

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2095

To reauthorize and modify the pilot program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 6, 2014

Mr. MORAN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. KING) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To reauthorize and modify the pilot program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers, 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 “Veterans Health Care
5 Access Received Closer to Home Act of 2014”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

1 (1) veterans who are authorized by the Sec-
2 retary of Veterans Affairs to receive health care in
3 the community must not lose the high quality, safe-
4 ty, care coordination, and other veteran-centric ele-
5 ments that the health care system of the Depart-
6 ment of Veterans Affairs provides;

7 (2) many veterans receive health care from both
8 the Department and community providers but the
9 lack of care coordination among the Department and
10 community providers when veterans receive pur-
11 chased care places veterans at risk for poor health
12 outcomes and results in inefficient use of finite
13 health care resources;

14 (3) veteran-centric care coordination is associ-
15 ated with improved patient outcomes, as Department
16 and non-Department health care teams coordinate
17 and collaborate to provide the best care for veterans;
18 and

19 (4) if the Secretary purchases care for veterans
20 from the private sector, such care must be secured
21 in a cost-effective manner, in a way that com-
22 plements the larger health care system of the De-
23 partment by using industry standards for care and
24 costs.

1 **SEC. 3. REAUTHORIZATION AND MODIFICATION OF PILOT**
 2 **PROGRAM OF ENHANCED CONTRACT CARE**
 3 **AUTHORITY FOR HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF**
 4 **VETERANS.**

5 Section 403 of the Veterans’ Mental Health and
 6 Other Care Improvements Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–
 7 387; 38 U.S.C. 1703 note) is amended—

8 (1) in subsection (a)—

9 (A) in paragraph (2), by striking “120
 10 days after the date of the enactment of this
 11 Act” and inserting “90 days after the date of
 12 the enactment of the Veterans Health Care Ac-
 13 cess Received Closer to Home Act of 2014”;
 14 and

15 (B) by amending paragraph (4) to read as
 16 follows:

17 “(4) PROGRAM LOCATIONS.—The Secretary
 18 shall carry out the pilot program at locations in the
 19 following Veterans Integrated Service Networks (and
 20 such other locations as the Secretary considers ap-
 21 propriate):

22 “(A) Veterans Integrated Service Network

23 1.

24 “(B) Veterans Integrated Service Network

25 6.

1 “(C) Veterans Integrated Service Network

2 15.

3 “(D) Veterans Integrated Service Network

4 18.

5 “(E) Veterans Integrated Service Network

6 19.”;

7 (2) by amending subsection (b) to read as fol-

8 lows:

9 “(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of the
10 pilot program under this section, a covered veteran is any
11 rural or highly rural veteran who—

12 “(1) is—

13 “(A) enrolled in the system of patient en-
14 rollment established under section 1705(a) of
15 title 38, United States Code;

16 “(B) eligible for health care under the laws
17 administered by the Secretary and enrolls in
18 such system of patient enrollment not later
19 than 30 days after the veteran begins receiving
20 covered health services under the pilot program;
21 or

22 “(C) eligible for health care under section
23 1710(e)(3) of such title; and

24 “(2) resides in a location that is—

1 “(A) more than 60 minutes driving dis-
2 tance from the nearest Department health care
3 facility providing primary care services, if the
4 veteran is seeking such services;

5 “(B) more than 120 minutes driving dis-
6 tance from the nearest Department health care
7 facility providing acute hospital care, if the vet-
8 eran is seeking such care; or

9 “(C) more than 240 minutes driving dis-
10 tance from the nearest Department health care
11 facility providing tertiary care, if the veteran is
12 seeking such care.”;

13 (3) by redesignating subsection (h) as sub-
14 section (j);

15 (4) by inserting after subsection (g) the fol-
16 lowing new subsections:

17 “(h) APPOINTMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot pro-
18 gram under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that
19 medical appointments for veterans occur during the 30-
20 day period beginning on the date that is 15 days after
21 the date on which the appointment is requested.

22 “(i) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall ensure that a
23 veteran eligible for the pilot program under this section
24 is informed of such program.”; and

- 1 (5) in paragraph (2)(B) of subsection (j), as re-
- 2 designated by paragraph (3) of this section, by strik-
- 3 ing the semicolon at the end and inserting “; and”.

