

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 603

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make permanent the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to transport individuals to and from facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with rehabilitation, counseling, examination, treatment, and care, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 26, 2015

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

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make permanent the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to transport individuals to and from facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with rehabilitation, counseling, examination, treatment, and care, 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 “Rural Veterans Travel
5 Enhancement Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. MAKING PERMANENT AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY**
 2 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO TRANSPORT INDIVIDUALS TO AND FROM FACILITIES OF DE-**
 3 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 Section 111A(a) of title 38, United States Code, is
 6 amended—

7 (1) by striking paragraph (2); and

8 (2) in paragraph (1), by striking “(1)”.

9 **SEC. 3. TREATMENT OF VET CENTERS AS DEPARTMENT OF**
 10 **VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES FOR PURPOSES OF PAYMENTS OR ALLOWANCES FOR**
 11 **BENEFICIARY TRAVEL.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 111 of title 38, United
 14 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 15 lowing new subsection:

16 “(h)(1) Vet Centers shall be treated as Department
 17 facilities for purposes of providing payment of actual ex-
 18 penses of travel or allowance for travel to or from a De-
 19 partment facility under this section.

20 “(2) In this subsection, the term ‘Vet Center’ means
 21 a center for readjustment counseling and related mental
 22 health services for veterans under section 1712A of this
 23 title.”.

24 (b) APPLICABILITY.—Section 111(h) of such title, as
 25 added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to travel

1 occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this
2 Act.

3 **SEC. 4. REAUTHORIZATION OF GRANTS FOR VETERANS**
4 **SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS FOR TRANSPOR-**
5 **TATION OF HIGHLY RURAL VETERANS.**

6 Section 307(d) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omni-
7 bus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163;
8 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended by striking “through
9 2014” and inserting “through 2020”.

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