

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 132

To require a pilot program on activities under the pre-separation transition process of members of the Armed Forces for a reduction in suicide among veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 30, 2023

Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To require a pilot program on activities under the pre-separation transition process of members of the Armed Forces for a reduction in suicide among veterans, 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.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Daniel J. Harvey Jr.
5 and Adam Lambert Improving Servicemember Transition
6 to Reduce Veteran Suicide Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM ON ACTIVITIES UNDER THE PRE-**
2 **SEPARATION TRANSITION PROCESS OF MEM-**
3 **BERS OF THE ARMED FORCES FOR A REDUC-**
4 **TION IN SUICIDE AMONG VETERANS.**

5 (a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of
6 Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly
7 carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and ad-
8 visability of providing the module described in subsection
9 (b) and services under subsection (c) as part of the pre-
10 separation transition process for members of the Armed
11 Forces as a means of reducing the incidence of suicide
12 among veterans.

13 (b) MODULE.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The module described in this
15 subsection shall include the following:

16 (A) An in-person meeting between a cohort
17 of members of the Armed Forces participating
18 in the pilot program and a social worker or
19 nurse in which the social worker or nurse—

20 (i) educates the cohort on resources
21 for and specific potential risks confronting
22 such members after discharge or release
23 from the Armed Forces, including—

24 (I) loss of community or a sup-
25 port system;

- 1 (II) isolation from family,
2 friends, or society;
- 3 (III) identity crisis in the transi-
4 tion from military to civilian life;
- 5 (IV) vulnerability viewed as a
6 weakness;
- 7 (V) need for empathy;
- 8 (VI) self-medication and addic-
9 tion;
- 10 (VII) importance of sleep and ex-
11 ercise;
- 12 (VIII) homelessness;
- 13 (IX) risk factors contributing to
14 attempts of suicide and deaths by sui-
15 cide; and
- 16 (X) safe storage of firearms as
17 part of suicide prevention lethal
18 means safety efforts;
- 19 (ii) educates the cohort on—
- 20 (I) the signs and symptoms of
21 suicide risk and physical, psycho-
22 logical, or neurological issues, such as
23 post-traumatic stress disorder, trau-
24 matic brain injury, chronic pain, sleep
25 disorders, substance use disorders, ad-

1 verse childhood experiences, depres-
2 sion, bipolar disorder, and socio-eco-
3 logical concerns, such as homeless-
4 ness, unemployment, and relationship
5 strain;

6 (II) the potential risks for mem-
7 bers of the Armed Forces from such
8 issues after discharge or release from
9 the Armed Forces; and

10 (III) the resources and treatment
11 options available to such members for
12 such issues through the Department
13 of Veterans Affairs, the Department
14 of Defense, and non-profit organiza-
15 tions;

16 (iii) educates the cohort about the re-
17 sources available to victims of military sex-
18 ual trauma through the Department of
19 Veterans Affairs; and

20 (iv) educates the cohort about the
21 manner in which members might experi-
22 ence challenges during the transition from
23 military to civilian life, and the resources
24 available to them through the Department

1 of Veterans Affairs, the Department of De-
2 fense, and other organizations.

3 (B) The provision to each member of the
4 cohort of contact information for a counseling
5 or other appropriate facility of the Department
6 of Veterans Affairs in the locality in which such
7 member intends to reside after discharge or re-
8 lease.

9 (C) The submittal by each member of the
10 cohort to the Department of Veterans Affairs
11 (including both the Veterans Health Adminis-
12 tration and the Veterans Benefits Administra-
13 tion) of their medical records in connection with
14 service in the Armed Forces, whether or not
15 such members intend to file a claim with the
16 Department for benefits with respect to any
17 service-connected disability.

18 (2) COMPOSITION OF COHORT.—Each cohort
19 participating in the module described in this sub-
20 section shall be comprised of not fewer than 50 indi-
21 viduals.

