

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 910

To amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that veterans in each of the 48 contiguous States are able to receive services in at least one full-service Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in the State or receive comparable services provided by contract in the State, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 9, 2011

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that veterans in each of the 48 contiguous States are able to receive services in at least one full-service Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in the State or receive comparable services provided by contract in the State, 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 “Veterans Health Eq-  
5       uity Act of 2011”.

1 **SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF FULL-SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF**  
2 **VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS IN**  
3 **CERTAIN STATES OR PROVISION OF COM-**  
4 **PARABLE SERVICES THROUGH CONTRACT**  
5 **WITH OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN**  
6 **THE STATE.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 17 of title 38, United  
8 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1706  
9 the following new section:

10 **“§ 1706A. Management of health care: access to full-**  
11 **service Department medical centers in**  
12 **certain States or comparable services**  
13 **through contract**

14 “(a) REQUIREMENT.—With respect to each of the 48  
15 contiguous States, the Secretary shall ensure that veterans  
16 in the State eligible for hospital care and medical services  
17 under section 1710 of this title have access—

18 “(1) to at least one full-service Department  
19 medical center in the State; or

20 “(2) to hospital care and medical services com-  
21 parable to the services typically provided by full-  
22 service Department medical centers through contract  
23 with other health care providers in the State.

24 “(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in sub-  
25 section (a) shall be construed to limit the ability of the  
26 Secretary to provide enhanced care to an eligible veteran

1 who resides in one State in a Department medical center  
2 in another State.

3 “(c) LIMITATION ON REQUIREMENT.—Subsection (a)  
4 shall be effective in any fiscal year only to the extent and  
5 in the amount provided in advance in appropriations Acts.

6 “(d) FULL-SERVICE DEPARTMENT MEDICAL CEN-  
7 TER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘full-service De-  
8 partment medical center’ means a facility of the Depart-  
9 ment that provides medical services, including hospital  
10 care, emergency medical services, and surgical care rated  
11 by the Secretary as having a surgical complexity level of  
12 standard.”.

13 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
14 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting  
15 after the item relating to section 1706 the following new  
16 item:

“1706A. Management of health care: access to full-service Department medical  
centers in certain States or comparable services through con-  
tract.”.

17 (c) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than  
18 one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the  
19 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a  
20 report describing the extent to which the Secretary has  
21 complied with the requirement imposed by section 1706A  
22 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection

- 1 (a), including the effect of such requirement on improving
- 2 the quality and standards of care provided to veterans.

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