H. R. 1783

To revive and expand the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 29, 2017

Mr. Graves of Missouri (for himself, Ms. Schakowsky, and Ms. Roybal-Allard) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

A BILL

To revive and expand the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

2. SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

3. This Act may be cited as the “Improving Veterans Access to Quality Care Act of 2017”.


SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.

(a) Establishment or Expansion of Advanced Degree Programs to Expand Availability of Care.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with institutions of higher education to develop partnerships for the establishment or expansion of programs of advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to improve and enhance the availability of high quality prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

(b) Report.—

(1) In General.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (d), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out subsection (a).

(2) Development of Plan.—The Secretary shall develop the plan required under paragraph (1) in consultation with veterans service organizations, institutions of higher education with accredited degree programs in prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the prosthetics and orthotics field.

(c) Funding.—
(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, $5,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain available for expenditure until September 30, 2020.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. PROVISION OF FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY FOR ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS, AND OTHER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide full practice authority to advanced practice registered nurses, physician assistants, and such other licensed health care professionals of the Department of Veterans Affairs as is consistent with the education, training, and certification of such health care professionals.

(b) INAPPLICABILITY OF STATE LIMITATIONS.—Full practice authority shall be provided by the Secretary under subsection (a) to health care professionals described in
that subsection without regard to any limitation that would otherwise be imposed on the health care practice of such professionals by a licensing or credentialing body of a State or otherwise under State law.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “advanced practice registered nurse” has the meaning given that term in section 5509(e)(1) of Public Law 111–148 (42 U.S.C. 1395ww note).

(2) The term “full practice authority” means—

(A) with respect to an advanced practice registered nurse, the full scope of practice for the area of nursing practiced by the advanced practice registered nurse as determined by the national professional association or organization, a successor association or organization, or any other appropriate entity as determined by the Secretary for such area of nursing;

(B) with respect to a physician assistant, the full scope of practice for the area of medicine practiced by the physician assistant as determined by the national professional association or organization, a successor association or organization, or any other appropriate entity as
determined by the Secretary for such area of
medicine; and

(C) with respect to any other licensed
health care professional not specified in sub-
paragraph (A) or (B), the full scope of practice
for the area of medicine practiced by the li-
censed health care professional as determined
by the national professional association or orga-
nization, a successor association or organiza-
tion, or any other appropriate entity as deter-
mined by the Secretary for such area of medi-
cine.

(3) The term “physician assistant” has the
meaning given that term in section 1861(aa)(5)(A)
of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
1395x(aa)(5)(A)).

SEC. 4. TRANSFER OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDER
CREDENTIALING DATA FROM SECRETARY OF
DEFENSE TO SECRETARY OF VETERANS AF-
FAIRS.

(a) In General.—In a case in which the Secretary
of Veterans Affairs hires a covered health care provider,
the Secretary of Defense shall, after receiving a request
from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the
credentialing data of the Secretary of Defense relating to
such health care provider, transfer to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs such credentialing data.

(b) COVERED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.—For purposes of this section, a covered provider is a health care provider who—

(1) is or was employed by the Secretary of Defense;

(2) provides or provided health care related services as part of such employment; and

(3) was credentialed by the Secretary of Defense.

(c) POLICIES AND REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall establish such policies and promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(d) CREDENTIALING DEFINED.—In this section, the term “credentialing” means the systematic process of screening and evaluating qualifications and other credentials, including licensure, required education, relevant training and experience, and current competence and health status.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.