

**AMENDMENT TO THE RULES COMMITTEE PRINT  
OF H.R. 1960  
OFFERED BY MR. BUTTERFIELD OF NORTH  
CAROLINA**

Page 296, after line 20, insert the following new section:

1 **SEC. 644. METHODS FOR VALIDATING CERTAIN SERVICE**  
2 **CONSIDERED TO BE ACTIVE SERVICE BY THE**  
3 **SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—For the purposes of verifying that  
5 an individual performed service under honorable condi-  
6 tions that satisfies the requirements of a coastwise mer-  
7 chant seaman who is recognized pursuant to section 401  
8 of the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–  
9 202; 38 U.S.C. 106 note) as having performed active duty  
10 service for the purposes described in subsection (c)(1), the  
11 Secretary of Homeland Security shall accept the following:

12 (1) In the case of an individual who served on  
13 a coastwise merchant vessel seeking such recognition  
14 for whom no applicable Coast Guard shipping or dis-  
15 charge form, ship logbook, merchant mariner’s docu-  
16 ment or Z-card, or other official employment record  
17 is available, the Secretary shall provide such recogni-

1       tion on the basis of applicable Social Security Ad-  
2       ministration records submitted for or by the indi-  
3       vidual, together with validated testimony given by  
4       the individual or the primary next of kin of the indi-  
5       vidual that the individual performed such service  
6       during the period beginning on December 7, 1941,  
7       and ending on December 31, 1946.

8               (2) In the case of an individual who served on  
9       a coastwise merchant vessel seeking such recognition  
10      for whom the applicable Coast Guard shipping or  
11      discharge form, ship logbook, merchant mariner's  
12      document or Z-card, or other official employment  
13      record has been destroyed or otherwise become un-  
14      available by reason of any action committed by a  
15      person responsible for the control and maintenance  
16      of such form, logbook, or record, the Secretary shall  
17      accept other official documentation demonstrating  
18      that the individual performed such service during pe-  
19      riod beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on  
20      December 31, 1946.

21              (3) For the purpose of determining whether to  
22      recognize service allegedly performed during the pe-  
23      riod beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on  
24      December 31, 1946, the Secretary shall recognize  
25      masters of seagoing vessels or other officers in com-

1       mand of similarly organized groups as agents of the  
2       United States who were authorized to document any  
3       individual for purposes of hiring the individual to  
4       perform service in the merchant marine or dis-  
5       charging an individual from such service.

6       (b) TREATMENT OF OTHER DOCUMENTATION.—  
7       Other documentation accepted by the Secretary of Home-  
8       land Security pursuant to subsection (a)(2) shall satisfy  
9       all requirements for eligibility of service during the period  
10      beginning on December 7, 1941, and ending on December  
11      31, 1946.

12      (c) BENEFITS ALLOWED.—

13           (1) BURIAL BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY.—Service of  
14      an individual that is considered active duty pursuant  
15      to subsection (a) shall be considered as active duty  
16      service with respect to providing burial benefits  
17      under chapters 23 and 24 of title 38, United States  
18      Code, to the individual.

19           (2) MEDALS, RIBBONS, AND DECORATIONS.—  
20      An individual whose service is recognized as active  
21      duty pursuant to subsection (a) may be awarded an  
22      appropriate medal, ribbon, or other military decora-  
23      tion based on such service.

24           (3) STATUS OF VETERAN.—An individual whose  
25      service is recognized as active duty pursuant to sub-

1 section (a) shall be honored as a veteran but shall  
2 not be entitled by reason of such recognized service  
3 to any benefit that is not described in this sub-  
4 section.

5 (d) DETERMINATION OF COASTWISE MERCHANT  
6 SEAMAN.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall  
7 verify that an individual performed service under honor-  
8 able conditions that satisfies the requirements of a coast-  
9 wise merchant seaman pursuant to this section without  
10 regard to the sex, age, or disability of the individual dur-  
11 ing the period in which the individual served as such a  
12 coastwise merchant seaman.

13 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 (1) The term “coastwise merchant seaman”  
15 means a mariner that served on a tug boat, towboat,  
16 or seagoing barge that transported war materials to  
17 and from ports located in the territorial seas of the  
18 United States in support of the war effort during  
19 the period beginning December 7, 1941, and ending  
20 December 31, 1946.

21 (2) The term “primary next of kin” with re-  
22 spect to an individual seeking recognition for service  
23 under this section means the closest living relative of  
24 the individual who was alive during the period of  
25 such service.

1       (f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act shall take effect 90  
2 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

