

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 261

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 1, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman JOANN DOWNEY

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblyman ERIC HOUGHTALING

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblywoman CLEOPATRA G. TUCKER

District 28 (Essex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Wirths, Space, Assemblywoman Swain and Assemblyman Tully

SYNOPSIS

Respectfully urges Congress to pass “Ensuring Survivor Benefits During COVID-19 Act of 2021.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/24/2021)

AR261 DOWNEY, HOUGHTALING

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1 AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION respectfully urging the United States
2 Congress to pass the “Ensuring Survivor Benefits During COVID-
3 19 Act of 2021.”

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5 WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted millions of
6 Americans, causing death and devastation in every state and in all
7 areas of life; and

8 WHEREAS, The pandemic has impacted veterans just as harshly as any
9 other group of people with over 10,000 deaths recorded alone by
10 homes and centers operated by the United States Department of
11 Veterans Affairs; and

12 WHEREAS, Due to the nature of COVID-19, it is often difficult to
13 determine the principal or contributory causes of death in a person
14 who dies from COVID-19; and

15 WHEREAS, Veterans with service-connected disabilities may have
16 multiple serious health conditions, including cancers, diabetes,
17 respiratory issues, and a weakened immune system, which make
18 COVID-19 that much more dangerous; and

19 WHEREAS, The families of veterans with service-connected disabilities
20 who have died as a result of contracting COVID-19 are potentially at
21 risk of losing their survivor benefits because the death certificate for
22 those veterans lists COVID-19 as the principal or contributory cause
23 of death; and

24 WHEREAS, The United States Congress has introduced the bipartisan
25 “Ensuring Survivor Benefits During COVID-19 Act of 2021” which
26 would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to get a medical
27 opinion to determine if a service-connected disability was the
28 principal or contributory cause of death in situations where a
29 veteran’s death certificate identifies COVID-19 as the principal or
30 contributory cause of death; and

31 WHEREAS, The medical opinion required by this act would ensure that
32 the families of those veterans would not be denied any survivor
33 benefits because the death certificate does not clearly identify any of
34 the veteran’s service-connected disabilities as the principal or
35 contributory cause of death; and

36 WHEREAS, The federal legislation would help the families of veterans
37 with service-connected disabilities by preserving the benefits to
38 which they are entitled; and

39 WHEREAS, Therefore, it is fitting and proper for this House to
40 demonstrate its support for this bipartisan legislation and honor its
41 commitment to veterans and their families by continuing to support
42 their needs and urging Congress to pass this important legislation;
43 now, therefore,

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45 BE IT RESOLVED by the General Assembly of the State of New
46 Jersey:

