

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5949

To establish a pilot program to furnish dental care to veterans who reside
in rural and highly rural areas.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 7, 2025

Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas introduced the following bill; which was
referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To establish a pilot program to furnish dental care to
veterans who reside in rural and highly rural areas.

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 Dental
5 Care Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM TO FURNISH DENTAL CARE TO**
7 **VETERANS WHO RESIDE IN RURAL AREAS.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—On October 1, 2026, the Sec-
9 retary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program
10 to furnish dental care to veterans who reside in rural and

1 highly rural areas (as determined by the Director of the
2 Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Af-
3 fairs).

4 (b) METHODS.—To carry out the pilot program, the
5 Secretary may use the following methods:

6 (1) Vans equipped with full diagnostic and
7 treatment dental equipment.

8 (2) Modular or containerized mobile dental clin-
9 ics—

10 (A) at community-based outpatient clinics
11 of the Department; or

12 (B) rural health fairs.

13 (3) Tents or other temporary structures at out-
14 reach events of the Department.

15 (c) PRIORITY.—In selecting locations to carry out the
16 pilot program, the Secretary shall give priority to loca-
17 tions—

18 (1) located more than 75 miles from the dental
19 clinic operated by the Secretary;

20 (2) that have a high concentration of veterans
21 with unmet dental needs; and

22 (3) rural and highly rural areas (as such terms
23 are used by the Office of Rural Health of the Vet-
24 erans Health Administration) that have large popu-
25 lations of veterans.

1 (d) DURATION.—The pilot program shall terminate
2 on September 30, 2029.

3 (e) REPORTING.—Not later than September 30 of
4 2027, 2028, and 2029, the Secretary shall submit to the
5 Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House
6 of Representatives a report on the pilot program. Such
7 a report shall include the following elements:

8 (1) The number of veterans who received dental
9 care through the pilot program.

10 (2) Locations where the Secretary carried out
11 the pilot program.

12 (3) The costs for operating each method under
13 subsection (b).

14 (4) The recommendation of the Secretary
15 whether to improve or make permanent the pilot
16 program.

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