

IMMIGRANT VETERANS



DEPORTED BY THE SAME NATION
THEY SACRIFICED TO DEFEND



Prepared by the Office of Senator Tammy Duckworth

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	2
Introduction	4
Findings.....	6
1. President Donald Trump Eliminated Military Naturalization Resources and Created Barriers to Prevent Expedited Citizenship for Servicemembers.....	6
2. The U.S. Government Deported Veterans Without Considering Military Service.....	9
3. Deported Veterans Are Denied Full Access Veteran Affairs’ Benefits	10
4. Deported Veterans Have No Clear Pathway to Citizenship	12
Conclusion	14
Recommendations	15
Endnotes.....	18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Immigrant servicemembers possess critical skills that enhance military readiness and strengthen national security. That is why for more than 200 years, the U.S. Government has passed laws, promulgated policies and created initiatives that provide servicemembers an expedited path to citizenship. Prior to the Trump administration, Republican and Democratic administrations alike at least sought to streamline the naturalization process for the brave men and women who answered the call to serve.

Yet, despite these efforts, there are still members of the U.S. Armed Forces that honorably serve and fight in combat overseas only to be discharged without receiving citizenship. Adding insult to injury, immigrant Veterans can, and have been, deported by the same Nation they took an oath to defend. Unfortunately, the U.S. Government neglected to keep an accurate record of the Veterans our Nation deported, forcing the Senator to identify these Veterans herself.

After meeting with dozens of deported Veterans living in Tijuana, Mexico, Senator Duckworth opened an investigation into the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) policies that result in Veteran deportation. In conducting a comprehensive review, the Senator requested information from multiple Federal agencies, reviewed source documents, consulted immigration and national security experts and met with officials at the U.S. Consulate in Tijuana, Mexico.

1. President Donald Trump Eliminated Military Naturalization Resources and Created Barriers to Prevent Expedited Citizenship for Servicemembers.

The Trump administration removed U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) teams at military training installations in order to prevent military members being naturalized upon graduating from basic training—thereby making it much more difficult to naturalize servicemembers. USCIS also shuttered a large number of its international immigration offices, dramatically limiting the ability of overseas servicemembers to naturalize while serving abroad.

2. The U.S. Government Deported Veterans Without Considering Military Service.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that Immigrations Customs Enforcement (ICE) violates its policy to review military service when initiating deportation orders for Veterans. From 2013-2018, ICE issued removal for 250 Veterans and deported 92 Veterans. However, this number likely does not cover every Veteran that ICE encountered, as the agency inconsistently enforced its policy to annotate Veteran status in removal proceedings. To date, ICE does not maintain a thorough and complete database to track when immigrant Veterans are placed in deportation proceedings or actually deported.

3. Deported Veterans Lack Full Access to Veteran Affairs' Benefits.

Veterans are entitled to VA benefits. Yet, the comprehensive healthcare that Veterans are eligible to receive is not fully accessible to men and women residing outside of the United States. VA physicians trained in addressing the complicated needs of Veterans operate at VA medical centers, which are located within the United States, U.S. territories and the Philippines. To be clear, Veterans do not legally lose the benefits they earned through their service because of their deportation. Rather, these Veterans simply cannot access the complete and comprehensive services offered by VA—such as preventative care, inpatient hospital services, emergency care and mental health services—because their deportation bars them from entering the United States.

4. Deported Veterans Have No Clear Pathway to Citizenship.

After deported Veterans complete the initial naturalization requirements—submitting the application for naturalization, passing comprehensive background checks and providing biometrics—USCIS schedules a naturalization interview with the applicant. However, at this point deported Veterans find themselves facing nearly insurmountable bureaucratic obstacles. Their removal orders prevent them from entering the United States, and DHS has the discretion to grant or deny their parole request to enter the country. While parole is discretionary, it leaves Veteran applicants in an ambiguous state. The vague DHS guidance on granting parole delays the naturalization process. Veterans spend valuable time and money traveling to a port of entry and cross their fingers in hope that the agency that approved and prescheduled their citizenship interview will also grant them parole to attend said interview. Some Veterans are granted parole, while others are not.

