115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION  

S. 373

To require the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress a report on hearing loss, tinnitus, and noise pollution due to small arms fire.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 14, 2017

Mr. HATCH introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress a report on hearing loss, tinnitus, and noise pollution due to small arms fire.

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

SECTION 1. REPORT ON HEARING LOSS, TINNITUS, AND NOISE POLLUTION DUE TO SMALL ARMS FIRE.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that hearing loss, tinnitus, and noise pollution due to small arms fire has a detrimental impact on the readiness and budget of the Department of Defense.

(b) REPORT.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives (and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives upon the request of either committee) and the President pro tempore of the Senate, a report on hearing loss, tinnitus, and noise pollution due to small arms fire.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A verification and validation of the results included in published findings on hearing loss and tinnitus due to small arms fire (including the “Clinical Study Design of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss in Marine Recruits” published by E.A. Williams (née Edelstein)).

(B) A description of the impact on the Department of Defense of noise pollution and noise ordinance requirements, as set forth under title IV of the Clean Air Act (relating to noise pollution) (42 U.S.C. 7641 et seq.), for small arms fire (including the impact on train-
ing ranges, training schedules, operational readiness, and mission parameters).

(C) Data on the severity and rates of noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus experienced by personnel of the Department due to small arms fire in training and operational environments, including costs currently incurred by the health care systems of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to treat noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus.

(D) A description of alternative methods and strategies currently being employed by the Department of Defense, as well as alternative methods, technologies, and techniques being considered, for the mitigation of hearing loss, tinnitus, and noise pollution due to small arms fire.

(E) A description of current mitigation strategies available to reduce hearing loss, tinnitus, and noise pollution as a whole and not as separate issues.