

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5396

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to employ additional categories of mental health professionals.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 2006

Mr. MORAN of Kansas (for himself and Mr. MICHAUD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to employ additional categories of mental health professionals.

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 “Veterans Mental
5 Health Care Access Improvement Act of 2006”.

6 **SEC. 2. AUTHORITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
7 **FAIRS TO EMPLOY ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES**
8 **OF MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS.**

9 Section 7402(b) of title 38, United States Code, is
10 amended—

1 (1) by redesignating paragraph (10) as para-
2 graph (12); and

3 (2) by inserting after paragraph (9) the fol-
4 lowing new paragraphs:

5 “(10) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST.—To be
6 eligible to be appointed to a licensed mental health coun-
7 selor position, a person must—

8 “(A) hold a master’s degree in marriage and
9 family therapy, or a comparable degree in mental
10 health, from a college or university approved by the
11 Secretary; and

12 “(B) be licensed or certified to independently
13 practice marriage and family therapy in a State, ex-
14 cept that the Secretary may waive the requirement
15 of licensure or certification for an individual mar-
16 riage and family therapist for a reasonable period of
17 time recommended by the Under Secretary for
18 Health.

19 “(11) LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR.—
20 To be eligible to be appointed to a position as a licensed
21 mental health counselor, a person must—

22 “(A) hold a master’s degree in mental health
23 counseling, or a related field, from a college or uni-
24 versity approved by the Secretary; and

1 “(B) be licensed or certified to independently
2 practice mental health counseling in a State, except
3 that the Secretary may waive the requirement of li-
4 censure or certification for an individual licensed
5 mental health counselor for a reasonable period of
6 time recommended by the Under Secretary for
7 Health.”.

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