

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2799

To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand and improve health care services available to women veterans, especially those serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 2, 2008

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. SCHUMER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand and improve health care services available to women veterans, especially those serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Women Veterans Health Care Improvement Act of
6 2008”.

1 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of
 2 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—STUDIES AND ASSESSMENTS OF DEPARTMENT OF
 VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH SERVICES FOR WOMEN VETERANS

Sec. 101. Long-term study of health of women members of the Armed Forces serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Sec. 102. Assessment of barriers to women veterans to health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 103. Comprehensive assessment of womens' health care programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 104. Institute of Medicine study on health consequences for women veterans of military service in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

TITLE II—IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION OF DEPARTMENT OF
 VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN
 VETERANS

Sec. 201. Care for newborn children of women veterans receiving maternity care.

Sec. 202. Training and certification for mental health care providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs on care for veterans suffering from sexual trauma.

Sec. 203. Training and certification for health care professionals on effective treatment of women veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Sec. 204. Pilot program on child care for certain veterans receiving health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 205. Pilot program on for counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.

Sec. 206. Requirement for full-time women veterans program managers at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.

Sec. 207. Service on certain Department of Veterans Affairs advisory committees of women recently separated from service in the Armed Forces.

1 **TITLE I—STUDIES AND ASSESS-**
2 **MENTS OF DEPARTMENT OF**
3 **VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH**
4 **SERVICES FOR WOMEN VET-**
5 **ERANS**

6 **SEC. 101. LONG-TERM STUDY OF HEALTH OF WOMEN MEM-**
7 **BERS OF THE ARMED FORCES SERVING IN**
8 **OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM AND OPER-**
9 **ATION ENDURING FREEDOM.**

10 (a) PROSPECTIVE, POPULATION-BASED LONG-TERM
11 STUDY.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
13 Affairs shall enter in contracts with one or more
14 qualified entities or organizations to conduct a long-
15 term epidemiologic study on the health of women
16 veterans who served on active duty in the Armed
17 Forces in the combat theaters of Operation Iraqi
18 Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

19 (2) SCOPE.—The study shall include informa-
20 tion on general health, mental health, reproductive
21 health, and mortality of such women veterans, and
22 shall include physical examinations and diagnostic
23 testing of a representative sample of such women
24 veterans.

1 (3) COLLABORATION.—The entities or organi-
2 zations conducting the study shall conduct the study
3 in collaboration with the War-Related Injury and Ill-
4 ness Study Centers of the Veterans Health Adminis-
5 tration.

6 (b) COHORT; LENGTH.—

7 (1) COHORT.—The study required by this sec-
8 tion shall utilize a cohort of women veterans suffi-
9 ciently large to provide meaningful data for purposes
10 of the study.

11 (2) FOLLOW-UP PERIOD.—The follow-up period
12 under the study shall be such period not less than
13 10 years as the Secretary shall specify for purposes
14 of the study.

15 (c) ARRANGEMENTS WITH DEPARTMENT OF DE-
16 FENSE.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
18 Affairs shall enter into arrangements with the Sec-
19 retary of Defense to carry out this section.

20 (2) ELEMENTS.—As part of the arrangements
21 under this subsection, the Secretary of Defense shall
22 make available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
23 health care data in the possession of the Department
24 of Defense with respect to women veterans covered
25 by the study required by this section, and shall pro-

1 vide access to the members of the cohort of such
2 women who are still serving in the Armed Forces.
3 The health care data so provided shall include rel-
4 evant predeployment health and health risk assess-
5 ments with respect to such women veterans.

6 (d) REPORTS.—

7 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than six
8 months after the date of the enactment of this Act,
9 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to
10 Congress an initial report on the status of the imple-
11 mentation of this section.

12 (2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than one
13 year after the date of the submittal to Congress of
14 the report required by paragraph (1), and annually
15 thereafter through 2018, the Secretary shall submit
16 to Congress a report on the progress and results of
17 the study required by this section as of the date of
18 such report. The final report under this paragraph
19 shall include a detailed description of the cumulative
20 findings of the study, and shall include such rec-
21 ommendations for administrative and legislative ac-
22 tion as the Secretary considers appropriate in light
23 of the study.

