

HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
HOUSE BILL 101

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012

AN ACT

RELATING TO VETERANS; CREATING A PILOT PROJECT TO TREAT
VETERANS WITH POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER USING VIRTUAL
REALITY TREATMENT DEVICES; PROVIDING FOR THERAPISTS' TRAINING;
PROVIDING FOR VIRTUAL REALITY THERAPY CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
FOR THE MASTER'S OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM AT WESTERN NEW MEXICO
UNIVERSITY; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

**SECTION 1. VETERANS VIRTUAL REALITY TREATMENT PILOT
PROJECT--CREATED--ADMINISTRATION--TRAINING--CURRICULUM
DEVELOPMENT--FUND CREATED.--**

A. The "veterans virtual reality treatment" pilot
project is created as a four-year study to determine the
efficacy of virtual reality therapy for veterans who suffer
from posttraumatic stress disorder. The purpose of the pilot

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1 project is to:

2 (1) demonstrate that virtual reality therapy
3 is a cost- and therapeutically effective strategy to help
4 reduce anxiety and depression and other symptoms of
5 posttraumatic stress disorder;

6 (2) demonstrate that virtual reality therapy
7 will decrease long-term costs due to chronic care needs,
8 reduced productivity and suicide among veterans with
9 posttraumatic stress disorder;

10 (3) develop and implement a related curriculum
11 in the master's of social work program at western New Mexico
12 university to train social workers in the therapeutic use of
13 virtual reality therapy;

14 (4) train graduate social workers and other
15 therapists to provide virtual reality therapy; and

16 (5) provide therapeutic services to rural
17 veterans closer to their homes through the use of mobile
18 virtual reality therapy devices.

19 B. The pilot project shall be administered by the
20 veterans' services department in conjunction with western New
21 Mexico university. The department and the university shall
22 establish reporting and evaluation requirements for the pilot
23 project and shall provide interim and final reports to the
24 governor and to the legislature through the interim military
25 and veterans' affairs and legislative health and human services

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1 committees. A copy of the reports shall be provided to the
2 legislative council service library.

3 C. The department shall seek public and private
4 grants and donations for the pilot project, which shall be
5 deposited in the "veterans virtual reality treatment grants
6 fund" created as a nonreverting fund in the state treasury.
7 Income from investment of the fund shall be deposited in the
8 fund. The department shall administer the fund, and money in
9 the fund is appropriated to the department to carry out the
10 purposes of the veterans virtual reality treatment pilot
11 project. Money shall be expended in accordance with the terms
12 of the grants and donations. Unless otherwise specified by the
13 terms of a grant or donation, money in the fund at the end of
14 the pilot project shall revert to the general fund.
15 Expenditures from the fund shall be by warrants of the
16 secretary of finance and administration drawn pursuant to
17 vouchers signed by the secretary of veterans' affairs or the
18 secretary's authorized representative.

19 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.**--Two hundred fifty thousand
20 dollars (\$250,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the
21 veterans' services department for expenditure in fiscal year
22 2013 and subsequent fiscal years to implement the veterans
23 virtual reality treatment pilot project. Any unexpended or
24 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year
25 shall not revert to the general fund until the end of the pilot

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1 project.

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