



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Republicans | Ranking Member Phil Roe, M.D.

H.R. 697: “To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay costs relating to the transportation of certain deceased veterans to veterans' cemeteries owned by a State or tribal organization”

Background:

Under current law, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is only allowed to pay for the costs of transporting a veteran's remains to the nearest open national cemetery. Current law does not authorize VA to cover transportation costs if a veteran is being buried in a state or tribal veterans cemetery.

This legislation would expand the VA Secretary's authority to pay for transportation costs if the families choose to have deceased veterans buried in a national cemetery, state veterans cemetery or tribal veterans cemetery. Under the bill, VA would pay expenses up to the cost of transporting the veteran's remains to the nearest national cemetery.

The Message:

- This bill would authorize VA to pay transportation expenses – up to the cost of transporting the deceased veteran to the closest national veterans cemetery – if the family prefers interment in a state or tribal veterans cemetery.
- Families should not be financially penalized for choosing to have their loved one laid to rest in a state or tribal veterans cemetery.
- This legislation will give the families of veterans more choices when deciding where to bury their loved one.