24 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
25 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Vet-

1 erans Affairs such sums as are necessary to carry out the
2 provisions of this section.

3 **SEC. 102. ASSESSMENT OF BARRIERS TO WOMEN VET-**
4 **ERANS TO HEALTH CARE FROM THE DEPART-**
5 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) ASSESSMENT.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
8 Affairs shall conduct a comprehensive assessment of
9 the barriers to the receipt of comprehensive health
10 care through the Department of Veterans Affairs
11 that are encountered by women veterans, especially
12 veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation
13 Enduring Freedom.

14 (2) UTILIZATION OF SURVEYS.—The studies
15 carried out for purposes of the assessment should in-
16 clude surveys of women veterans who seek or receive
17 health care services from the Department and of
18 women veterans who do not seek or receive such
19 services.

20 (b) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the assessment re-
21 quired by subsection (a), the Secretary shall conduct re-
22 search on the effects of the following:

23 (1) Any stigma perceived or associated with
24 seeking mental health care services through the De-
25 partment of Veterans Affairs.

1 (2) The effect on access to care through the
2 Department of driving distance or availability of
3 other forms of transportation to the nearest appro-
4 priate facility of the Department.

5 (3) The availability of child care.

6 (4) The receipt of health care through women's
7 health clinics, integrated primary care clinics, or
8 both.

9 (5) The extent of comprehension of eligibility
10 requirements for health care through the Depart-
11 ment, and the scope of health care services available
12 through the Department.

13 (6) The quality and nature of the reception of
14 women veterans by Department health care pro-
15 viders and other staff.

16 (7) The perception of personal safety and com-
17 fort of women veterans in inpatient, outpatient, and
18 behavioral health facilities of the Department.

19 (8) The sensitivity of Department health care
20 providers and other staff to issues that particularly
21 affect women.

22 (9) The effectiveness of outreach on health care
23 services of the Department that are available to
24 women veterans.

1 (10) Such other matters as the Secretary iden-
2 tifies for purposes of the assessment.

3 (c) REVIEW OF DATA WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure
5 that the head of each element of the Department of
6 the Veterans Affairs specified in paragraph (2)—

7 (A) reviews the results of the assessment
8 conducted under subsection (a); and

9 (B) submits to the Under Secretary for
10 Health, and to such other offices of the Depart-
11 ment having responsibilities relating to health
12 care services for women veterans as the Sec-
13 retary shall specify for purposes of this sub-
14 section, the findings of such element with re-
15 spect to the assessment.

16 (2) COVERED ELEMENTS.—The elements of the
17 Department specified in this paragraph are the fol-
18 lowing:

19 (A) The Center for Women Veterans under
20 section 318 of title 38, United States Code.

21 (B) The Advisory Committee on Women
22 Veterans under section 542 of title 38, United
23 States Code.

24 (d) REPORTS.—

1 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than six
2 months after the date of the enactment of this Act,
3 the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on
4 the status of the implementation of the section.

5 (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 30 months
6 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
7 retary shall submit to Congress a report on the as-
8 sessment conducted under this section. The report
9 shall include the following:

10 (A) Such recommendations for administra-
11 tive and legislative action as the Secretary con-
12 siderers appropriate in light of the assessment.

13 (B) The findings of each element of the
14 Department under subsection (c)(1)(B), and of
15 the Under Secretary for Health, with respect to
16 the assessment.

17 (e) FACILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT DEFINED.—In
18 this section, the term “facility of the Department” has the
19 meaning given that term in section 1701(3) of title 38,
20 United States Code.

21 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
22 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Vet-
23 erans Affairs such sums as are necessary to carry out the
24 provisions of this section.

1 **SEC. 103. COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF WOMENS'**
2 **HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS OF THE DEPART-**
3 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

4 (a) ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
6 Affairs shall carry out a comprehensive assessment
7 of all services and programs of the Department of
8 Veterans Affairs intended to address the health care
9 needs of women veterans.

