To authorize educational assistance under the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship program for pursuit of advanced degrees in physical therapy and occupational therapy.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 8, 2011

Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. COONS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To authorize educational assistance under the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship program for pursuit of advanced degrees in physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-

1 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR ADVANCED DEGREES IN PHYSICAL THERAPY AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY UNDER THE ARMED FORCES HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of Defense for purposes of this section, assistance under the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship program under subchapter I of chapter 105 of title 10, United States Code, shall be available for pursuit of a master’s degree and a doctoral degree in the disciplines as follows:

(1) Physical therapy.

(2) Occupational therapy.

(b) TERMINATION.—The guidance under subsection (a) shall provide that the availability of assistance as described in that subsection for pursuit of a degree in a discipline covered by that subsection shall cease when the Secretary certifies to Congress that there no longer exists a current or projected shortfall in qualified personnel in that discipline in either of the following:

(1) The military departments.

(2) Any major military medical treatment facility specializing in the rehabilitation of wounded members of the Armed Forces.

(e) SUNSET.—
(1) In general.—The authority to commence
the provision of assistance under this section shall
expire on the date that is two years after the date
of the enactment of this Act, if not terminated ear-
lier in accordance with subsection (b).

(2) Continuation of ongoing assistance.—
Nothing in paragraph (1) shall be construed to ter-
minate the provision of assistance under this section
after the date specified in paragraph (1) to persons
provided assistance under this section before or as of
such date.