

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2405

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide veterans enrolled in the health system of the Department of Veterans Affairs the option of receiving covered health services through facilities other than those of the Department.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 14, 2009

Mr. LATHAM (for himself, Mr. McCOTTER, and Mr. MILLER of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide veterans enrolled in the health system of the Department of Veterans Affairs the option of receiving covered health services through facilities other than those of the Department.

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 “Richard Helm Vet-
5 erans’ Access to Local Health Care Options and Resources
6 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. REQUIREMENT FOR PAYMENTS TO FACILITIES**
2 **OTHER THAN THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
3 **ERANS AFFAIRS FOR COVERED HEALTH**
4 **SERVICES.**

5 (a) REQUIREMENT TO AUTHORIZE RECEIPT OF COV-
6 ERED HEALTH SERVICES AT NON-DEPARTMENT FACILI-
7 TIES PURSUANT TO CONTRACTS WITH SUCH FACILI-
8 TIES.—Subsection (a) of section 1703 of title 38, United
9 States Code, is amended to read as follows:

10 “(a) An enrolled veteran may elect to receive covered
11 health services through a non-Department facility. Such
12 an election shall be made by submission to the Secretary
13 of an application in accordance with such regulations as
14 the Secretary prescribes. The Secretary shall authorize
15 such services to be furnished to such veteran pursuant to
16 contracting with such a facility to furnish such services
17 to such a veteran, as authorized in section 1710 of this
18 title.”.

19 (b) DESCRIPTIONS OF COVERED HEALTH SERVICES
20 AND ENROLLED VETERANS.—Such section is further
21 amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
22 section:

23 “(e) For purposes of subsection (a)—

24 “(1) a covered health service is any hospital
25 care, medical service, rehabilitative service, or pre-
26 ventative health service for which the veteran de-

1 scribed in such subsection is eligible under this title;
2 and

3 “(2) an enrolled veteran is a veteran who is en-
4 rolled in the system of patient enrollment established
5 under section 1705(a) of this title.”.

6 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The Secretary of Veterans
7 Affairs shall implement the amendments made by sub-
8 sections (a) and (b) in order for enrolled veterans de-
9 scribed in section 1703(e)(2) of title 38, United States
10 Code, as added by subsection (b), to receive covered health
11 services in accordance with section 1703(a) of such title,
12 as amended by subsection (a), not later than 180 days
13 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

14 **SEC. 3. AUTHORITY OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
15 **FAIRS PHARMACIES TO DISPENSE MEDICA-**
16 **TIONS TO VETERANS ON PRESCRIPTIONS**
17 **WRITTEN BY PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS.**

18 Section 1712 of title 38, United States Code, is
19 amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
20 section:

21 “(f) Subject to section 1722A of this title, the Sec-
22 retary shall furnish to a veteran, through a Department
23 health-care facility, such drugs and medicines as may be
24 ordered on prescription of a duly licensed physician in the
25 treatment of any illness or injury of the veteran provided

1 pursuant to the authority to contract with a non-Depart-
2 ment facility for such treatment under section 1703 of this
3 title.”.