INTRODUCTION

History of Immigrants Enlisting in the U.S. Military

Beginning with the Revolutionary War, immigrants have enlisted in the U.S. Armed Forces and fought alongside American-born troops. Foreign-born servicemembers have shown their loyalty to America by joining the ranks of the military to defend and protect our Nation. Section 504 of title 10 of the United States Code permits U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents (LPR) to enlist in the military as well as other individuals with skill sets vital to the American national interest, as directed by the Secretary of Defense.¹

- I. In World War I, immigrant Soldiers comprised 18 percent of the U.S. Army. Even military units like the 77th Infantry Division, known as the “Melting Pot Division” were famous for the diversity of their servicemembers.² DoD, formerly known as the Department of War, embraced foreign-born servicemembers and facilitated English classes at training camps to help noncitizens learn the language.
- II. In World War II, Congress passed the Second War Powers Act to expedite naturalization for foreign-born servicemembers. The law did not automatically grant citizenship, but rather permitted individuals who served honorably to be exempt from certain citizen requirements, including age, residence and educational tests.³ To earn citizenship, noncitizens were required to complete a naturalization petition and swear the Oath of Allegiance. The government actively assisted immigrants in attaining citizenship and conducted naturalization ceremonies at military installations at home and overseas.
- III. Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2004 to recognize and reward the contributions of foreign-born servicemembers.⁴ This legislation expedited naturalization requirements to incentivize immigrants to join the military. For example, the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) permits Legal Permanent Residents (LPR) enlisted in the military to apply for naturalization more quickly than immigrants who do not serve. During peacetime, enlisted LPRS can become citizens after one year of service; during times of war or hostility, enlisted LPRs can immediately apply for naturalization. LPRs not enrolled in the military generally are required to wait between three to five years for naturalization.

- IV. In response to the current national security threats, DoD used its legal authority outlined in U.S. Code Title 10 to allow noncitizens with critical skills to join the Armed Forces. From 2008 – 2016, DoD facilitated the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) program to allow legally present noncitizens to join the U.S. Armed Forces or the Reserves. The agency has recruited more than 10,000 noncitizens with critical medical, cyber and language skills.⁵
- V. President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama both clarified and attempted to expedite the citizenship process for military members. Military naturalizations have long received bipartisan support:

President George W. Bush Authorized Expedited Citizenship for Servicemembers

In 2002, the Bush administration issued an Executive Order authorizing that all noncitizens who served honorably in active-duty status in the U.S. Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001 could immediately file for citizenship.⁶ This Executive Order designated a period of hostility, which affects the requirements for naturalization applications for military servicemembers. During military periods of hostility, noncitizens are able to immediately apply for citizenship, in contrast to periods of peacetime, which requires noncitizens to honorably serve for one year before applying for naturalization. As of February 2021, this Executive Order is still in effect and no President has rescinded this order.

President Barack Obama Ensured Servicemembers Could Naturalize Before Deployment

In 2008, under the Obama administration, USCIS opened the Naturalization at Basic Training Initiative for enlistees in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and National Guard.⁷ Graduates of basic training received the opportunity to naturalize through this initiative and request expedited processing of their application. Each military installation was equipped with designated personnel to help members prepare their naturalization documents: the N-400 Application for Naturalization and the N-426 Certification of Military or Naval Service. USCIS conducted naturalization processing, including the capturing biometrics, conducting naturalization interviews and administering the Oath of Allegiance on the military installation. USCIS also provided customer service specialists to assist military members and their families.

FINDINGS

1. **President Donald Trump Eliminated Military Naturalization Resources and Created Barriers to Prevent Expedited Citizenship for Servicemembers**

A. Prolonged Eligibility for Certification of Service for Naturalization:

In 2017, DoD issued a memorandum changing two key qualifications for the N-426 Certification of Military or Naval Service, a form necessary for USICS to expedite military naturalizations.⁸ The DoD guidance stated that noncitizens must pass all background checks before attending basic training and complete 180 days of active duty before receiving the N-426 form.⁹ Prior to the 2017 DoD policy change, noncitizens were eligible to apply for expedited naturalization at the start of basic training with one day on active duty. Some immigration experts cite that these changes lengthened the amount of time it takes for servicemembers to receive citizenship—significantly delaying the naturalization process for servicemembers and potentially impacting the number of servicemembers who are able to naturalize in the long-term.

