

THE BRING OUR HEROES HOME ACT

INTRODUCED BY SENATORS CRAPO AND SHAHEEN

Too many families still do not know the fates of their loved ones who were reported as missing during wars dating as far back as the Second World War. According to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, more than 81,000 Americans remain unaccounted for from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War, the Gulf Wars and other conflicts.

Worse still, U.S. government agencies are holding old records that might give these families answers. At present, there is no obligation for these agencies to disclose these reports, and many are still being held as classified or restricted even though the conflict or era during which they were created passed long ago. These families deserve to know what happened to their family members, and government agencies have not always been willing to share what they know.

The *Bring Our Heroes Home Act* (S.2315/H.R.3110) would provide for the creation of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Collection (Collection) within the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The bill also requires U.S. government agencies to transmit records that relate, directly or indirectly, to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel to this newly created office within one year of enactment. U.S. government agencies would need to certify that they conducted a thorough search for these records and if any copies were not sent to NARA. Agencies could postpone the transmission of records on limited grounds. The legislation would also establish the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board (Review Board) that would promulgate rules to establish guidelines and processes for the disclosure of records contained in the Collection. The Review Board would also review any agency decision to postpone the release of records related to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

The Coalition of Families of Korean & Cold War POW/MIAs has played a pivotal role in drafting, shaping and advocating for the legislation.

Senators Risch, Blackburn, Thune, Cassidy, Rounds, Warren, Padilla, Rosen, King, Duckworth and Hassan are cosponsors.