

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 8167

To require the Secretary of Defense to award grants to fund research on orthotics and prosthetics.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2024

Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. MOYLAN, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. BILIRAKIS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To require the Secretary of Defense to award grants to fund research on orthotics and prosthetics.

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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Wounded Warrior Re-  
5 search Enhancement Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. ORTHOTIC AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH.**

7 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the grants described  
8 in this section is to advance orthotic and prosthetic clinical  
9 care for members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and civil-

1 ians who have undergone amputation, traumatic brain in-  
2 jury, and other serious physical injury as a result of com-  
3 bat or military experience.

4 (b) GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON PATIENT OUT-  
5 COMES.—The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with  
6 the Secretary of Veteran Affairs, shall award grants to  
7 persons to carry out research on one or more of the fol-  
8 lowing:

9 (1) The actions that can be taken to prevent  
10 amputation of limbs.

11 (2) The point in the course of patient treatment  
12 during which orthotic and prosthetic intervention is  
13 most effective.

14 (3) The orthotic interventions that are most ef-  
15 fective in treating the physical effects of traumatic  
16 brain injury.

17 (4) The patients that benefit most from par-  
18 ticular orthotic and prosthetic technologies.

19 (5) The orthotic and prosthetic services that  
20 best facilitate the return to active duty of members  
21 of the Armed Forces.

22 (6) The effect of the aging process on the use  
23 of prosthetics, including—

24 (A) increased skin breakdown;

25 (B) loss of balance;

1 (C) falls; and

2 (D) other issues that arise during the  
3 aging process.

4 (c) GRANTS ON MATERIALS RESEARCH.—The Sec-  
5 retary shall award grants to persons to carry out research  
6 on the following:

7 (1) The improvement of existing materials used  
8 in orthotics and prosthetics for the purpose of im-  
9 proving quality of life and health outcomes for indi-  
10 viduals with limb loss.

11 (2) The development of new materials used in  
12 orthotics and prosthetics for the purpose of improv-  
13 ing quality of life and health outcomes for individ-  
14 uals with limb loss.

15 (d) GRANTS ON TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH.—The Sec-  
16 retary shall award grants to persons to carry out research  
17 on the following:

18 (1) The improvement of existing orthotic and  
19 prosthetic technology and devices for the purpose of  
20 improving quality of life and health outcomes for in-  
21 dividuals with limb loss.

22 (2) The development of new orthotic and pros-  
23 thetic technology and devices for the purpose of im-  
24 proving quality of life and health outcomes for indi-  
25 viduals with limb loss.

1       (e) REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS.—A person seeking  
2 the award of a grant under this section shall submit to  
3 the Secretary an application therefore in the form and ac-  
4 companied by such information as the Secretary shall re-  
5 quire.

6       (f) AWARD REQUIREMENTS.—

7           (1) PEER-REVIEWED PROPOSALS.—Grants  
8 under this section may be awarded only for research  
9 that is peer-reviewed.

10          (2) COMPETITIVE PROCEDURES.—Grants under  
11 this section shall be awarded through competitive  
12 procedures.

13       (g) GRANT USE.—A person awarded a grant under  
14 subsection (b), (c), or (d) shall use the grant amount to  
15 carry out the research described in the applicable sub-  
16 section.

17       (h) REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the  
18 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,  
19 the Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with the  
20 Secretary of Veterans Affairs, veterans, community-based  
21 clinicians, and expert researchers in the field of orthotics  
22 and prosthetics, submit to Congress a report setting forth  
23 the following:

24           (1) An agenda for orthotic and prosthetic re-  
25 search that identifies and prioritizes the most sig-

1       nificant unanswered orthotic and prosthetic research  
2       questions pertinent to the provision of evidence-  
3       based clinical care to members of the Armed Forces,  
4       veterans, and civilians.

5               (2) For each report after the initial report  
6       under this subsection—

7                       (A) a summary of how the grants awarded  
8                       under subsection (b) are addressing the most  
9                       significant orthotic and prosthetic needs; and

10                      (B) the progress made towards resolving  
11                      orthotic and prosthetic challenges facing mem-  
12                      bers of the Armed Forces and veterans.

13       (i) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term  
14       “veteran” has the meaning given that term in section 101  
15       of title 38, United States Code.

16       (j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
17       authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2025 for the  
18       Department of Defense for the Defense Health Program,  
19       \$30,000,000 to carry out this section.

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