In August 2020, the D.C. Federal District Court found that Trump’s 180-day requirement violated the Immigration and Nationality Act and deemed these policy changes as arbitrary and capricious. Finding the policy in violation of Congress’ clear intent, the Court required that DoD return to the prior policy. In September 2020, DoD released guidance directing all military departments to comply with the court order and allow servicemembers to apply for expedited citizenship after one day of active service.

B. Prevented New Enlistees from Naturalizing After Graduation of Basic Training:

In 2018, the Trump administration’s USCIS closed the Naturalization at Basic Training Initiative at all three sites – Fort Still in Oklahoma, Fort Benning in Georgia and Fort Jackson in South Carolina. According to reports, USCIS officials claimed that the 2017 DoD guidance initiated the closures of these offices.¹⁰ These closures make attaining citizenship harder for servicemembers, who are likely not receiving adequate support to naturalize.

C. Closed USCIS Offices Established to Help Troops Attain Citizenship:

In 2019, USCIS announced its plans to close 13 of the 20 international field offices that provide immigration services to individuals located outside of the United States by August 2020.¹¹ This means that servicemembers will now only have seven international offices available to receive assistance with the naturalization process.

To supplement these closures, USCIS will offer onsite overseas military naturalization services at four military bases. Once a quarter, USCIS officials will conduct naturalization services for military members and their families at four military installations – Camp Humphreys in South Korea, Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka in Japan, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart in Germany and Naval Support Activity Naples in Italy.¹² Unfortunately, servicemembers must cover their own cost of travel to these installations.

While Trump administration officials said that onsite services will help streamline immigration services, some see this initiative as insufficient, especially considering that seven field offices and the Department of State will now have to carry the additional caseload of the 13 offices that were already offering these services.

Although DoD and USCIS have tried to modernize the naturalization process in the past, both agencies have failed to ensure that every immigrant servicemember who wants to naturalize can attain citizenship. In such an instance, a servicemember mistakenly believed he received citizenship upon enlisting in the U.S. Army.

The Case of Miguel Perez



Miguel Perez meets with Senator Duckworth after working for nearly two years to assist him to become an American citizen.

This Veteran's name is Miguel Perez. He is a combat Veteran who served two tours of duty in Afghanistan while participating in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Throughout his military service, he participated in numerous classified missions and supported combat operations.

Unfortunately, he did not realize that he was not a citizen when he left the Armed Forces, even though he sacrificed much for our country. The U.S. Army failed to help Miguel naturalize on two separate occasions: prior to his April 2003 deployment to Afghanistan and upon his return from that deployment in October 2003. Although ICE deported Miguel and barred him from entering the U.S. for nearly two years, he recently became an American citizen and reunited with his children.

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2. The U.S. Government Deported Veterans Without Considering Military Service

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that Immigrations Customs Enforcement (ICE) does not follow its own policy to review military service when initiating deportation orders for Veterans.¹³

ICE issued guidance in June and September 2004 that outlined how DHS staff must issue Veterans a Notice to Appear (NTA), which begins removal proceedings. DHS must consider several factors before issuing an NTA, including, criminal history, evidence of rehabilitation, family and financial ties to the United States, employment history, health, community service, duty status, deployment, years of service and awards. These policies also gave the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Special Agent in Charge and Enforcement Removal Officer Field Director the authority to issue NTAs for Veterans and required them to submit a complete memo that listed the factors they considered to initiate removal proceedings.

In 2015, ICE built on this guidance and released a memo that required ICE headquarters to review NTA cases that would potentially involve Veterans. The policy required HSI, Enforcement and Removal Operations and the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor's House of Chief Counsel to complete a joint memorandum that outlines the facts considered and recommendation for a course of action for ICE headquarters to consider.

To date, ICE does not maintain a thorough and complete database to track when immigrant Veterans are placed in deportation proceedings or actually deported. The available data that ICE did record revealed that between fiscal years 2013 and 2018. The GAO report found:

- ICE ignored the 2004 guidance in 18 of 87 cases (21 percent).
- ICE ignored the 2015 guidance in 26 of 37 cases (70 percent).
- ICE removed 92 Veterans of 250 Veterans for which they issued a NTA.

The analysis also indicated that the most common countries where deported Veterans came from were Mexico, Germany, Belize, Canada, the Dominican Republic, the Federated States of Micronesia, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Thailand, Costa Rica, Korea and Poland. These negligent and cruel actions not only separate Veterans from their families and homes, but also cause deported Veterans to lose out on the critical VA healthcare services they earned through their service and sacrifice.

