

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 521

To require the Secretary of Defense to award grants to fund research on orthotics and prosthetics.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 11, 2013

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. HARKIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Defense to award grants to fund research on orthotics and prosthetics.

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 “Wounded Warrior Re-
5 search Enhancement Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. ORTHOTIC AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH.**

7 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the grants described
8 in this section is to advance orthotic and prosthetic clinical
9 care for members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and civil-
10 ians who have undergone amputation, traumatic brain in-

1 jury, and other serious physical injury as a result of com-
2 bat or military experience.

3 (b) GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON PATIENT OUT-
4 COMES.—The Secretary of Defense shall award grants to
5 persons to carry out research on the following:

6 (1) The actions that can be taken to prevent
7 amputation of limbs.

8 (2) The point in the course of patient treatment
9 during which orthotic and prosthetic intervention is
10 most effective.

11 (3) The orthotic interventions that are most ef-
12 fective in treating the physical effects of traumatic
13 brain injury.

14 (4) The patients that benefit most from par-
15 ticular orthotic and prosthetic technologies.

16 (5) The orthotic and prosthetic services that
17 best facilitate the return to active duty of members
18 of the Armed Forces.

19 (6) The effect of the aging process on the use
20 of prosthetics, including—

21 (A) increased skin breakdown;

22 (B) loss of balance;

23 (C) falls; and

24 (D) other issues that arise during the
25 aging process.

1 (c) GRANTS ON MATERIALS RESEARCH.—The Sec-
2 retary shall award grants to persons to carry out research
3 on the following:

4 (1) The improvement of existing materials used
5 in orthotics and prosthetics for the purpose of im-
6 proving quality of life and health outcomes for indi-
7 viduals with limb loss.

8 (2) The development of new materials used in
9 orthotics and prosthetics for the purpose of improv-
10 ing quality of life and health outcomes for individ-
11 uals with limb loss.

12 (d) GRANTS ON TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH.—The Sec-
13 retary shall award grants to persons to carry out research
14 on the following:

15 (1) The improvement of existing orthotic and
16 prosthetic technology and devices for the purpose of
17 improving quality of life and health outcomes for in-
18 dividuals with limb loss.

19 (2) The development of new orthotic and pros-
20 thetic technology and devices for the purpose of im-
21 proving quality of life and health outcomes for indi-
22 viduals with limb loss.

23 (e) REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS.—A person seeking
24 the award of a grant under this section shall submit to
25 the Secretary an application therefore in the form and ac-

1 accompanied by such information as the Secretary shall re-
2 quire.

3 (f) AWARD REQUIREMENTS.—

4 (1) PEER-REVIEWED PROPOSALS.—Grants
5 under this section may be awarded only for research
6 that is peer-reviewed.

7 (2) COMPETITIVE PROCEDURES.—Grants under
8 this section shall be awarded through competitive
9 procedures.

10 (g) GRANT USE.—A person awarded a grant under
11 subsection (b), (c), or (d) shall use the grant amount to
12 carry out the research described in the applicable sub-
13 section.

14 (h) REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the
15 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
16 the Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with the
17 Secretary of Veterans Affairs, veterans, community-based
18 clinicians, and expert researchers in the field of orthotics
19 and prosthetics, submit to Congress a report setting forth
20 the following:

21 (1) An agenda for orthotic and prosthetic re-
22 search that identifies and prioritizes the most sig-
23 nificant unanswered orthotic and prosthetic research
24 questions pertinent to the provision of evidence-

1 based clinical care to members of the Armed Forces,
2 veterans, and civilians.

3 (2) For each report after the initial report
4 under this subsection—

5 (A) a summary of how the grants awarded
6 under subsection (b) are addressing the most
7 significant orthotic and prosthetic needs; and

8 (B) the progress made towards resolving
9 orthotic and prosthetic challenges facing mem-
10 bers of the Armed Forces and veterans.

11 (i) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term
12 “veteran” has the meaning given that term in section 101
13 of title 38, United States Code.

14 (j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
15 authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2014 for the
16 Department of Defense for the Defense Health Program,
17 \$30,000,000 to carry out this section.

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