

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 699

To provide for the construction by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of
a full service hospital in Far South Texas.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2009

Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To provide for the construction by the Secretary of Veterans
Affairs of a full service hospital in Far South Texas.

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 “Far South Texas Vet-
5 erans Medical Center Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; DEFINITION.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
8 ings:

9 (1) The current and future health care needs of
10 veterans residing in the Far South Texas area are

1 not being fully met by the Department of Veterans
2 Affairs.

3 (2) The Department of Veterans Affairs esti-
4 mates that more than 117,000 veterans reside in
5 Far South Texas.

6 (3) In its Capital Asset Realignment for En-
7 hanced Services study, the Department of Veterans
8 Affairs found that fewer than three percent of its
9 enrollees in the Valley-Coastal Bend Market of Vet-
10 erans Integrated Service Network 17 reside within
11 its acute hospital access standards.

12 (4) Travel times for veterans from the market
13 referred to in paragraph (3) can exceed six hours
14 from their residences to the nearest Department of
15 Veterans Affairs hospital for acute inpatient health
16 care.

17 (5) Even with the significant travel times, vet-
18 erans from Far South Texas demonstrate a high de-
19 mand for health care services from the Department
20 of Veterans Affairs.

21 (6) Current deployments involving members of
22 the Texas National Guard and Reservists from
23 Texas will continue to increase demand for medical
24 services provided by the Department of Veterans Af-
25 fairs.

1 (b) DEFINITION.—In this Act, the term “Far South
2 Texas” means the following counties of the State of Texas:
3 Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Calhoun, Cameron, Crockett,
4 DeWitt, Dimmit, Duval, Goliad, Hidalgo, Jackson, Jim
5 Hogg, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Nueces, Refugio, San
6 Patricio, Starr, Victoria, Webb, Willacy, and Zapata.

7 **SEC. 3. CONSTRUCTION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY IN**
8 **FAR SOUTH TEXAS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
10 shall carry out the construction of a major medical facility
11 project in Far South Texas consisting of a full service De-
12 partment of Veterans Affairs hospital.

13 (b) FACILITY LOCATION.—The facility referred to in
14 subsection (a) shall be located in a county in Far South
15 Texas that the Secretary determines to be most appro-
16 priate to meeting the health care needs of veterans in Far
17 South Texas.

18 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
19 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit
20 to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and
21 House of Representatives a report identifying and out-
22 lining the determination of the Secretary under subsection
23 (b) and a detailed estimate of the cost of and time nec-
24 essary for completion of the project required by subsection
25 (a).

1 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans
3 Affairs for fiscal year 2009 for the Construction, Major
4 Projects account such sums as may be necessary for the
5 project required by subsection (a).

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