3. Deported Veterans Are Denied Full Access Veteran Affairs' Benefits

The U.S. Veterans Affairs Department (VA) may provide VA benefits to noncitizens. That is why it is of grave concern that deported Veterans have severely-limited access to the VA's uniquely-qualified health care system. Our country has an obligation to care for these individuals who risked their lives defending this Nation and continue to live with health conditions because of their service.

A. Deported Veterans Face Limited Access to Healthcare

VA's comprehensive healthcare is not fully accessible to Veterans residing outside of the United States. VA physicians are trained in addressing the unique and complicated needs of Veterans and provide robust care at VA medical centers, which are located within the United States, U.S. territories and in the Philippines. Veterans barred from entering the United States as a result of deportation thus lose out on complete and comprehensive access to necessary preventative care, inpatient hospital services, emergency care and mental health services.

Due to lack of access, they may be forced to seek these services from providers who are not equipped or trained to treat the needs of the Veteran patients. For instance, these physicians may not be trained to identify damage caused by toxic burn pits or airborne exposure, mental health illnesses or health conditions associated with various places of deployments, unique medical needs of female Veterans or effectively screening for Veteran suicidal ideation.

Additionally, many deported Veterans became entangled in the criminal justice system, which can subsequently lead to immigration removal proceedings, because of undiagnosed mental health issues or the use of self-medicating on illegal substances. It is simply wrong and inhumane to leave these Veterans who are especially vulnerable, isolated and without access to a healthcare system that is uniquely qualified to treat them in a culture and environment where they can feel safe and heard.

B. VA's Foreign Medical Program Cannot Adequately Provide Healthcare to Deported Veterans

While deported Veterans may not be able to access direct VA healthcare services, Veterans living abroad may receive medical care through VA's Foreign Medical Program (FMP). This program reimburses medical expenses for a VA-rated, service-connected disability and any disability associated with and held to be aggravating a service-connected disability¹⁴. Covered benefits include emergency services, hospitalization, outpatient care, physical therapy, prescription drugs and medical equipment.

FMP is intended for servicemembers traveling abroad or permanently relocating, which makes this program available for deported Veterans. FMP is not a perfect nor comprehensive solution for these Veterans. In addition, FMP only reimburses Veterans who are otherwise eligible to receive hospital care and medical services and who are determined to be in need of hospital care or medical services (including durable medical equipment). Most deported Veterans likely lack the resources to pay for medical treatments upfront and cannot wait the long periods it takes to be reimbursed for such expenses. Additionally, FMP does not reimburse travel expenses, so Veterans must scrape up money to travel to medical providers. FMP also cannot reimburse Veterans who reside in countries where U.S. Department of Treasury checks are restricted or where travel is prohibited.

C. Deported Veterans Face Obstacles Receiving Disability Compensation

According to both VA and Veteran Service Organization officials, deported Veterans also face challenges scheduling and receiving quality Compensation and Pension (C&P) exams—exams that may be requested by VA officials to determine a Veterans eligibility for disability compensation. Veterans living abroad may receive exams from either VA contractors or a private provider scheduled by the U.S. embassy or consulate. As of March 2019, VA has contractors in 33 countries and U.S. territories, including Mexico, Belize, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines.

VA does not reimburse Veterans for travel costs associate with attending their C&P exams. Also, VA has stated that the effectiveness for coordination between VA and the embassies varies by country, and access to specialized providers, such as those who are qualified to assess mental health or audio levels, also varies by the location of the embassy or consulate. VA has stated that Veterans who receive embassy-scheduled exams from private providers abroad may receive lower-quality exams than Veterans in the United States. Some of the providers are unfamiliar with U.S. medical terminology, misunderstand VA exam requirements due to language barriers and lack access to the Veteran's service record. Subsequently, many providers are unable to determine if a condition is service-connected.

4. Deported Veterans Have No Clear Pathway to Citizenship

Theoretically, the citizenship process is simple to understand.

Upon completion of the initial naturalization requirements—submitting the naturalization application, passing comprehensive background checks and providing biometrics—USCIS schedules a naturalization interview for the applicant. At the interview, a USCIS officer will question the candidate regarding their naturalization application and proctor the English and civics test, typically approving applicants for naturalization upon passing these tests. On that same day, the candidate takes the Oath of Allegiance and becomes a United States citizen.

