

# Counting Veterans Cancer Act of 2023 Passes the U.S. Senate as Part of the Annual Senate Affairs Appropriations Bill

*NCRA salutes Senate passage of the Counting Veterans' Cancer Act of 2023, included as an amendment to the Senate Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill, H.R.4366.*

ALEXANDRIA, VA, UNITED STATES, November 3, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The National Cancer Registrars Association \(NCRA\)](#) salutes the Senate passage of the Counting Veterans' Cancer Act of 2023, included as an amendment to the Senate Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill, H.R.4366 – the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Introduced by Senator Mark Kelly (D-AZ) and Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC), the Counting Veterans' Cancer Act of 2023 would improve veteran care by requiring all data on veterans diagnosed with cancer to be reported by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to central cancer registries (also known as state registries). This change will help to more accurately identify cancer cases among veterans, improve care and treatment, and increase opportunities for veterans with cancer to be included in clinical trials and cancer research.

The VA is America's largest integrated health care system, serving nine million enrolled veterans each year. Under current cancer reporting laws, it is estimated that thousands of cancer cases among veterans are missed each year which leads to the underreporting of VA cancer cases. After the passage of the Counting Veterans' Cancer Act, Congressional mandate will have the VA able to report cancer cases to all state registries without being hindered by the need for data-use agreements. This will improve the completeness of cancer data and statistics at the state and national level.

In addition, researchers will be able to conduct thorough studies on the health disparities among veterans and enroll more veterans in clinical trials, special studies, and cancer-data projects.

NCRA coordinated hundreds of volunteers from the cancer surveillance community to advocate for passage of the legislation. "Meetings with key Senators and a comprehensive grassroots advocacy campaign are paying off," said Lori Swain, NCRA's Executive Director. She further noted, "The cancer registry community is thankful to Senators Kelly and Tillis for championing this important bill. With passage by the Senate, NCRA looks forward to the House's consideration of this vital legislation. The Counting Veterans' Cancer Act will help ensure all veterans receive the highest quality cancer care they need and deserve."

“Collecting and centralizing cancer data empowers doctors and scientists to develop treatments that save lives. It’s essential that veteran cancer cases are comprehensively reported, and this legislation will ensure veterans are included in life-saving cancer prevention and research efforts,” said Senator Kelly. In addition, he noted, “I’m grateful to the National Cancer Registrars Association and Arizona constituents for raising the issue of gaps in veteran cancer data and working with us on this solution.”

“Far too many veterans suffering from cancer are left uncounted by national cancer registries,” said Senator Tillis.

“It is crucial that veteran cancer cases are accurately reported so doctors, scientists, and other health care providers can provide the best care and treatments to our veterans, and this legislation will provide the necessary changes to ensure veteran cancer cases are properly identified and reported. I’m proud to work with organizations like the National Cancer Registrars Association to address this important issue and thank them for their continued advocacy on behalf of veterans and patients.”

The full text of the Counting Veterans’ Cancer Act of 2023, as inserted into H.R. 4366, [can be read here](#).

About the National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA):

NCRA is a non-profit organization that represents over 6,800 cancer registry professionals. The mission of NCRA is to empower and advance registry professionals through innovations in education, advocacy, credentialing, and strategic partnerships. Cancer registrars are data information specialists who capture a complete history, diagnosis, treatment, and health status for every cancer patient in the U.S. The data provides essential information to researchers, healthcare providers, and public health officials to better monitor and advance cancer treatments, conduct research, and improve cancer prevention and screening programs. For more information about NCRA, visit [www.ncra-usa.org](http://www.ncra-usa.org) and [www.CancerRegistryEducation.org](http://www.CancerRegistryEducation.org).

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