years
10 2008 through 2012 \$10,000,000 to carry out this sec-
11 tion.”.

12 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
13 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting
14 after the item relating to section 521 the following new
15 item:

“521A. Assistance for United States Olympic Committee’s Paralympic Pro-
gram.”.

16 (c) DEADLINE FOR MEMORANDUM OF UNDER-
17 STANDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not
18 award a grant under section 521A of title 38, United
19 States Code, as added by subsection (a), until the United
20 States Olympic Committee has entered into a memo-
21 randum of understanding or cooperative agreement with
22 the Secretary regarding implementation of the Paralympic

1 Program. Such agreement shall be concluded not later
2 than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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