

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 684

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of services for homeless veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 10, 2015

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) 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 improve the provision of services for homeless 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 “Homeless Veterans
5 Prevention Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. INCREASED PER DIEM PAYMENTS FOR TRANSI-**
2 **TIONAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE THAT BE-**
3 **COMES PERMANENT HOUSING FOR HOME-**
4 **LESS VETERANS.**

5 Section 2012(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code,
6 is amended—

7 (1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B)
8 through (D) as subparagraphs (C) through (E), re-
9 spectively;

10 (2) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated, by
11 striking “in subparagraph (D)” and inserting “in
12 subparagraph (E)”;

13 (3) in subparagraph (D), as redesignated, by
14 striking “under subparagraph (B)” and inserting
15 “under subparagraph (C)”;

16 (4) in subparagraph (E), as redesignated, by
17 striking “in subparagraphs (B) and (C)” and insert-
18 ing “in subparagraphs (C) and (D)”;

19 (5) in subparagraph (A)—

20 (A) by striking “The rate” and inserting
21 “Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph
22 (B), the rate”; and

23 (B) by striking “under subparagraph (B)”
24 and all that follows through the end and insert-
25 ing the following: “under subparagraph (C).

1 “(B)(i) Except as provided in clause (ii), in no case
 2 may the rate determined under this paragraph exceed the
 3 rate authorized for State homes for domiciliary care under
 4 subsection (a)(1)(A) of section 1741 of this title, as the
 5 Secretary may increase from time to time under sub-
 6 section (c) of that section.

7 “(ii) In the case of services furnished to a homeless
 8 veteran who is placed in housing that will become perma-
 9 nent housing for the veteran upon termination of the fur-
 10 nishing of such services to such veteran, the maximum
 11 rate of per diem authorized under this section is 150 per-
 12 cent of the rate described in clause (i).”.

13 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS FOR**
 14 **FURNISHING CARE TO DEPENDENTS OF CER-**
 15 **TAIN HOMELESS VETERANS.**

16 Subsection (a) of section 2012 of title 38, United
 17 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 18 lowing new paragraph:

19 “(4) Services for which a recipient of a grant under
 20 section 2011 of this title (or an entity described in para-
 21 graph (1)) may receive per diem payments under this sub-
 22 section may include furnishing care for a dependent of a
 23 homeless veteran who is under the care of such homeless
 24 veteran while such homeless veteran receives services from
 25 the grant recipient (or entity).”.

1 **SEC. 4. PARTNERSHIPS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTI-**
2 **TIES TO PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES TO**
3 **HOMELESS VETERANS AND VETERANS AT**
4 **RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 20 of title 38, United
6 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2022
7 the following new section:

8 **“§ 2022A. Partnerships with public and private enti-**
9 **ties to provide legal services to homeless**
10 **veterans and veterans at risk of home-**
11 **lessness**

12 “(a) PARTNERSHIPS AUTHORIZED.—Subject to the
13 availability of funds for that purpose, the Secretary may
14 enter into partnerships with public or private entities to
15 fund a portion of the general legal services specified in
16 subsection (c) that are provided by such entities to home-
17 less veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

18 “(b) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall ensure that,
19 to the extent practicable, partnerships under this section
20 are made with entities equitably distributed across the ge-
21 ographic regions of the United States, including rural
22 communities and tribal lands.

23 “(c) LEGAL SERVICES.—Legal services specified in
24 this subsection include legal services provided by public
25 or private entities that address the needs of homeless vet-
26 erans and veterans at risk of homelessness as follows:

1 “(1) Legal services related to housing, including
2 eviction defense and representation in landlord-ten-
3 ant cases.

4 “(2) Legal services related to family law, in-
5 cluding assistance in court proceedings for child sup-
6 port, divorce, and estate planning.

7 “(3) Legal services related to income support,
8 including assistance in obtaining public benefits.

9 “(4) Legal services related to criminal defense,
10 including defense in matters symptomatic of home-
11 lessness, such as outstanding warrants, fines, and
12 driver’s license revocation, to reduce recidivism and
13 facilitate the overcoming of reentry obstacles in em-
14 ployment or housing.

15 “(d) CONSULTATION.—In developing and carrying
16 out partnerships under this section, the Secretary shall,
17 to the extent practicable, consult with public and private
18 entities—

19 “(1) for assistance in identifying and contacting
20 organizations described in subsection (c); and

21 “(2) to coordinate appropriate outreach rela-
22 tionships with such organizations.

23 “(e) REPORTS.—The Secretary may require entities
24 that have entered into partnerships under this section to
25 submit to the Secretary periodic reports on legal services

1 provided to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of
2 homelessness pursuant to such partnerships.”.

3 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
4 at the beginning of chapter 20 of such title is amended
5 by adding after the item relating to section 2022 the fol-
6 lowing new item:

“2022A. Partnerships with public and private entities to provide legal services
to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.”.