In practice, the citizenship process for deported Veterans is extremely complex.

One Veteran, by the name of Roman Sabal, navigated the naturalizations process for years after being barred from reentering.¹⁵ As his case exemplifies, the central obstacle for deported Veterans is actually attending the citizenship interview. Their removal orders prevents them from entering the United States, and DHS has the discretion to grant or deny their parole request to enter the country.

Because parole is discretionary, it leaves Veteran applicants in an ambiguous state. Veterans spend valuable time and money traveling to a port of entry and can only hope that the agency that approved and prescheduled their citizenship interview will also grant them parole to attend said interview.

A. Vague Guidance on Granting Parole Delays the Naturalization Process:

When deported Veterans complete the preliminary citizenship requirements, they often struggle to receive parole into the United States to attend their USCIS-scheduled naturalization interview. The reason being that the DHS uses a confusing and vague decisional framework to grant parole.

A 2008 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) describes that the DHS Secretary delegated her parole authority to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, ICE and USCIS all to grant parole on a case-by-case basis. This MOA outlines that parole is granted at the discretion of the agency on a case-by-case basis for “urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit.” It also provides a non-exhaustive list of parole categories stating which DHS bureau will receive and adjudicate requests. This list does not provide an appropriate parole category for deported Veterans seeking reentry for their citizenship interview, nor specify which agency has jurisdiction to grant such requests. Consequently, the lack of clarity deprives Veterans of a fair chance for citizenship and further delays the naturalization process and even denies access to this important interview.

B. Marine Veteran Navigated the Citizenship Process for 12 Years:

In July 2019, DHS denied parole to Marine Veteran Roman Sabal. This decision denied him entry into the United States and caused him to miss his pre-scheduled USCIS naturalization interview.

Sergeant Sabal first entered the U.S. on a tourist visa from Belize and managed to join the Marine Corps with a false identity document. He confessed during boot camp, but was told, “Don’t worry about it. You’re a Marine now.” From April 1987 – April 1993, Sabal served in the Marine Corps and received an honorable discharge. He later joined the California National Army Guard for four years.

Following Sabal’s diabetes diagnosis, he traveled to Belize for treatment. When he returned to the United States, his entry triggered an immigration court case. Sabal was never made aware of the immigration proceeding, and consequently a Judge launched orders for his deportation due to failure to appear on his court date. In 2008, Sabal traveled to Belize a second time, and upon reentering, DHS did not allow him back into the U.S. This made his path toward citizenship much more difficult.

After DHS denied Sabal’s parole request, his pro-bono legal team filed a Federal lawsuit in the Northern District of Illinois. The lawsuit claimed that Sabal is legally entitled to naturalize because of his honorable military service. It took a Federal lawsuit to make the U.S. Government parole Sabal into the country to attend his interview. In October 2020, Sabal became a U.S. Citizen and now enjoys the freedoms that accompany citizenship.



Javier Ramirez with Senator Duckworth during her 2019 Veterans Day visit to honor the service of deported Veterans in Tijuana, Mexico.

Unfortunately, some deported Veterans will never enjoy the full benefits of citizenship due to our unforgiving and overly burdensome immigration laws. Javier Ramirez, a Vietnam-era Marine, is one of those Veterans. Javier died of cancer in Mexico and returned to his family only to be buried on American soil.¹⁶ He suffered from multiple myeloma, like other Veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange and other hazardous chemicals while serving in Vietnam and other areas. Javier had no access to VA hospitals and used his military pension to pay for cancer treatments in Mexico. In February 2021, Javier received a military burial as his family laid him to rest at the VA’s Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Illinois.

CONCLUSION

The United States relies on immigrant servicemembers in all sectors within the military, and it is clear that the government must better support and protect them. Deporting Veterans separates military families and places comprehensive healthcare services out of reach for many who have served.

The U.S. Departments of Defense, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs must actively coordinate outreach efforts to ensure that noncitizens understand the naturalization process and are able to actually move forward with the process to become American citizens. Immigration officials must retain trained staff to provide timely and accessible citizenship services at military installations.

