

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 7508

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program for the recruitment, retention, and training of providers of specialty care for women veterans, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 14, 2022

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

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## A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program for the recruitment, retention, and training of providers of specialty care for women 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 “Improving Specialty  
5 Care for Women Veterans Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. AUTHORITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
2 **FAIRS PROGRAM ON RECRUITMENT, RETEN-**  
3 **TION, AND TRAINING OF SPECIALTY CARE**  
4 **PROVIDERS FOR WOMEN VETERANS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
6 may carry out a program, including a pilot program, for  
7 the recruitment, retention, and training of providers of  
8 specialty care for former members of the Armed Forces  
9 who are women.

10 (b) PARTICIPANTS.—Participation in a program  
11 under subsection (a) shall be available to the following:

12 (1) Individuals serving in a medical internship  
13 or residency program.

14 (2) Nurses and physicians who are covered pro-  
15 viders.

16 (c) SPECIALTY CARE AREAS; INCENTIVES FOR RE-  
17 CRUITMENT.—In carrying out a program under subsection  
18 (a), the Secretary may—

19 (1) target for recruitment individuals with ex-  
20 pertise in such specialty care areas as the Secretary  
21 may determine appropriate for purposes of the pro-  
22 gram; and

23 (2) offer to individuals targeted for recruitment  
24 under the program such incentives as the Secretary  
25 determines appropriate to facilitate the recruitment  
26 and retention of such individuals, including mone-

1 tary incentives and incentives relating to the reduc-  
2 tion of education debt under the Education Debt Re-  
3 duction program authorized under section 7681 of  
4 title 38, United States Code.

5 (d) TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR PROVIDERS.—

6 (1) TRAINING AND SUPPORT.—In carrying out  
7 a program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall  
8 furnish to each individual recruited under the pro-  
9 gram such training and support as the Secretary de-  
10 termines necessary with respect to the unique needs  
11 of women veterans, including with respect to mental  
12 and behavioral health conditions relating to the serv-  
13 ice of women veterans in the Armed Forces.

14 (2) CONTRACTS WITH NON-DEPARTMENT ENTI-  
15 TIES.—The Secretary may only enter into a contract  
16 with a non-Department entity for such entity to pro-  
17 vide training or support under paragraph (1) if, not  
18 later than 30 days after the date on which the Sec-  
19 retary enters into the contract, the Secretary sub-  
20 mits to the Committees on Veterans Affairs of the  
21 House of Representatives and the Senate a notifica-  
22 tion regarding the contract.

23 (e) RELATIONSHIP TO APPOINTMENT SCHED-  
24 ULING.—The Secretary shall—

1           (1) make available to veterans enrolled in the  
2 patient enrollment system of the Department under  
3 section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, infor-  
4 mation indicating whether a covered provider has  
5 participated in a program under subsection (a); and

6           (2) take such steps as may be necessary to im-  
7 prove the timeliness of appointments scheduled by  
8 such veterans with covered providers who have so  
9 participated, including by waiving requirements of  
10 the Department relating to wait times for such ap-  
11 pointments.

12 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13           (1) The term “covered provider” means a  
14 health care provider—

15                   (A) who is an employee of the Department  
16 of Veterans Affairs; or

17                   (B) who provides medical care or services  
18 to veterans under the Veterans Community  
19 Care program.

20           (2) The term “Veterans Community Care pro-  
21 gram” means the program of the Department of  
22 Veterans Affairs under section 1703 of title 38,  
23 United States Code.

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