7 **SEC. 5. EXPANSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
8 **FAIRS AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE DENTAL**
9 **CARE TO HOMELESS VETERANS.**

10 Subsection (b) of section 2062 of title 38, United
11 States Code, is amended to read as follows:

12 “(b) ELIGIBLE VETERANS.—(1) Subsection (a) ap-
13 plies to a veteran who—

14 “(A) is enrolled for care under section 1705(a)
15 of this title; and

16 “(B) for a period of 60 consecutive days, is re-
17 ceiving—

18 “(i) assistance under section 8(o) of the
19 United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C.
20 1437f(o)); or

21 “(ii) care (directly or by contract) in any
22 of the following settings:

23 “(I) A domiciliary under section 1710
24 of this title.

1 “(II) A therapeutic residence under
2 section 2032 of this title.

3 “(III) Community residential care co-
4 ordinated by the Secretary under section
5 1730 of this title.

6 “(IV) A setting for which the Sec-
7 retary provides funds for a grant and per
8 diem provider.

9 “(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), in determining
10 whether a veteran has received assistance or care for a
11 period of 60 consecutive days, the Secretary may disregard
12 breaks in the continuity of assistance or care for which
13 the veteran is not responsible.”.

14 **SEC. 6. REPEAL OF SUNSET ON AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT**
15 **PROGRAM OF REFERRAL AND COUNSELING**
16 **SERVICES FOR VETERANS AT RISK FOR**
17 **HOMELESSNESS WHO ARE TRANSITIONING**
18 **FROM CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS.**

19 Section 2023 of title 38, United States Code, is
20 amended—

21 (1) by striking subsection (d); and

22 (2) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-
23 section (d).

1 **SEC. 7. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR FINANCIAL ASSIST-**
2 **ANCE FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VERY**
3 **LOW-INCOME VETERAN FAMILIES IN PERMA-**
4 **NENT HOUSING.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 2044(e)
6 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at
7 the end the following new subparagraph (F):

8 “(F) \$500,000,000 for fiscal year 2016.”.

9 (b) TRAINING ENTITIES FOR PROVISION OF SUP-
10 PORTIVE SERVICES.—Paragraph (3) of such section is
11 amended by inserting “and 2015” after “through 2012”.

12 **SEC. 8. REQUIREMENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**
13 **AFFAIRS TO ASSESS COMPREHENSIVE SERV-**
14 **ICE PROGRAMS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the
16 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
17 erans Affairs shall assess and measure the capacity of pro-
18 grams for which entities receive grants under section 2011
19 of title 38, United States Code, or per diem payments
20 under section 2012 or 2061 of such title.

21 (b) ASSESSMENT AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEV-
22 ELS.—In assessing and measuring under subsection (a),
23 the Secretary shall develop and use tools to examine the
24 capacity of programs described in such subsection at both
25 the national and local level in order to assess the following:

1 (1) Whether sufficient capacity exists to meet
2 the needs of homeless veterans in each geographic
3 area.

4 (2) Whether existing capacity meets the needs
5 of the subpopulations of homeless veterans located in
6 each geographic area.

7 (3) The amount of capacity that recipients of
8 grants under sections 2011 and 2061 and per diem
9 payments under section 2012 of such title have to
10 provide services for which the recipients are eligible
11 to receive per diem under section 2012(a)(2)(B)(ii)
12 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section
13 3(5)(B).

14 (c) USE OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall use
15 the information collected under this section as follows:

16 (1) To set specific goals to ensure that pro-
17 grams described in subsection (a) are effectively
18 serving the needs of homeless veterans.

19 (2) To assess whether programs described in
20 subsection (a) are meeting goals set under para-
21 graph (1).

22 (3) To inform funding allocations for programs
23 described in subsection (a).

24 (4) To improve the referral of homeless vet-
25 erans to programs described in subsection (a).

1 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
2 on which the assessment required by subsection (b) is
3 completed, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee
4 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on
5 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report
6 on such assessment and such recommendations for legisla-
7 tive and administrative action as the Secretary may have
8 to improve the programs and per diem payments described
9 in subsection (a).

10 **SEC. 9. REQUIREMENT FOR COMPTROLLER GENERAL TO**
11 **STUDY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**
12 **HOMELESS VETERANS PROGRAMS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the
14 date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
15 of the United States shall complete a study of programs
16 of the Department of Veterans Affairs that provide assist-
17 ance to homeless veterans.

18 (b) ELEMENTS.—The study required by subsection
19 (a) shall include the following:

20 (1) An assessment of whether programs de-
21 scribed in subsection (a) are meeting the needs of
22 veterans who are eligible for assistance provided by
23 such programs.

24 (2) A review of recent efforts of the Secretary
25 of Veterans Affairs to improve the privacy, safety,

1 and security of female veterans receiving assistance
2 from such programs.

3 **SEC. 10. REPEAL OF REQUIREMENT FOR ANNUAL REPORTS**
4 **ON ASSISTANCE TO HOMELESS VETERANS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2065 of title 38, United
6 States Code, is hereby repealed.

7 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
8 at the beginning of chapter 20 of such title is amended
9 by striking the item relating to section 2065.

○