

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4325

To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the Center for Minority Veterans and the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans to include services for historically underserved veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 23, 2023

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK (for herself, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. MCGARVEY, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CARBAJAL, and Mr. LIEU) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the Center for Minority Veterans and the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans to include services for historically underserved veterans, 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 “Historically Under-
5 served Veterans Inclusion Act of 2023”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF CENTER FOR MINORITY VETERANS**
2 **AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MINORITY**
3 **VETERANS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
4 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) CENTER FOR MINORITY AND HISTORICALLY UN-
6 DERSERVED VETERANS.—Section 317 of title 38, United
7 States Code, is amended—

8 (1) in the heading, by inserting “**and His-**
9 **torically Underserved**” after “**Minority**”;

10 (2) by inserting “Executive” before “Director”
11 each place it appears;

12 (3) in subsection (a)—

13 (A) by inserting “and Historically Under-
14 served” after “Minority”; and

15 (B) by striking “the Center a” and insert-
16 ing “the Center an”;

17 (4) in subsection (d), by striking “veterans who
18 are minorities” each place it appears and inserting
19 “covered veterans”;

20 (5) in subsection (g)—

21 (A) in paragraph (1)—

22 (i) by striking “‘veterans who are mi-
23 norities’” means and inserting “‘covered
24 veterans’”; and

1 (ii) by inserting “and veterans who
2 are historically underserved” after “minor-
3 ity group members”; and

4 (B) in paragraph (2)—

5 (i) by striking “The term” and insert-
6 ing “The terms”;

7 (ii) by inserting “and ‘veterans who
8 are historically underserved’” after “mi-
9 nority group member”;

10 (iii) by striking “has the meaning
11 given such term” and inserting “have the
12 meanings given such terms”; and

13 (iv) by striking “section 544(d)” and
14 inserting “section 544”.

15 (b) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MINORITY AND HIS-
16 TORICALLY UNDERSERVED VETERANS.—Section 544 of
17 title 38, United States Code, is amended—

18 (1) in the heading, by inserting “**and His-**
19 **torically Underserved**” after “**Minority**”;

20 (2) by striking “veterans who are minority
21 group members” each place it appears and inserting
22 “covered veterans”;

23 (3) in subsection (a)—

24 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “and
25 Historically Underserved” after “Minority”;

1 (B) in paragraph (2)—

2 (i) in subparagraph (A)(v)—

3 (I) by striking “women”; and

4 (II) by inserting “who are
5 women” before “and are”; and

6 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by adding at
7 the end the following new clauses:

8 “(vii) The Secretary of Housing and Urban De-
9 velopment (or a representative of the Secretary of
10 Housing and Urban Development designated by the
11 Secretary of Housing and Urban Development).

12 “(viii) The Secretary of Education (or a rep-
13 resentative of the Secretary of Education designated
14 by the Secretary of Education).

15 “(ix) The Attorney General (or a representative
16 of the Attorney General designated by the Attorney
17 General).

18 “(x) The Administrator of the Small Business
19 Administration (or a representative of the Adminis-
20 trator of the Small Business Administration des-
21 ignated by the Administrator of the Small Business
22 Administration).

23 “(xi) The Director of the Office of National
24 Drug Control Policy (or a representative of the Di-
25 rector of the Office of National Drug Control Policy

1 designated by the Director of the Office of National
2 Drug Control Policy).”; and

3 (C) by adding at the end the following new
4 paragraph:

5 “(5) The duties of the Committee are to advise the
6 Secretary on the following:

7 “(A) Modifying programs of the Department re-
8 lating to policy, regulations, and legislative affairs to
9 improve the representation of covered veterans with-
10 in the Department.

11 “(B) Expanding benefits and services under the
12 laws administered by the Secretary for covered vet-
13 erans, including such benefits and services relating
14 to health care, suicide prevention, and homelessness.

