

Current Bills Affecting Women Veterans

A bill must be passed by both the House and Senate in identical form and then be signed by the President to become law.

Bill Name	H.R. 1948: Veterans' Access to Child Care Act
Introduced	April 22, 2015
Sponsor	Julia Brownley
Full Title of Bill	To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide child care assistance to veterans receiving certain medical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
Status	Assigned to a congressional committee on April 22, 2015, which will consider it before possibly sending it on to the House or Senate as a whole.
Brief Summary	<p>Directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide child care assistance to an eligible veteran for any period that the veteran: (1) receives covered health care services at a VA facility, and (2) is required to travel to and return from such facility for the receipt of such services.</p> <p>Defines:</p> <p>(1) "covered health care services" to mean regular mental health care services, intensive mental health care services, or such other intensive health care services to which the VA determines that provision of child care assistance would improve the veteran's access; and</p> <p>(2) "eligible veteran" as a veteran who is the primary caretaker of a child and who is receiving covered health care services from the VA or who is in need of, and who would receive, such services from the VA but for lack of child care.</p> <p>Includes among child care assistance to be provided under this Act:</p> <p>a stipend for the payment of the full cost of child care offered by a licensed child care center, which shall be modeled after the VA's Child Care Subsidy Program; direct provision of child care at an on-site VA facility; a payment made directly to a private child care agency; and collaboration with a facility or program of another federal department or agency.</p>

Bill Name	H.R. 1607: Ruth Moore Act of 2015
Introduced	March 25, 2015
Sponsor	Chellie Pingree
Full Title of Bill	To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the disability compensation evaluation procedure of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for veterans with mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma, and for other purposes.

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Status	Passed in the House on July 27, 2015 and goes to the Senate next for consideration.
Brief Summary	<p>Directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in any case in which a veteran claims that a covered mental health condition was incurred in or aggravated by military sexual trauma during active duty, to:</p> <p>(1) accept as sufficient proof of service-connection a diagnosis by a mental health professional together with satisfactory lay or other evidence of such trauma and an opinion by the mental health professional that such condition is related to such trauma if consistent with the circumstances, conditions, or hardships of such service, notwithstanding the fact that there is no official record of such incurrence or aggravation in such service; and</p> <p>(2) resolve every reasonable doubt in favor of the veteran.</p> <p>Allows such service-connection to be rebutted by clear and convincing evidence to the contrary.</p> <p>Includes as a "covered mental health condition" post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, or any other mental health diagnosis that the Secretary determines to be related to military sexual trauma.</p> <p>Requires the Secretary to report annually to Congress in each of 2016 through 2020 on covered claims submitted.</p>

Bill Name	S. 469 Women Veterans and Families Health Services Act of 2015
Introduced	February 11, 2015
Sponsor	Patty Murray
Full Title of Bill	Improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.
Status	This bill was assigned to a congressional committee on February 11, 2015, which will consider it before possibly sending it on to the House or Senate as a whole. Senate next for consideration.
Brief Summary	<p>Directs the Secretary of Defense (DOD) to furnish fertility treatment and counseling, including through the use of assisted reproductive technology, to a spouse, partner, or gestational surrogate of a severely wounded, ill, or injured member of the Armed Forces who has an infertility condition incurred or aggravated while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces.</p> <p>Requires provision of fertility treatment and counseling to a spouse, partner, or gestational surrogate of a member of the Armed Forces without regard to the member's sex or marital status.</p>

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States that, if a member of the Armed Forces is unable to provide gametes for fertility treatment purposes, the Secretary shall, at the member's election, allow the member to be treated with donated gametes and pay or reimburse the reasonable costs of procuring donor gametes.

Directs DOD to:

establish procedures for gamete retrieval from a member of the Armed Forces in cases in which the fertility of such member is potentially jeopardized as a result of an injury or illness incurred or aggravated while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces; and give members of the Armed Forces on active duty the opportunity to cryopreserve and store their gametes prior to deployment to a combat zone at no cost to the member.

Directs DOD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to share best practices and facilitate fertility treatment and counseling referrals to eligible individuals.

Includes fertility counseling and treatment within authorized VA medical services.

Authorizes VA to pay the adoption expenses (for up to three adoptions) for a severely wounded, ill, or injured veteran who has an infertility condition incurred or aggravated in the line of duty and who is enrolled in the VA health care system.

Directs VA to report annually to Congress on the counseling and treatment provided under this Act; and (2) prescribe regulations on the furnishing of such counseling, treatment, and adoption assistance.

Directs VA to facilitate research conducted collaboratively by DOD and the Department of Health and Human Services in order to improve VA's ability to meet the long-term reproductive health care needs of veterans who have a service-connected genitourinary disability or a condition that was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty that affects the veterans' reproductive ability.

Requires VA to enhance the capabilities of the VA women veterans contact center to: (1) respond to requests for assistance with accessing VA health care and benefits, and (2) refer such veterans to federal or community resources to obtain assistance not furnished by VA.

Amends the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 regarding a pilot program of group retreat reintegration and readjustment counseling for women veterans recently separated from service to: (1) increase the number of counseling locations, and (2) extend the program.

Establishes VA programs to provide assistance to qualified veterans to obtain child care so that such veterans can receive: (1) regular mental health care services, intensive mental health care services, or other intensive health care services; and (2) readjustment counseling and related mental health services.

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Bill Name	S. 471 Women Veterans Access to Quality Care Act of 2015
Introduced	February 12, 2015
Sponsor	Dean Heller
Full Title of Bill	A bill to improve the provision of health care for women veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
Status	Assigned to a congressional committee on February 12, 2015, which will consider it before possibly sending it on to the House or Senate as a whole.
Brief Summary	<p>Directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) establish standards to ensure that all VA medical facilities have the structural characteristics necessary to adequately meet the gender-specific health care needs of veterans at such facilities, including privacy, safety, and dignity;(2) integrate such standards into its prioritization methodology with respect to requests for funding major medical facility projects and major medical facility leases; and(3) report on such standards, including regarding the facilities that fail to meet such standards and the costs of projects and leases required to meet them. <p>Requires the VA to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) use health outcomes for women veterans furnished health care by the the VA in evaluating the performance of VA medical center directors,(2) publish on its website information on such performance and on health outcomes for women veterans for each VA medical facility,(3) ensure that every VA medical center has a full-time obstetrician or gynecologist, and(4) carry out a pilot program to increase the number of residency program positions and graduate medical education positions for obstetricians and gynecologists at VA medical facilities in not less than three Veterans Integrated Service Networks. <p>Directs the VA to develop procedures to share information that includes military service and separation data, personal email addresses and telephone numbers, and mailing addresses of veterans with state veterans agencies in electronic format as a means of facilitating the furnishing of assistance and benefits to such veterans. Allows a veteran to elect to prevent their information from being shared.</p> <p>Directs the Government Accountability Office to carry out an examination of whether VA medical centers are able to meet the health care needs of women veterans.</p>