

H.R. 1211, as amended

Women Veterans Health Care Improvement Act

Title: To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand and improve health care services available to women veterans, especially those serving in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Ms. Herseth Sandlin of South Dakota introduced H.R. 1211 on February 26, 2009.

H.R. 1211, as amended, would:

1. Authorize \$4 million for VA to conduct a study on barriers to accessing health care within the VA system for women veterans.
2. Authorize \$5 million for VA to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the women's health care program at each VA medical center. Further, requires VA to develop a plan to improve such services at each VA medical center. Mandates a report by VA within one year of the enactment of the Act and a GAO report within six months of the completion of VA's report.
3. Authorize the VA to provide medical care for newborn children of women veterans receiving maternity care for a period of seven days beginning on the day the child is born.
4. Mandate the VA to carry out a program to provide graduate medical education, training, certification, and continuing medical education for mental health professionals at the VA caring for veterans suffering from military sexual trauma and PTSD. Further, requires an annual report detailing the number of providers certified under such program, the number of women provided counseling, and other relevant data.
5. Authorize appropriations of \$1.5 million for each of FY 2010 and FY 2011 for the VA to conduct a child care pilot program for patients in at least three VISNs.
6. Require the VA to add recently separated women and minority veterans to serve on the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans and the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans.

Effective Date: Date of enactment.

Cost: Preliminary cost estimate from CBO estimates that implementation of H.R. 1211 would be \$165 million over five years in discretionary spending.

Legislative History:

- March 3, 2009: Legislative hearing held by the Subcommittee on Health.
- June 4, 2009: Ordered reported, as amended, by the Subcommittee on Health.
- June 10, 2009: Ordered reported, as amended, by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
- June 18, 2009: Reported, as amended, H. Rept. 111-165.
- June 23, 2009: Passed the House by the Yeas and Nays: 408-0 (Roll No. 421)