15 “(C) Incorporating research and practices from
16 outreach programs to improve the provision of
17 health care and burial benefits under the laws ad-
18 ministered by the Secretary to covered veterans.

19 “(D) Addressing issues raised by State and
20 local organizations that serve covered veterans.

21 “(E) Issuing, to private, non-profit, and faith-
22 based organizations that serve covered veterans,
23 guidance relating to addressing the needs of covered
24 veterans.

1 “(F) Helping covered veterans receive benefits
2 and services under the laws administered by the Sec-
3 retary to which covered veterans are entitled.

4 “(G) Improving the methods by which covered
5 veterans may submit feedback to the Department
6 with respect to policies and regulations of the Sec-
7 retary, including through stakeholder forums, social
8 media, and virtual town halls.

9 “(H) Developing outreach and engagement to
10 covered veterans.

11 “(I) Commemorating the contributions of cov-
12 ered veterans to their respective communities.

13 “(J) To explore options on how the Secretary
14 may incorporate lessons learned utilizing journey
15 mapping, human center design, social determinants
16 of wellness metrics, or other means to illustrate the
17 life experience cycle of minority and historically un-
18 derserved veterans to create a more holistic under-
19 standing of important life cycle events and their im-
20 pact.”;

21 (4) by striking subsection (e);

22 (5) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
23 section (e);

24 (6) by inserting after subsection (c) the fol-
25 lowing new subsection:

1 “(d)(1) The Secretary shall, on a biennial basis, carry
2 out a review to identify any disparities among groups of
3 veterans in the receipt of benefits under the laws adminis-
4 tered by the Secretary. In carrying out any such review,
5 the Secretary shall consider relevant recommendations
6 from the Committee and data analysis conducted by the
7 Department.

8 “(2) Not later than 120 days after the date on which
9 Secretary completes any such review, the Secretary shall
10 submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the
11 House of Representatives and the Senate a report that
12 includes, if applicable, recommendations with respect to
13 extending services of Center for Minority and Historically
14 Underserved Veterans under section 517 of this title to
15 groups of veterans the Secretary determines to be histori-
16 cally underserved pursuant to such review.”; and

17 (7) in subsection (e) (as so redesignated)—

18 (A) by striking “section,” and all that fol-
19 lows through “who is—” and inserting “sec-
20 tion:”;

21 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (1)
22 through (5) as subparagraphs (A) through (E),
23 respectively (and adjusting the margins accord-
24 ingly);

1 (C) by inserting before subparagraph (A)
2 (as so redesignated) the following new para-
3 graphs:

4 “(1) The term ‘covered veterans’ means vet-
5 erans who are minority group members and veterans
6 who are historically underserved.

7 “(2) The term ‘minority group member’ means
8 an individual who is—”;

9 (D) in paragraph (2) (as added by sub-
10 paragraph (C))—

11 (i) in subparagraph (D) (as so redes-
12 ignated), by striking “or”;

13 (ii) in subparagraph (E) (as so redes-
14 ignated), by striking the period at the end
15 and inserting a semicolon; and

16 (iii) by adding at the end of the fol-
17 lowing new subparagraphs:

18 “(F) Middle Eastern or North African
19 American; or

20 “(G) identified with more than one race or
21 ethnicity described in subparagraphs (A)
22 through (F).”;

23 (E) by adding after paragraph (2) (as
24 added by subparagraph (D)) the following new
25 paragraph:

1 “(3) The term ‘veterans who are historically
2 underserved’ means veterans the Committee deter-
3 mines have experienced difficulty in receiving bene-
4 fits under the laws administered by the Secretary to
5 which such veterans are entitled on the basis of one
6 or more of the following:

7 “(A) Sexual orientation.

8 “(B) Gender identity.

9 “(C) English language proficiency.

10 “(D) United States citizenship.

11 “(E) Religion.

12 “(F) Membership in a group of veterans
13 the Secretary determines appropriate pursuant
14 to the biennial review required under subsection
15 (d).”.

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