10 (2) FOCUS ON CERTAIN SPECIALIZED PRO-
11 GRAMS.—The assessment shall include a study of
12 the specialized health care programs of the Depart-
13 ment as follows:

14 (A) Programs for women veterans with
15 post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

16 (B) Programs for women veterans who are
17 homeless.

18 (C) Programs for women veterans who re-
19 quire care for substance abuse or mental ill-
20 nesses.

21 (D) Programs for women veterans who re-
22 quire pregnancy care.

23 (3) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary
24 may enter into one or more contracts with a quali-
25 fied independent entity or organization having exper-
26 tise in matters relating to women's health to carry

1 out the assessment, or any study conducted as part
2 of the assessment.

3 (b) SPECIFIC ELEMENTS.—

4 (1) READY ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE SERVICES.—

5 The assessment required by subsection (a) shall in-
6 clude a determination whether effective health care
7 services (including evidenced-based health care serv-
8 ices) are readily available to and easily accessed by
9 women veterans under each category of programs as
10 follows:

11 (A) Health promotion programs.

12 (B) Disease prevention programs.

13 (C) Reproductive health programs.

14 (D) Such other health care programs as
15 the Secretary shall specify for purposes of this
16 subsection.

17 (2) SCOPE OF DETERMINATIONS ON ACCESS.—

18 In making a determination under paragraph (1)
19 with respect to a category of programs, the assess-
20 ment shall address—

21 (A) the frequency with which such services
22 are available and provided to women veterans
23 under such category of programs;

24 (B) the demographics of the women vet-
25 eran population, including the population of

1 women veterans who would seeks health care
2 services under such category of programs;

3 (C) the sites where services under such
4 category of programs are available and provided
5 to women veterans; and

6 (D) whether, and to what extent, waiting
7 lists, geographic distance, and other factors ob-
8 struct the receipt by women veterans of any
9 services under such category of programs at
10 any site covered by subparagraph (C).

11 (c) PROGRAM TO IMPROVE SERVICES.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—After completion of the as-
13 sessment required by subsection (a), the Secretary
14 shall develop a program to—

15 (A) improve the provision of health care
16 services to women veterans; and

17 (B) plan appropriately for the future
18 health care needs, including mental health care
19 needs, of women serving on active duty in the
20 Armed Forces in the combat theaters of Oper-
21 ation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring
22 Freedom.

23 (2) REQUIRED ACTIONS.—In developing the
24 program required by this subsection, the Secretary
25 shall—

1 (A) identify the types of health care serv-
2 ices to be available to women veterans under
3 the program at each Department of Veterans
4 Affairs medical center; and

5 (B) identify the personnel and other re-
6 sources required to provide such services to
7 women veterans under the program as each
8 such medical center.

9 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the
10 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall sub-
11 mit to Congress a report on the assessment conducted
12 under this section. The report shall include such rec-
13 ommendations for administrative and legislative action as
14 the Secretary considers appropriate in light of the assess-
15 ment.

16 (e) GAO REPORT.—Not later than six months after
17 the date on which the Secretary submits to Congress the
18 report required by subsection (d), the Comptroller General
19 of the United States shall submit to Congress a report
20 containing the findings of the Comptroller General with
21 respect to the report of the Secretary under subsection (d),
22 including such recommendations for administrative or leg-
23 islative actions as the Comptroller General considers ap-
24 propriate.

1 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
2 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Vet-
3 erans Affairs such sums as are necessary to carry out the
4 provisions of this section.

5 **SEC. 104. INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE STUDY ON HEALTH CON-**
6 **SEQUENCES FOR WOMEN VETERANS OF MILI-**
7 **TARY SERVICE IN OPERATION IRAQI FREE-**
8 **DOM AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.**

9 (a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans
10 Affairs shall enter into an agreement with the Institute
11 of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences for the
12 purpose of conducting a study on health consequences for
13 women veterans of service on active duty in the Armed
14 Forces in deployment in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Op-
15 eration Enduring Freedom.

16 (b) SPECIFIC MATTERS STUDIED.—The study under
17 subsection (a) shall include the following:

18 (1) A determination of any association of envi-
19 ronmental and occupational exposures and combat in
20 Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring
21 Freedom with the general health, mental health, or
22 reproductive health of women who served on active
23 duty in the Armed Forces in Operation Iraqi Free-
24 dom or Operation Enduring Freedom.

