

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5029

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to staff each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs with at least one suicide prevention coordinator, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 8, 2019

Mr. WATKINS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to staff each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs with at least one suicide prevention coordinator, 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 “VA Suicide Prevention
5 Services Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SUICIDE PREVENTION COORDINATORS AT MEDICAL**
2 **CENTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
3 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
5 shall ensure that each medical center of the Department
6 of Veterans Affairs is staffed with not fewer than one full-
7 time employee whose primary job responsibility is serving
8 as a suicide prevention coordinator.

9 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

10 (1) MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN.—The term
11 “mental health clinician” means a psychologist, so-
12 cial worker, marriage and family therapist, or li-
13 censed professional mental health counselor hired
14 under section 7401(3) of title 38, United States
15 Code, or a nurse hired under section 7401(1) of
16 such title.

17 (2) SUICIDE PREVENTION COORDINATOR.—The
18 term “suicide prevention coordinator” means a men-
19 tal health clinician who is responsible for—

20 (A) coordinating local suicide prevention
21 strategies and activities, including those sup-
22 porting the identification of veterans at a high
23 risk of suicide;

24 (B) coordination of enhanced care for vet-
25 erans identified as being at a high risk of sui-
26 cide; and

1 (C) suicide prevention education and out-
2 reach to stakeholders, including health care pro-
3 viders, veterans, caregivers, families, and mem-
4 bers of the community.

○