



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

July 17, 2002

H.R. 4940

Arlington National Cemetery Burial Eligibility Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on July 16, 2002

H.R. 4940 would codify, with minor changes, many current regulations governing eligibility for burial in Arlington National Cemetery and interment in its columbarium. The bill would allow certain close family members of eligible veterans to be buried in the same grave without the need for a waiver, grant eligibility for burial to members of the armed services who die in the performance of duty during training, and grant eligibility to certain members and former members of reserve components of the armed forces. H.R. 4940 also would prohibit burial of any individual who would otherwise be ineligible, unless the President authorizes burial because of a candidate's extraordinary contributions to the armed forces. Under the bill, future memorials or markers must commemorate service in the armed forces.

H.R. 4940 would require the Secretary of the Army to maintain a public register that would describe the eligibility of each individual buried in Arlington National Cemetery after January 1, 2002. The bill would also require the Secretary to publish a pamphlet describing eligibility requirements for burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

CBO estimates that the costs of implementing H.R. 4940 would not be significant. Most categories of veterans and family members covered under the bill's eligibility criteria are already eligible under current regulations. The bill would grant eligibility to family members who are presently ineligible for burial at the cemetery, but because these individuals are small in number and have often received waivers in the past, CBO estimates that this new eligibility would not lead to a significant increase in the numbers of burials.

H.R. 4940 also would grant burial eligibility to certain members of the armed services who were previously ineligible. CBO estimates that less than 1,000 veterans and close family members a year would become eligible for burial under the bill, but that only a small portion would request burial at Arlington National Cemetery. Thus, CBO estimates that implementing these new eligibility criteria would not lead to a significant increase in the number of burials at the cemetery.

CBO estimates that the costs of maintaining the register and producing the pamphlet would be negligible. Because the legislation would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

H.R. 4940 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.

On July 11, 2002, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 4940, as introduced on June 13, 2002. The two versions of the bill are identical, as are the two estimates.

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