1 (2) A review and analysis of published lit-
2 erature on environmental and occupational exposures
3 of women while serving in the Armed Forces, includ-
4 ing combat trauma, military sexual trauma, and ex-
5 posure to potential teratogens associated with repro-
6 ductive problems and birth defects.

7 (c) REPORT.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months
9 after entering into the agreement for the study
10 under subsection (a), the Institute of Medicine shall
11 submit to Congress, and to the Secretary of Vet-
12 erans Affairs, a report on the study containing such
13 findings and determinations as the Institute of Med-
14 icine considers appropriate.

15 (2) RESPONSIVE REPORT.—Not later than 90
16 days after the receipt of the report under paragraph
17 (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report
18 setting forth the response of the Secretary to the
19 findings and determinations of the Institute of Medi-
20 cine in the report under paragraph (1).

1 **TITLE II—IMPROVEMENT AND**
 2 **EXPANSION OF DEPARTMENT**
 3 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**
 4 **HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS**
 5 **FOR WOMEN VETERANS**

6 **SEC. 201. CARE FOR NEWBORN CHILDREN OF WOMEN VET-**
 7 **ERANS RECEIVING MATERNITY CARE.**

8 (a) NEWBORN CARE.—Subchapter VIII of chapter
 9 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding
 10 at the end the following new section:

11 **“§ 1786. Care for newborn children of women vet-**
 12 **erans receiving maternity care**

13 “The Secretary may furnish care to a newborn child
 14 of a woman veteran who is receiving maternity care fur-
 15 nished by the Department for not more than 30 days after
 16 the birth of the child if the veteran delivered the child in
 17 a Department facility or in another facility pursuant to
 18 a Department contract for the delivery services.”.

19 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
 20 at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended
 21 by inserting after the item relating to section 1785 the
 22 following new item:

“1786. Care for newborn children of women veterans receiving maternity care.”.

1 **SEC. 202. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION FOR MENTAL**
2 **HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS OF THE DEPART-**
3 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ON CARE FOR**
4 **VETERANS SUFFERING FROM SEXUAL TRAU-**
5 **MA.**

6 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Section 1720D of title
7 38, United States Code, is amended—

8 (1) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
9 section (f); and

10 (2) by inserting after subsection (c) the fol-
11 lowing new subsections:

12 “(d)(1) The Secretary shall implement a program for
13 education, training, certification, and continuing medical
14 education for mental health professionals to specialize in
15 the provision of counseling and care to veterans eligible
16 for services under subsection (a). In carrying out the pro-
17 gram, the Secretary shall ensure that all such mental
18 health professionals have been trained in a consistent
19 manner and that such training includes principles of evi-
20 dence-based treatment and care for sexual trauma.

21 “(2) The Secretary shall determine the minimum
22 qualifications necessary for mental health professionals
23 certified by the program under paragraph (1) to provide
24 evidence-based treatment and therapy to veterans eligible
25 for services under subsection (a) in facilities of the De-
26 partment.

1 “(e) The Secretary shall submit to Congress an an-
2 nual report on the counseling and care and services pro-
3 vided to veterans under this section. Each report shall in-
4 clude data for the year involved with respect to the fol-
5 lowing:

6 “(1) The number of mental health professionals
7 and primary care providers who have been certified
8 under the program under subsection (d), and the
9 amount and nature of continuing medical education
10 provided under such program to professionals and
11 providers who have been so certified.

12 “(2) The number of women veterans who re-
13 ceived counseling and care and services under sub-
14 section (a) from professionals and providers who
15 have been trained or certified under the program
16 under subsection (d).

17 “(3) The number of training, certification, and
18 continuing medical education programs operating
19 under subsection (d).

20 “(4) The number of trained full-time equivalent
21 employees required in each facility of the Depart-
22 ment to meet the needs of veterans requiring treat-
23 ment and care for sexual trauma.

24 “(5) Such other information as the Secretary
25 considers appropriate.”.