22 (c) SERVICES.—In carrying out the pilot program,
23 the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans
24 Affairs shall provide to each individual participating in the
25 pilot program the following services:

1 (1) During the transition process and prior to
2 discharge or release from the Armed Forces, a one-
3 on-one meeting with a social worker or nurse of the
4 Department of Veterans Affairs who will—

5 (A) conduct an assessment of the indi-
6 vidual regarding eligibility to receive health care
7 or counseling services from the Department of
8 Veterans Affairs;

9 (B) for those eligible, or likely to be eligi-
10 ble, to receive health care or counseling services
11 from the Department of Veterans Affairs—

12 (i) identify and provide contact infor-
13 mation for an appropriate facility of the
14 Department of Veterans Affairs in the lo-
15 cality in which such individual intends to
16 reside after discharge or release;

17 (ii) facilitate registration or enroll-
18 ment in the system of patient enrollment
19 of the Department of Veterans Affairs
20 under section 1705(a) of title 38, United
21 States Code, if applicable;

22 (iii) educate the individual about care,
23 benefits, and services available to the indi-
24 vidual through the Veterans Health Ad-
25 ministration; and

1 (iv) coordinate health care based on
2 the health care needs of the individual, if
3 applicable, to include establishing an initial
4 appointment, at the election of the indi-
5 vidual, to occur not later than 90 days
6 after the date of discharge or release of the
7 member from the Armed Forces.

8 (2) For each individual determined ineligible for
9 care and services from the Department of Veterans
10 Affairs during the transition process, the Secretary
11 of Defense shall conduct an assessment of the indi-
12 vidual to determine the needs of the individual and
13 appropriate follow-up, which shall be identified and
14 documented in the appropriate records of the De-
15 partment of Defense.

16 (3) During the appointment scheduled pursuant
17 to paragraph (1)(B)(iv), the Secretary of Veterans
18 Affairs shall conduct an assessment of the individual
19 to determine the needs of the individual and appro-
20 priate follow-up, which shall be identified and docu-
21 mented in the appropriate records of the Depart-
22 ment of Veterans Affairs.

23 (d) LOCATIONS.—

24 (1) MODULE AND MEETING.—The module
25 under subsection (b) and the one-on-one meeting

1 under subsection (c)(1) shall be carried out at not
2 fewer than 10 locations of the Department of De-
3 fense that serve not fewer than 300 members of the
4 Armed Forces annually that are jointly selected by
5 the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Vet-
6 erans Affairs for purposes of the pilot program.

7 (2) ASSESSMENT AND APPOINTMENT.—The as-
8 sessment under subsection (c)(2) and the appoint-
9 ment under subsection (c)(3) may occur at any loca-
10 tion determined appropriate by the Secretary of De-
11 fense or the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, as the
12 case may be.

13 (3) MEMBERS SERVED.—The locations selected
14 under paragraph (1) shall, to the extent practicable,
15 be locations that, whether individually or in aggre-
16 gate, serve all the Armed Forces and both the reg-
17 ular and reserve components of the Armed Forces.

18 (e) SELECTION AND COMMENCEMENT.—The Sec-
19 retary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
20 shall jointly select the locations of the pilot program under
21 subsection (d)(1) and commence carrying out activities
22 under the pilot program by not later than September 30,
23 2024.

24 (f) DURATION.—The duration of the pilot program
25 shall be five years.

1 (g) REPORTS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
3 after the commencement of the pilot program, and
4 annually thereafter during the duration of the pilot
5 program, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary
6 of Veterans Affairs shall jointly submit to the appro-
7 priate committees of Congress a report on the activi-
8 ties under the pilot program.

9 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by para-
10 graph (1) shall include the following:

11 (A) The demographic information of the
12 members and former members of the Armed
13 Forces who participated in the pilot program
14 during the one-year period ending on the date
15 of such report.

16 (B) A description of the activities under
17 the pilot program during such period.

18 (C) An assessment of the benefits of the
19 activities under the pilot program during such
20 period to members and former members of the
21 Armed Forces.

22 (D) An assessment of whether the activi-
23 ties under the pilot program as of the date of
24 such report have met the targeted outcomes of
25 the pilot program among members and former

1 members who participated in the pilot program
2 within one year of discharge or release from the
3 Armed Forces.

4 (E) Such recommendations as the Sec-
5 retary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans
6 Affairs jointly consider appropriate regarding
7 the feasibility and advisability of expansion of
8 the pilot program, extension of the pilot pro-
9 gram, or both.

10 (h) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DE-
11 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate commit-
12 tees of Congress” means—

13 (1) the Committee on Armed Services and the
14 Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

15 (2) the Committee on Armed Services and the
16 Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of
17 Representatives.

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