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# POW Family Travel Bill Is Passed

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The House rapidly completed final congressional action yesterday on a measure that would pay the travel expenses of families to the burials of U.S. prisoners of war who died in captivity during the Vietnam war.

The bill was sent to the President after the House, without objection or debate, approved it.

The Senate had approved it Friday afternoon with a voice vote.

Neither chamber sent the measure through the normal committee route.

The Pentagon announced Saturday that it supported the bill and would implement the provisions immediately after President Nixon signs it.

The Funeral Transportation and Living Expense Benefits Act fills a gap in the military's extensive death benefits by authorizing the payment of families' transportation to and from the chosen cemeteries for the burials of servicemen and women who die on active duty or in captivity.

Military regulations already provide for the transportation of the deceased's remains and a gratuity of \$800 to \$3000, depending on rank, which may be used by the next-of-kin for any purpose, including transportation expenses.

Congressmen proposed the extension of the Pentagon's benefits authority last week after an article in The Washington Post related the thoughts of Cecile Abbott, 43, of Sacramento, widow of U.S. Navy Captain John Abbott, when she realized she would have to pay the transportation for herself and her son to the burial here.

Mrs. Abbott, whose husband lived a week in a prison camp after his jet was shot down over North Vietnam eight years ago, said: "It seemed inequitable that President Nixon could fly POWs and their wives to Washington for a big wingding at the White House, but someone at the top could not provide travel for 23 families of dead men returning from Vietnam."

Hanoi released the remains of 23 American POWs this month under the January 1973 Paris peace accords.

*Associated Press*

Aide in D. J. .