

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 7900
OFFERED BY MS. SLOTKIN OF MICHIGAN

Add at the appropriate place in division E, the following:

1 **SEC. ____ . DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS**
2 **FOR MERCHANT MARINERS WHO SERVED**
3 **DURING THE VIETNAM ERA IN THE SOUTH-**
4 **EAST ASIA THEATER OF OPERATIONS.**

5 (a) VETERANS BENEFITS FOR MERCHANT MARI-
6 NERS WHO SERVED DURING THE VIETNAM ERA IN THE
7 SOUTHEAST ASIA THEATER OF OPERATIONS.—

8 (1) ELIGIBILITY FOR VETERANS BENEFITS.—
9 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
10 service of an eligible individual described in para-
11 graph (2)(A) shall be considered to be active duty in
12 determining the individual’s eligibility for veterans
13 benefits under all laws administered by the Sec-
14 retary of Veterans Affairs.

15 (2) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—In this section, the
16 term “eligible individual” means an individual in the
17 United States merchant marine who—

18 (A) served as a crewmember of a vessel
19 that was in oceangoing service during the Viet-

1 nam Era in the Southeast Asia theater of oper-
2 ations; and

3 (B) receives a certificate of honorable dis-
4 charge under paragraph (3).

5 (3) DOCUMENTATION OF SERVICE.—

6 (A) CERTIFICATE OF HONORABLE DIS-
7 CHARGE.—The Secretary of Defense shall, upon
8 application, issue a certificate of honorable dis-
9 charge to an individual in the United States
10 merchant marine who served as a crewmember
11 of a vessel that was in oceangoing service dur-
12 ing the Vietnam Era in the Southeast Asia the-
13 ater of operations who, as determined by the
14 Secretary, engaged in service of a nature and
15 duration that warrants issuance of the certifi-
16 cate.

17 (B) STANDARDS RELATING TO SERVICE.—
18 In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Sec-
19 retary shall apply the same standards relating
20 to the nature and duration of service that apply
21 to the issuance of honorable discharges under
22 section 401(a)(1)(B) of the GI Bill Improve-
23 ment Act of 1977 (38 U.S.C. 106 note).

24 (4) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the fol-
25 lowing definitions apply:

1 (A) INDIVIDUAL IN THE UNITED STATES
2 MERCHANT MARINE.—The term “individual in
3 the United States merchant marine” means any
4 citizen or resident alien of the United States
5 serving as a civilian or civil service member of
6 the United States merchant marine.

7 (B) VIETNAM ERA.—The term “Vietnam
8 Era” means—

9 (i) the period beginning on February
10 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975, in
11 the case of an individual in the United
12 States merchant marine who served in the
13 Republic of Vietnam during that period;
14 and

15 (ii) the period beginning on August 5,
16 1964, and ending on May 7, 1975, in all
17 other cases.

18 (b) RETROACTIVE APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (a)
19 shall apply to an individual eligible for veterans benefits
20 under paragraph (1) of such subsection as if such sub-
21 section had been in effect as of the last date of the individ-
22 ual’s service described in paragraph (2)(A) of such sub-
23 section.

