

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/SM 1472

SPONSOR: Rules and Calendar Committee and Senator Crist

SUBJECT: POW/MIA

DATE: April 3, 2003

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Krasovsky</u>	<u>Kassack</u>	<u>RC</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This memorial requests Congress to provide the necessary funds to the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) within the Department of Defense (DOD) and other DOD agencies in order that they can continue to achieve the fullest possible accounting of POW/MIAs unimpeded by budget constraints or reduction. It is resolved that the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs will continue to work with the DPMO to identify unlocated family members of a Florida POW/MIA to request that eligible family members provide blood samples to keep on file to assist, if needed, in the identification process.

II. Present Situation:

Currently, there are over 78,000 persons missing from World War II, over 8,000 persons missing from the Korean War, over 120 persons missing from the Cold War, and over 1,900 persons missing from the Vietnam War.

The federal agency tasked by Congress to deal with the POW/MIA issue is the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) within the Department of Defense (DOD). The DPMO exercises policy, control, and oversight within the DoD of the entire process of investigation and recovery related to missing persons, including matters related to search, rescue, escape, and evasion. The Office coordinates on DOD's behalf with other departments and agencies of the U.S. on all matters concerning missing persons, and establishes procedures to be followed by DOD boards of inquiry and by officials reviewing the reports of such other boards.

Many DoD groups external to DPMO play critical roles in achieving the fullest possible accounting. They bring together many different specialties and perform the majority of DPMO's field work.

- The Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) performs DNA testing. This includes mitochondria DNA typing. Their work helps identify remains recovered from all conflicts. They also support other groups outside of DoD when tasked.
- The Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) has a worldwide mission. The lab's staff people search for, recover, and identify remains of Americans who die while serving our nation. When directed, they support civil humanitarian missions and provide technical assistance on recovering and identifying remains.
- Joint Task Force – Full Accounting (JTF-FA) works to resolve cases from the Vietnam War. Its search teams conduct operations including analysis, investigations, archival research, and recovery operations (in close cooperation with CILHI) in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.
- The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) maintains a program dedicated solely to Vietnam War accounting, commonly referred to as “Stony Beach.” This team of experts provides direct support to Joint Task Force-Full Accounting and DPMO by interviewing people in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and the United States. They investigate both “last known alive” cases and first-hand “live sighting” reports. Their work contributes to the oral history program.
- The Life Science Equipment Laboratory (LSEL) provides scientific analysis of aircraft and military equipment recovered at loss sites to help determine if an individual survived or died.
- The service casualty offices (SCOs) serve as primary liaison between the family and all other government groups involved in POW/MIA accounting. The Secretaries of the Military Departments maintain offices for each military service as the focal point on all casualty matters while the Department of State handles matters on missing civilians.

The stated number one priority of the U.S. government is “live recovery”. American service personnel are deployed globally to bring men and women home alive anytime, anywhere. These actions, defined as “personnel recovery,” are the sum of military, civil, and political acts needed to gain the release or rescue of our men and women.

A review of available federal information does not provide the current funding level of the DPMO.

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs is currently working with the DPMO to assist in the identification of unlocated family members. This will allow the DPMO to ask eligible family members to provide a blood sample to keep on file at the AFDIL in the event it is needed in the identification process. Locating family members is also necessary to comply with Public Law 50 U.S.C. Section 435. The law requires the DoD to consult with the primary next-of-kin to determine if the information pertaining to the treatment, location, or condition of their loved one can be released to the public.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This memorial requests Congress to provide the necessary funds to the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) within the Department of Defense (DOD) and other DOD agencies in order that they can continue to achieve the fullest possible accounting of POW/MIAs unimpeded by budget constraints or reduction. It is resolved that the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs will continue to work with the DPMO to identify un-located family members of a Florida POW/MIA and request that eligible family members provide blood samples to keep on file to assist, if needed, in the identification process.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

To the extent that the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs is already assisting the DPMO in providing information that would aide in the identification of Florida POW/MIAs, there will be no additional cost to the agency.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
