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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R.

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a decennial national survey of veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. BROWNLEY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a decennial national survey of veterans, 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 “Every Veteran Counts
5 Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Department of Veterans Affairs pro-
2 vides a variety of benefits and services to more than
3 20,000,000 veterans who have served the United
4 States.

5 (2) Pursuant to section 527 of title 38, United
6 States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has
7 conducted the National Survey of Veterans to assess
8 the status of all veterans.

9 (3) The Secretary has conducted this National
10 Survey of Veterans in the late 1970s, 1987, 1993,
11 2001, and 2010.

12 (4) The last survey conducted in 2010 included
13 veterans and other beneficiary groups such as mem-
14 bers of the Armed Forces serving on active duty, de-
15 mobilized National Guard and Reserve members,
16 spouses, and surviving spouses.

17 (5) The 2010 survey included information on
18 demographics, awareness and utilization of benefits,
19 health status, military service, and employment.

20 (6) These surveys provide the Department of
21 Veterans Affairs, Congress, State and local govern-
22 ments, and various organizations that serve veterans
23 valuable information on the veteran population.

1 (7) This information is utilized to inform pol-
2 icy-making efforts and to ensure the needs of the
3 ever-changing veteran population are met.

4 (8) As the data from the 2010 survey is more
5 than a decade old, conducting a new survey will pro-
6 vide more current and accurate data on veterans and
7 other beneficiaries.

8 **SEC. 3. DECENNIAL NATIONAL SURVEY OF VETERANS.**

9 (a) SURVEY.—Not later than one year after the date
10 of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than
11 once every 10 years thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans
12 Affairs shall conduct a national survey of veterans in a
13 manner that includes a statistically valid sample of vet-
14 erans, disaggregated by the following:

15 (1) Biological sex.

16 (2) Gender identity, including disaggregation by
17 male, female, transgender, gender diverse, and
18 whether one identifies with the sex assigned at birth.

19 (3) Age.

20 (4) Educational level.

21 (5) Race and ethnicity, including disaggregation

22 by—

23 (A) membership in an Indian tribe (as de-
24 fined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determina-

1 tion and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C.
2 5304)); and

3 (B) the same major race groups as the de-
4 cennial censuses.

5 (6) Sexual orientation, including disaggregation
6 by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer.

7 (7) Marital status.

8 (8) Whether the veteran has dependent children
9 or other dependents.

10 (9) The veteran is part of a household with
11 non-dependent members.

12 (10) Income amount and source of income.

13 (11) Whether the veteran rents or owns a
14 home.

15 (12) Employment, including disaggregation by
16 whether the veteran owns a small business or is self-
17 employed.

18 (13) Reasons for not seeking employment, if
19 applicable.

20 (14) Branch and period of service.

21 (15) Whether the veteran served or is serving
22 in the National Guard or a reserve component of the
23 Armed Forces.

24 (16) Whether the veteran served in a combat
25 theater of operations or war zone.

1 (17) Whether the veteran was exposed to dead,
2 dying, or wounded people while serving on active
3 duty.

4 (18) Prisoner of war status.

5 (19) Whether the veteran was definitely or
6 probably exposed to environment hazards while in
7 military service.

8 (20) Whether the veteran is enrolled in the pa-
9 tient enrollment system of the Department of Vet-
10 erans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United
11 States Code.

12 (21) Whether the veteran is in receipt of De-
13 partment of Veterans Affairs benefits and services
14 and if not, why.

15 (22) Disability rating.

16 (23) Whether the veteran experienced military
17 sexual trauma.

18 (24) Whether the veteran lives in a rural or
19 urban setting.

20 (25) Whether the veteran has access to
21 broadband service.

22 (26) Any other category the Secretary considers
23 appropriate.

1 (b) GROUPS OF VETERANS.—Each survey conducted
2 pursuant to subsection (a) shall include the following
3 groups:

4 (1) World War II veterans.

5 (2) Korean conflict era veterans.

6 (3) Vietnam era veterans.

7 (4) Persian Gulf era veterans.

8 (5) Veterans of the conflicts in Lebanon in
9 1982 and 1983, Grenada in 1983, and Panama in
10 1989 and 1990.

11 (6) Post-9/11 era veterans.

12 (7) Veterans who served during peacetime.

13 (8) Veterans who served in a reserve component
14 of the Armed Forces, including veterans who served
15 in the National Guard, activated under title 10,
16 United States Code.

17 (9) Any other group the Secretary considers ap-
18 propriate.

19 (c) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall—

20 (1) prior to administration of the survey, con-
21 sult and collaborate with a wide range of relevant
22 stakeholders on the survey instrument and adminis-
23 tration, such as—

1 (A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of
2 the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-
3 fairs of the House of Representatives;

4 (B) Congressional Budget Office;

5 (C) veterans service organizations; and

6 (D) the Advisory Committees on Minority
7 Veterans, Women Veterans, and Homeless Vet-
8 erans of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

9 (2) be creative in carrying out outreach nec-
10 essary to conduct each survey under subsection (a);

11 (3) strive to collect statistically significant sam-
12 ples across all surveyed groups; and

13 (4) collect ample intersectional data.

14 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the com-
15 pletion of a survey conducted pursuant to subsection (a),
16 the Secretary shall—

17 (1) submit to Congress a report on the results
18 of the survey;

19 (2) publish such report on a publicly accessible
20 website of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

21 (3) make the data collected through administra-
22 tion of the survey available to the public, with such
23 redactions or other changes made as the Secretary
24 considers appropriate to protect the privacy of the
25 individuals surveyed.