

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6527

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to women veterans, to improve health care furnished by the Department, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2012

Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. FILNER, and Ms. BONAMICI) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to women veterans, to improve health care furnished by the Department, 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 and Other Health Care Improvements
6 Act of 2012”.

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

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research.
- Sec. 3. Clarification that fertility counseling and treatment are medical services which the Secretary may furnish to veterans like other medical services.
- Sec. 4. Reproductive treatment and care delivery for spouses and surrogates of veterans.
- Sec. 5. Requirement to improve Department of Veterans Affairs women veterans call center.
- Sec. 6. Modification of pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 7. Pilot programs on assistance for child care for certain veterans.

3 **SEC. 2. FACILITATION OF REPRODUCTION AND INFER-**
4 **TILITY RESEARCH.**

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

8 **“§ 7330B. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility**
9 **research**

10 “(a) FACILITATION OF RESEARCH REQUIRED.—The
11 Secretary shall facilitate research conducted collabo-
12 ratively by the Secretary of Defense and the Director of
13 the National Institutes of Health to improve the ability
14 of the Department of Veterans Affairs to meet the long-
15 term reproductive health care needs of veterans who have
16 a service-connected genitourinary disability or a condition
17 that was incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the ac-
18 tive military, naval, or air service, such as spinal cord in-
19 jury, that affects the veterans’ ability to reproduce.

1 “(b) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The Sec-
2 retary shall ensure that information produced by the re-
3 search facilitated under this section that may be useful
4 for other activities of the Veterans Health Administration
5 is disseminated throughout the Veterans Health Adminis-
6 tration.”.

7 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
8 at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by inserting
9 after the item relating to section 7330A the following new
10 item:

“7330B. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research.”.

11 (c) REPORT.—Not later than three years after the
12 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
13 erans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the re-
14 search activities conducted by the Secretary under section
15 7330B of title 38, United States Code, as added by sub-
16 section (a).

17 **SEC. 3. CLARIFICATION THAT FERTILITY COUNSELING AND**
18 **TREATMENT ARE MEDICAL SERVICES WHICH**
19 **THE SECRETARY MAY FURNISH TO VET-**
20 **ERANS LIKE OTHER MEDICAL SERVICES.**

21 Section 1701(6) of such title is amended by adding
22 at the end the following new subparagraph:

23 “(H) Fertility counseling and treatment,
24 including treatment using assisted reproductive
25 technology.”.

1 **SEC. 4. REPRODUCTIVE TREATMENT AND CARE DELIVERY**
2 **FOR SPOUSES AND SURROGATES OF VET-**
3 **ERANS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17 of
5 title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the
6 end the following new section:

7 **“§ 1787. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses**
8 **and surrogates of veterans**

9 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall furnish fer-
10 tility counseling and treatment, including through the use
11 of assisted reproductive technology, to a spouse or surro-
12 gate of a severely wounded veteran who has an infertility
13 condition incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the ac-
14 tive military, naval, or air service and who is enrolled in
15 the health care system established under section 1705(a)
16 of this title if the spouse and the veteran apply jointly
17 for such counseling and treatment through a process pre-
18 scribed by the Secretary.

19 “(b) COORDINATION OF CARE FOR OTHER SPOUSES
20 AND SURROGATES.—In the case of a spouse or surrogate
21 of a veteran not described in subsection (a) who is seeking
22 fertility counseling and treatment, the Secretary may co-
23 ordinate fertility counseling and treatment for such spouse
24 or surrogate.”.

25 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
26 at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended

1 by inserting after the item relating to section 1786 the
2 following new section:

“1787. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans.”.

3 (c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than one year after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
5 erans Affairs shall prescribe regulations to carry out sec-
6 tion 1787 of title 38, United States Code, as added by
7 paragraph (1).

8 **SEC. 5. REQUIREMENT TO IMPROVE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
9 **ERANS AFFAIRS WOMEN VETERANS CALL**
10 **CENTER.**

11 The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enhance the
12 capabilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs women
13 veterans call center—

14 (1) to respond to requests by women veterans
15 for assistance with accessing health care and bene-
16 fits furnished under laws administered by the Sec-
17 retary; and

18 (2) for referral of such veterans to community
19 resources to obtain assistance with services not fur-
20 nished by the Department.