1 (b) STANDARDS FOR PERSONNEL PROVIDING
2 TREATMENT FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The Secretary of
3 Veterans Affairs shall establish education, training, cer-
4 tification, and staffing standards for Department of Vet-
5 erans Affairs health-care facilities for full-time equivalent
6 employees who are trained to provide treatment and care
7 to veterans for sexual trauma.

8 **SEC. 203. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION FOR HEALTH**
9 **CARE PROFESSIONALS ON EFFECTIVE**
10 **TREATMENT OF WOMEN VETERANS WITH**
11 **POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD).**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
13 shall develop and implement a program of education,
14 training, and certification for health care professionals of
15 the Veterans Health Administration for the treatment, in-
16 cluding evidence-based treatment, of post-traumatic stress
17 disorder (PTSD) and other comorbid conditions (attrib-
18 utable to combat or sexual trauma) that are proven effec-
19 tive for women veterans. The Secretary shall develop and
20 implement the plan through the National Center for Post-
21 traumatic Stress Disorder of the Department of Veterans
22 Affairs.

23 (b) CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION.—As part of
24 the program developed under subsection (a), the Secretary

1 shall ensure that health care professionals who participate
2 in the program—

3 (1) are provided continuing medical education
4 on matters covered by the program;

5 (2) are regularly evaluated for competency in
6 such matters; and

7 (3) have regular and effective mentoring on
8 such matters.

9 (c) REPORT.—

10 (1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than two
11 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
12 Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the
13 program required by subsection (a).

14 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report shall include the
15 following:

16 (A) A description of the methodology and
17 results of the program of training, certification,
18 and continuing medical education of personnel
19 involved in the program.

20 (B) An assessment of the effect of the pro-
21 gram on the counseling and treatment of
22 women veterans suffering from post-traumatic
23 stress disorder; and

24 (C) Such recommendations at the Sec-
25 retary considers appropriate for improvements

1 to the program or to the treatment of women
2 veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress
3 disorder.

4 (3) **ADDITIONAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDA-**
5 **TIONS.**—In preparing the report under paragraph
6 (1), the Secretary shall also include any findings or
7 recommendations of the Director of the Center for
8 Women Veterans under section 318 of title 38,
9 United States Code, and of the Under Secretary for
10 Health, with respect to the program and treatment
11 of women veterans suffering from post-traumatic
12 stress disorder.

13 **SEC. 204. PILOT PROGRAM ON CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN**
14 **VETERANS RECEIVING HEALTH CARE FROM**
15 **THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

16 (a) **PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—Commencing not
17 later than six months after the date of the enactment of
18 this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out
19 a pilot program under which, subject to subsection (b),
20 payment is made to a qualified veteran for the costs of
21 child care incurred by the veteran in order for the veteran
22 to receive one or more of the health care services described
23 in subsection (c).

1 (b) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—Pay-
2 ment for child care under the pilot program may only be
3 made for the period of time that the qualified veteran—

4 (1) receives the types of health care services re-
5 ferred to in subsection (c) at a facility of the De-
6 partment; and

7 (2) requires to travel to and return from such
8 facility for the receipt of such health care services.

9 (c) QUALIFIED VETERANS.—In this section, the term
10 “qualified veteran” means a veteran who is the primary
11 caretaker of a child or children and who is receiving from
12 the Department one or more of the following health care
13 services:

14 (1) Regular mental health care services.

15 (2) Intensive mental health care services.

16 (3) Such other intensive health care services
17 that the Secretary determines that payment to the
18 veteran for the provision of child care would improve
19 access to those health care services by the veteran.

20 (d) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the
21 pilot program in no fewer than three Veterans Integrated
22 Service Networks (VISNs) selected by the Secretary for
23 purposes of the pilot program.

1 (e) DURATION.—The pilot program shall be carried
 2 out during the two-year period beginning on the date of
 3 the commencement of the pilot program.

4 (f) REPORT.—Not later than six months after the
 5 completion of the pilot program, the Secretary shall sub-
 6 mit to Congress a report on the pilot program. The report
 7 shall include the findings and conclusions of the Secretary
 8 as a result of the pilot program, and shall include such
 9 recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the
 10 pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

11 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
 12 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Vet-
 13 erans Affairs for each of fiscal years 2009 and 2010,
 14 \$1,500,000 to carry out the pilot program.

