

Senators Gilbert, Basham, Birkholz, Toy, Kuipers, Allen, Van Woerkom and Brater offered the following concurrent resolution:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 51.

A concurrent resolution to urge the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to provide all veterans access to credit rating agencies to secure personal information against identity theft.

Whereas, Certain personal information for up to 26.5 million veterans who were discharged after 1975 and some spouses was stolen from an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) who removed the data from the VA without authorization. The VA also reported that this data appears to include personal information for up to 50,000 National Guard, Reserve, and Navy personnel. The stolen data includes the names, social security numbers, disability ratings, and dates of birth of the veterans and some spouses, representing a treasure trove for criminals if this data is used for identity theft; and

Whereas, Law enforcement agencies, including the FBI and the VA Inspector General's office, have launched investigations to find this information. In addition, the VA is working with members of Congress, the media, veterans service organizations, and other government agencies to inform veterans of this loss of data, the dangers of this data getting into the hands of criminals, and the steps they may take to protect themselves from identity theft; and

Whereas, These steps are welcome but insufficient to protect our veterans from harm. Much depends on veterans and their families taking action to protect themselves, and so the role of private credit rating services is crucial. These services are the gateways to granting credit to criminals who possess the identifying information that was stolen. Our veterans must have free and prompt access to these credit rating agencies to secure their personal information and prevent it from being used by criminals to wreak havoc on their lives; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we urge the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to provide all veterans access to credit rating agencies to secure personal information against identity theft; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Secretary of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.