1 **SEC. 6. MODIFICATION OF PILOT PROGRAM ON COUN-**
2 **SELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR WOMEN**
3 **VETERANS NEWLY SEPARATED FROM SERV-**
4 **ICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.**

5 (a) INCREASE IN NUMBER OF LOCATIONS.—Sub-
6 section (c) of section 203 of the Caregivers and Veterans
7 Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–
8 163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is amended by striking “three
9 locations” and inserting “14 locations”.

10 (b) EXTENSION OF DURATION.—Subsection (d) of
11 such section is amended by striking “2-year” and insert-
12 ing “four-year”.

13 **SEC. 7. PILOT PROGRAMS ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD**
14 **CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS.**

15 (a) MODIFICATION OF DURATION OF PILOT PRO-
16 GRAM ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN
17 VETERANS RECEIVING HEALTH CARE.—Subsection (e) of
18 section 205 of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus
19 Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163; 38
20 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended to read as follows:

21 “(e) DURATION.—A child care center that is estab-
22 lished as part of the pilot program may operate until the
23 date that is two years after the date on which the pilot
24 program is established in the third Veterans Integrated
25 Service Network required by subsection (d).”.

1 (b) REQUIREMENT FOR PILOT PROGRAM ON ASSIST-
2 ANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS RECEIV-
3 ING READJUSTMENT COUNSELING AND RELATED MEN-
4 TAL HEALTH SERVICES.—

5 (1) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Sec-
6 retary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot
7 program to assess the feasibility and advisability of
8 providing, subject to paragraph (2), assistance to
9 qualified veterans described in paragraph (3) to ob-
10 tain child care so that such veterans can receive re-
11 adjustment counseling and related mental health
12 services.

13 (2) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—
14 Assistance may only be provided to a qualified vet-
15 eran under the pilot program required by paragraph
16 (1) for receipt of child care during the period that
17 the qualified veteran receives readjustment coun-
18 seling and related health care services at a Vet Cen-
19 ter.

20 (3) QUALIFIED VETERANS.—For purposes of
21 this subsection, a qualified veteran is a veteran who
22 is—

23 (A) the primary caretaker of a child or
24 children; and

1 (B)(i) receiving from the Department reg-
2 ular readjustment counseling and related men-
3 tal health services; or

4 (ii) in need of readjustment counseling and
5 related mental health services from the Depart-
6 ment, and but for lack of child care services,
7 would receive such counseling and services from
8 the Department.

9 (4) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out
10 the pilot program under this subsection in no fewer
11 than three Readjustment Counseling Service Regions
12 selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot
13 program.

14 (5) DURATION.—The pilot program under this
15 subsection shall be carried out until the end of the
16 two-year period beginning on the day on which the
17 Secretary begins carrying out the pilot program at
18 the last Readjustment Counseling Service Region se-
19 lected under paragraph (4) at which the Secretary
20 begins carrying out the pilot program.

21 (6) FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—Child care assistance
23 under this subsection may include the following:

24 (i) Stipends for the payment of child
25 care offered by licensed child care centers

1 (either directly or through a voucher pro-
2 gram) which shall be, to the extent prac-
3 ticable, modeled after the Department of
4 Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Pro-
5 gram established pursuant to section 630
6 of the Treasury and General Government
7 Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law
8 107–67; 115 Stat. 552).

9 (ii) Payments to private child care
10 agencies.

11 (iii) Collaboration with facilities or
12 programs of other Federal departments or
13 agencies.

14 (iv) Such other forms of assistance as
15 the Secretary considers appropriate.

16 (B) AMOUNTS OF STIPENDS.—In the case
17 that child care assistance under this subsection
18 is provided as a stipend under subparagraph
19 (A)(i), such stipend shall cover the full cost of
20 such child care.

21 (7) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after
22 the completion of the pilot program required by
23 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Con-
24 gress a report on the pilot program. The report shall
25 include the findings and conclusions of the Secretary

1 as a result of the pilot program, and shall include
2 such recommendations for the continuation or ex-
3 pansion of the pilot program as the Secretary con-
4 siders appropriate.

5 (8) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
6 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
7 retary of Veterans Affairs to carry out the pilot pro-
8 gram required by paragraph (1) \$1,000,000 for each
9 of fiscal years 2014 and 2015.

10 (9) VET CENTER DEFINED.—In this section,
11 the term “Vet Center” means a center for readjust-
12 ment counseling and related mental health services
13 for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United
14 States Code.

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