Rather than removing those who risked their lives to defend our Nation, the U.S. Government must end the practice of deporting immigrant servicemembers and provide robust VA services for all impacted Veterans. Immigrants willing to serve and defend our Nation deserve a real opportunity to earn citizenship, and it is the U.S. Government's responsibility to uphold this promise for those who bravely served.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The U.S. Government must resolve citizenship challenges for Veterans and active-duty troops through executive actions and legislation. President Joe Biden has signaled his commitment to supporting active duty troops naturalize. He issued Executive Order 14012 to facilitate naturalizations for immigrant servicemembers. Public reports indicate that the Biden administration plans to review Veteran deportations under the Trump administration. While this is commendable start, there are greater policy changes the administration must enact. Specifically, the administration should:

Prevent Veteran Deportation and Repatriate Deported Veterans by:

- Reviewing all cases of Veterans deported under previous administrations and facilitating the naturalization of deported Veterans. This includes establishing streamlined procedures where Veterans can attend naturalization interviews and oath ceremonies at ports of entry or through parole for inadmissible Veterans.
- Requiring all DHS agencies to annotate all records for immigration benefits and immigration enforcement to reflect Veteran status.

Strengthen Military Naturalization Programs by:

- Repealing the DoD October 2017 policy memos on immigrant enlistment, enhanced background screening and honorable service certification that impedes military members' ability to naturalize expeditiously.
- Repealing the DoD April 24, 2020 policy memo that retains the requirement of an O-6 officer (equivalent of a full Colonel in the Army) to adjudicate the N-426 certification needed for expedited military naturalization. This policy change has caused delay in certification and upended previous practice that allowed a broad range of military officials to authorize certification.
- Reestablishing USCIS' Naturalization at Basic Training Initiative to allow new enlistees to naturalize upon graduating from basic training.
- Reopening USCIS overseas offices and ensure naturalization ceremonies can take place at overseas military installations.

Improve Administrative Regulation and Policy by:

- Creating an interagency taskforce among DoD, DHS and VA to identify, repatriate and enroll deported Veterans into VA benefits and the VA healthcare system.
- Requiring the VA to assist Veterans with the naturalization process by establishing a VA office for noncitizen Veterans.
- Requiring the VA to assess the barriers to care and enrollment that deported Veterans face and create a plan for addressing those gaps and providing greater access to VA healthcare and benefits to Veterans living abroad.
- Appointing a Director at the DoD General Counsel Office to oversee immigration and citizenship issues for servicemembers and their dependents, as well as maintain a central repository for coordination with DHS and the State Department with regard to citizenship and immigration issues.
- Repealing the 8 C.F.R. § 329.2(d) one-year good moral character requirement for wartime servicemembers and Veterans, which was not authorized by Congress and is ultra vires of INA § 329, which requires honorable service in lieu of the standard good moral character requirement. By unnecessarily importing an extraneous good moral character requirement into the military naturalization procedure, USCIS has barred many noncitizen Veterans from naturalizing.

Senator Duckworth has introduced legislation to help deported Veterans return home and help immigrants earn citizenship through military service. Congress should pass the following legislation to fulfill our promise to immigrant servicemembers and help them attain American citizenship and Veterans' benefits:

- **Veterans Visa and Protection Act** would prohibit the deportation of Veterans who are non-violent offenders. The bill would establish a visa program through which deported Veterans may enter the United States as legal permanent residents and enable legal permanent residents to become naturalized citizens through military service. In addition, the bill would extend military and Veterans benefits to those who would be eligible for those benefits, if they were not deported.
- **Naturalization at Training Site (NATS) Act** would establish a naturalization office at each initial military training site to identify and conduct outreach to noncitizen servicemembers to ensure the government follows through on its promise to help them become American citizens.

- **Healthcare Opportunities for Patriots in Exile (HOPE) Act** would allow deported Veterans who committed non-violent crimes the opportunity to re-enter temporarily the United States to receive medical care from a VA facility for service-connected medical conditions.
- **Immigrant Veterans Eligibility Tracking System (I-VETS) Act** would identify noncitizens who are currently serving or who have served in the Armed Forces when they are applying for immigration benefits or when placed in immigration enforcement proceedings.
- **Strengthening Citizenship Services for Veterans Act** would direct United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to conduct biometric collections, naturalization examinations and oath ceremonies at a port of entry, embassy or consulate for Veterans so they can complete the naturalization process.

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