

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4304

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assign physicians of the Department of Veterans Affairs to temporarily serve as traveling physicians in the territories and possessions of the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 15 (legislative day, APRIL 14), 2026

Mr. SHEEHY (for himself and Ms. HIRONO) 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 authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assign physicians of the Department of Veterans Affairs to temporarily serve as traveling physicians in the territories and possessions of the United States, 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 “Territorial Response
5 and Access to Veterans’ Essential Lifecare Act” or the
6 “TRAVEL Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS ASSIGNMENT OF**
 2 **TRAVELING PHYSICIANS TO SERVE TERRI-**
 3 **TORIES AND POSSESSIONS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 74 of title
 5 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end
 6 the following new section:

7 **“§ 7415. Traveling physicians**

8 “(a) ASSIGNMENT.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may assign
 10 a physician appointed under section 7401 of this
 11 title to serve as a traveling physician for a period of
 12 not more than one year at a time.

13 “(2) LOCATIONS.—A physician assigned to
 14 serve as a traveling physician under this section may
 15 be assigned to provide health care to veterans resid-
 16 ing in American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth
 17 of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Common-
 18 wealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the
 19 United States, or any other territory or possession
 20 of the United States at facilities of the Department
 21 or other approved facilities located in such territory
 22 or possession.

23 “(3) MULTIPLE PHYSICIANS.—The Secretary
 24 may assign multiple physicians to serve as traveling
 25 physicians under this section and may assign each

1 such physician to serve in a specific territory or pos-
2 session.

3 “(b) COORDINATION OF CARE.—In providing care
4 under this section, traveling physicians shall coordinate
5 with non-Department medical providers to the extent
6 practicable and necessary to ensure high quality and co-
7 ordinated care for veterans receiving hospital care and
8 medical services (as those terms are defined in section
9 1701 of this title).

10 “(c) PAY.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to pay under
12 section 7431 of this title, the Secretary shall provide
13 a relocation or retention bonus to traveling physi-
14 cians under this section.

15 “(2) NATURE OF BONUS.—The relocation or re-
16 tention bonus provided under paragraph (1) shall be
17 substantially similar to a relocation or retention
18 bonus offered under section 7410(a) of this title, as
19 the Secretary considers appropriate.”.

20 “(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
21 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting
22 after the item relating to section 7414 the following new
23 item:

“7415. Traveling physicians.”.

1 (c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

2 Title 38, United States Code, is further amended as fol-
3 lows:

4 (1) In section 7410(a)(1), by—

5 (A) striking “retention allowances” and in-
6 serting “retention bonuses”; and

7 (B) striking the second comma after “sec-
8 tion 7401(1) of this title”.

9 (2) In section 7431(e)(5)(B), by striking “re-
10 tention allowances” and inserting “retention bo-
11 nuses”.

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