

TO AUTHORIZE THE PLACEMENT IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
OF A MEMORIAL HONORING THE WORLD WAR II VETERANS WHO
FOUGHT IN THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

JULY 18, 2002.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 5055]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 5055) to authorize the placement in Arlington National Cemetery of a memorial honoring the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

INTRODUCTION

On July 9, 2002, the Subcommittee met and unanimously ordered H.R. 5055 reported favorably to the full Committee.

On July 16, 2002, the full Committee met and ordered H.R. 5055 reported favorably to the House by voice vote.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORTED BILL

H.R. 5055 would:

1. Authorize the Secretary of the Army to place in Arlington National Cemetery a memorial marker honoring veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge during World War II.
2. Provide the Secretary of the Army exclusive authority to approve an appropriate design and site for the memorial authorized.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The Battle of the Bulge is one of the most famous battles in U.S. history. In September 1944, Adolph Hitler and the German High Command planned a winter offensive with the objective of splitting the Allied forces. Hitler believed that a surprise attack on Allied forces, which had fewer men and long supply lines, would impel Allied leaders to negotiate an armistice, after which time the German army could move to defeat the Soviet Union.

On December 16, 1944, German forces attacked in the Ardennes Forest area of Belgium, and the Allies were caught off guard. General Dwight Eisenhower countered and divided the command of the Allied forces around the “bulge” created by the German offensive. One group was lead by General Bernard Law Montgomery, British Commander of the Twenty-First Army Group, the other by General Omar M. Bradley, American Commander of the Twelfth Army Group. General George Patton’s Third Army also moved in to relieve the defenders of the bulge.

Just weeks into the assault, the Germans began a tactical withdrawal; by January 28, 1945, Hitler’s armies were in full retreat. The German failure at what became widely known as the Battle of the Bulge essentially signaled the end of the German Army. Total German defeat was accomplished within a few months thereafter; in April 1945 Hitler committed suicide and on May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered.

More than one million men fought in this epic battle, the largest land battle of World War II. In scope and number of participants, no American engagement in our history was more costly or massive. At its conclusion, 62,000 U.S. servicemembers were wounded and 19,000 were killed, the British had casualties of 1,400 with 200 killed and 100,000 Germans were killed, wounded or captured. Winston Churchill called it “the greatest American battle of the war.”

H.R. 5055 would enable a group of Battle of the Bulge survivors to replace the modest and decaying plaque at Arlington National Cemetery commemorating this battle with a more appropriate memorial.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1(a) would authorize the Secretary of the Army to place in Arlington National Cemetery a memorial marker honoring veterans who fought in the European theater of operations during World War II in the battle known as the Battle of the Bulge.

Section 1(b) would provide exclusive authority to the Secretary of the Army to approve an appropriate design and site within Arlington National Cemetery for the memorial authorized under subsection (a).

PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The reported bill would authorize a new memorial in Arlington National Cemetery commemorating the Battle of the Bulge. The Cemetery’s performance goals and objectives are established in annual performance plans and are subject to the Committee’s regular oversight.

STATEMENT OF THE VIEWS OF THE ADMINISTRATION

The Committee did not request the views of the Administration.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

The following letter was received from the Congressional Budget Office concerning the cost of the reported bill:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 17, 2002.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 5055, a bill to authorize the placement in Arlington National Cemetery of a memorial honoring the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Melissa E. Zimmerman, who can be reached at 226-2840.

Sincerely,

DAN L. CRIPPEN,
Director.

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

H.R. 5055, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE PLACEMENT IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY OF A MEMORIAL HONORING THE WORLD WAR II VETERANS WHO FOUGHT IN THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, AS ORDERED REPORTED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS ON JULY 16, 2002

H.R. 5055 would authorize the Secretary of the Army to place a memorial honoring veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge within Arlington National Cemetery. The design and placement of the memorial would be subject to the Secretary's approval.

Based on information provided by Arlington National Cemetery, CBO expects that a private veterans organization would pay for the design and construction of the memorial. The cemetery would incur costs to construct the foundation for the memorial, host groundbreaking and dedication ceremonies, and maintain the memorial. CBO estimates that these costs would be insignificant. Because the legislation would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

H.R. 5055 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact is Melissa E. Zimmerman. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

STATEMENT OF FEDERAL MANDATES

The preceding Congressional Budget Office cost estimate states that the bill contains no intergovernmental or private sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

STATEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Article I, section 8, of the United States Constitution, the reported bill is authorized by Congress' power to "provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States."