15 **SEC. 205. PILOT PROGRAM ON FOR COUNSELING IN RE-**
 16 **TREAT SETTINGS FOR WOMEN VETERANS**
 17 **NEWLY SEPARATED FROM SERVICE IN THE**
 18 **ARMED FORCES.**

19 (a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than
 21 six months after the date of the enactment of this
 22 Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry
 23 out, through the Readjustment Counseling Service of
 24 the Veterans Health Administration, a pilot program
 25 to evaluate the feasibility and advisability of pro-

1 viding reintegration and readjustment services de-
2 scribed in subsection (b) to women veterans who are
3 recently separated from service in the Armed Forces
4 after a prolonged deployment in group retreat set-
5 tings.

6 (2) PARTICIPATION AT ELECTION OF VET-
7 ERAN.—The participation of a veteran in the pilot
8 program under this section shall be at the election
9 of the veteran.

10 (b) COVERED SERVICES.—The services provided to a
11 women veteran under the pilot program shall include the
12 following:

13 (1) Information on reintegration into the vet-
14 eran’s family, employment, and community.

15 (2) Financial counseling.

16 (3) Occupational counseling.

17 (4) Information and counseling on stress reduc-
18 tion.

19 (5) Information and counseling on conflict reso-
20 lution.

21 (6) Such other information and counseling as
22 the Secretary considers appropriate to assist women
23 veterans under the pilot program in reintegration
24 into the veteran’s family and community.

1 (c) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the
2 pilot program at not fewer than five locations selected by
3 the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program.

4 (d) DURATION.—The pilot program shall be carried
5 out during the two-year period beginning on the date of
6 the commencement of the pilot program.

7 (e) REPORT.—Not later than six months after the
8 completion of the pilot program, the Secretary shall sub-
9 mit to Congress a report on the pilot program. The report
10 shall contain the findings and conclusions of the Secretary
11 as a result of the pilot program, and shall include such
12 recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the
13 pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

14 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
15 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Vet-
16 erans Affairs for each of fiscal years 2009 and 2010,
17 \$2,000,000 to carry out the pilot program.

18 **SEC. 206. REQUIREMENT FOR FULL-TIME WOMEN VET-**
19 **ERANS PROGRAM MANAGERS AT DEPART-**
20 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CEN-**
21 **TERS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73 of
23 title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the
24 end the following new section:

1 **“§ 7330A. Women veterans program managers**

2 “The Secretary shall, acting through the Under Sec-
3 retary for Health, ensure that there is at least one full-
4 time employee at each Department medical center who is
5 a women veterans program manager. Each such employee
6 shall meet such qualifications as the Secretary may specify
7 for appointment to such position in the Veterans Health
8 Administration to ensure that health care needs of women
9 veterans are met.”.

10 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
11 at the beginning of chapter 73 of such title is amended
12 by inserting after the item relating to section 7330 the
13 following new item:

“7330A. Women veterans program managers.”.

14 **SEC. 207. SERVICE ON CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
15 **ERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF**
16 **WOMEN RECENTLY SEPARATED FROM SERV-**
17 **ICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.**

18 (a) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS.—
19 Section 542(a)(2)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is
20 amended—

21 (1) in clause (ii), by striking “and” at the end;

22 (2) in clause (iii), by striking the period at the
23 end and inserting “; and”; and

24 (3) by inserting after clause (iii) the following
25 new clause:

1 “(iv) women veterans who are recently sepa-
2 rated from service in the Armed Forces.”.

3 (b) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MINORITY VET-
4 ERANS.—Section 544(a)(2)(A) of such title is amended—

5 (1) in clause (iii), by striking “and” at the end;

6 (2) in clause (iv), by striking the period at the
7 end and inserting “; and”; and

8 (3) by inserting after clause (iv) the following
9 new clause:

10 “(v) women veterans who are minority group
11 members and are recently separated from service in
12 the Armed Forces.”.

13 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
14 this section shall apply to appointments made on or after
15 the date of the enactment of this Act.

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