

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2336

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on providing intensive community care coordination and supportive services to veteran families who lack adequate access to services, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 24, 2018

Mr. TESTER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on providing intensive community care coordination and supportive services to veteran families who lack adequate access to services, 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 “Supporting Veteran
5 Families Act of 2018”.

1 **SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM ON COMMUNITY CARE COORDINA-**
2 **TION AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VET-**
3 **ERAN FAMILIES WHO LACK ACCESS TO SERV-**
4 **ICES.**

5 (a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not
6 later than one year after the date of the enactment of this
7 Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a
8 pilot program with community partners to assess the fea-
9 sibility and advisability of providing intensive community
10 care coordination and supportive services to veteran fami-
11 lies who lack adequate access to services furnished by the
12 Department of Veterans Affairs or other entities of Fed-
13 eral, State, and local governments.

14 (b) COMMUNITY CARE COORDINATION AND SUP-
15 PORTIVE SERVICES DESCRIBED.—For purposes of the
16 pilot program, intensive community care coordination and
17 supportive services are services provided by a community
18 partner to improve the well-being and address the needs
19 of veteran families who live in rural or underserved areas
20 or who otherwise lack access to adequate services fur-
21 nished by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Federal
22 Government, or State and local governments. Intensive
23 community care coordination and supportive services may
24 include the following:

25 (1) Care coordination and case management
26 services.

1 (2) Outreach services.

2 (3) Assistance in obtaining any benefits from
3 the Department which the veteran may be eligible to
4 receive, including the following:

5 (A) Vocational and rehabilitation coun-
6 seling.

7 (B) Employment and training services.

8 (C) Educational assistance.

9 (D) Health care services.

10 (4) Assistance in obtaining and coordinating
11 the provision of other public benefits or available
12 services provided by the Federal Government, State
13 or local governments, or other community partners,
14 including the following:

15 (A) Marriage counseling.

16 (B) Services for children.

17 (C) Suicide prevention.

18 (D) Substance abuse awareness and treat-
19 ment.

20 (E) Mental health awareness and treat-
21 ment.

22 (F) Financial counseling.

23 (G) Employment assistance.

24 (H) Transportation services.

25 (I) Child care.

1 (J) Housing counseling.

2 (K) Preparing and updating family care
3 plans.

4 (L) Development of strategies for living
5 with a veteran with post traumatic stress dis-
6 order or traumatic brain injury.

7 (M) Accessing emergency financial assist-
8 ance through philanthropic efforts.

9 (N) Such other services as may be appro-
10 priate to improve the well-being and address the
11 unique needs of veteran families who live in
12 rural or underserved areas or otherwise lack ac-
13 cess to adequate services furnished by the De-
14 partment of Veterans Affairs, the Federal Gov-
15 ernment, or State and local governments.

16 (5) Providing direct services, described in para-
17 graph (4), that are necessary to address the needs
18 of the veteran families but are otherwise unavailable
19 through existing public or private programs.

20 (c) AGREEMENTS AND GRANTS.—

21 (1) AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary shall carry
22 out the pilot program by entering into partnership
23 agreements with community partners to provide in-
24 tensive community care coordination and supportive
25 services.

1 (2) GRANTS.—

2 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall,
3 using a competitive and merit-based process,
4 award grants to community partners with
5 whom the Secretary has entered into agree-
6 ments under paragraph (1).

7 (B) USE OF FUNDS.—The amounts of
8 grants awarded under subparagraph (A) shall
9 be used to provide intensive community care co-
10 ordination and supportive services under the
11 pilot program and to assess service delivery effi-
12 ciencies.

13 (C) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary may
14 award grants under subparagraph (A) on an in-
15 dividual location basis and may award grants
16 for the provision of certain services at locations
17 that also provide other services.

18 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
19 authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Vet-
20 erans Affairs to carry out the pilot program \$5,000,000
21 for each of fiscal years 2018, 2019, and 2020.

22 (e) REPORT.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 340 days be-
24 fore the completion of the pilot program, the Sec-
25 retary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'

1 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Vet-
 2 erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-
 3 port on the results of the pilot program.

4 (2) CONTENTS.—The report required by para-
 5 graph (1) shall include the following:

6 (A) The number of veteran families served
 7 under the pilot program.

8 (B) The number of veteran families who
 9 received service linkages or referrals under the
 10 pilot program.

11 (C) A description and assessment of the ef-
 12 fectiveness and achievements of the pilot pro-
 13 gram with respect to services and treatments
 14 and mitigation of risks, including risks relating
 15 to homelessness, unemployment, and suicide.

16 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) COMMUNITY PARTNER.—The term “com-
 18 munity partner” means a private nonprofit organiza-
 19 tion.

20 (2) VETERAN FAMILY.—The term “veteran
 21 family” means a family with respect to which the
 22 head of the household or the spouse of the head of
 23 the household is a veteran. A family that consists of

- 1 a single individual who is a veteran shall be consid-
- 2 ered a veteran family.

