

Honor Their Service Act

Immigration Legal Services for Noncitizen Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces

VETERANS WHO SERVED ARE BEING DEPORTED

Tens of thousands of noncitizens have served honorably in the U.S. military, putting their lives on the line for a country that promised them a path to citizenship. Yet many of these veterans now face removal, have already been deported, or died in exile, cut off from the VA health care, disability benefits, and mental health treatment they earned. Over 40,000 noncitizens currently serve in the armed forces, and an estimated 115,000 noncitizen veterans live in the United States.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When signing up, servicemembers are often promised an easy path to citizenship but find meeting requirements challenging while serving. The military has specifically recruited non-citizens with medical and language skills in exchange for an expectation of expedited citizenship that often doesn't occur.

There is no mechanism within the Department of Defense to ensure noncitizen service members are able to complete the naturalization process before discharge. Veterans can be sent home from war without the citizenship they were promised.

Then, many veterans are deported for minor offenses or lose status due to bureaucratic failures, despite years of honorable military service.

Deported veterans often lose access to VA health care, disability benefits, and mental health treatment they earned through service.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

This bill establishes a VA grant program to fund immigration legal services for noncitizen veterans who are in removal proceedings, at risk of removal, or have already been deported. The bill authorizes \$20 million over four years for this program.

- **Legal aid** in removal proceedings
- **Naturalization assistance**, including military pathways
- **Parole applications**, including parole in place
- **Repatriation support** for deported veterans
- **Discharge upgrade help** when status blocks relief
- **Nationwide Access** including rural & territories

ACCOUNTABILITY & OVERSIGHT: Grants go only to qualified public or nonprofit entities. The Secretary of VA must consult veterans service organizations and experienced legal providers. Biennial reports to Congress ensure transparency on outcomes.

Cosponsor the Honor Their Service Act. Contact Serena Gobbi at Serena.Gobbi@mail.house.gov to sign on.