

114TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 3141

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a grant program to improve the monitoring of mental health and substance abuse treatment programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 7, 2016

Mr. ROUNDS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a grant program to improve the monitoring of mental health and substance abuse treatment programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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 “Protection and Advo-  
5 cacy for Veterans Act of 2016”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM TO IMPROVE**  
2 **MONITORING OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUB-**  
3 **STANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAMS OF**  
4 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Commencing not later than  
6 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the  
7 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a grant pro-  
8 gram to improve the monitoring of mental health and sub-  
9 stance abuse treatment programs of the Department of  
10 Veterans Affairs.

11 (b) GRANTS.—

12 (1) MAIN GRANT.—

13 (A) AWARD.—In carrying out subsection  
14 (a), the Secretary shall award grants to four  
15 protection and advocacy systems under which  
16 each protection and advocacy system shall carry  
17 out a demonstration project to investigate and  
18 monitor the care and treatment of veterans pro-  
19 vided under chapter 17 of title 38, United  
20 States Code, for mental illness or substance  
21 abuse issues at medical facilities of the Depart-  
22 ment.

23 (B) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—Each grant  
24 awarded under subparagraph (A) to a protec-  
25 tion and advocacy system shall be in an amount  
26 that is not less than \$105,000 for each year

1           that the protection and advocacy system carries  
2           out a demonstration project described in such  
3           subparagraph under the grant program.

4           (2) COLLABORATION GRANT.—

5                 (A) AWARD.—During each year in which a  
6           protection and advocacy system carries out a  
7           demonstration project under paragraph (1)(A),  
8           the Secretary shall award a joint grant to a na-  
9           tional organization with extensive knowledge of  
10          the protection and advocacy system and a vet-  
11          erans service organization in the amount of  
12          \$80,000.

13                (B) COLLABORATION.—Each national or-  
14          ganization and veterans service organization  
15          that is awarded a joint grant under subpara-  
16          graph (A) shall use the amount of the grant to  
17          facilitate the collaboration between the national  
18          organization and the veterans service organiza-  
19          tion to—

20                       (i) coordinate training and technical  
21                       assistance for the protection and advocacy  
22                       systems awarded grants under paragraph  
23                       (1)(A); and

1 (ii) provide for data collection, report-  
2 ing, and analysis in carrying out such  
3 paragraph.

4 (3) AUTHORITY.—In carrying out a demonstra-  
5 tion project under paragraph (1)(A), a protection  
6 and advocacy system shall have the authorities speci-  
7 fied in section 105(a) of the Protection and Advo-  
8 cacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act (42  
9 U.S.C. 10805(a)) with respect to medical facilities of  
10 the Department.

11 (c) SELECTION.—In selecting the four protection and  
12 advocacy systems to receive grants under subsection  
13 (b)(1)(A), the Secretary shall consider the following cri-  
14 teria:

15 (1) Whether the protection and advocacy sys-  
16 tem has demonstrated monitoring and investigation  
17 experience, along with knowledge of the issues facing  
18 veterans with disabilities.

19 (2) Whether the State in which the protection  
20 and advocacy system operates—

21 (A) has low aggregated scores in the do-  
22 mains of mental health, performance, and ac-  
23 cess as rated by the Strategic Analytics Im-  
24 provement and Learning database system (com-  
25 monly referred to as “SAIL”); and

1 (B) to the extent practicable, is representa-  
2 tive of both urban and rural States.

3 (d) REPORTS.—The Secretary shall ensure that each  
4 protection and advocacy system participating in the grant  
5 program submits to the Secretary reports developed by the  
6 protection and advocacy system relating to investigations  
7 or monitoring conducted pursuant to subsection (b)(1)(A).  
8 The Secretary shall designate an office of the Department  
9 of Veterans Affairs to receive each such report.

10 (e) DURATION; TERMINATION.—

11 (1) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out  
12 the grant program established under subsection (a)  
13 for a period of five years beginning on the date of  
14 commencement of the grant program.

15 (2) TERMINATION OF DEMONSTRATION  
16 PROJECTS.—The Secretary may terminate a dem-  
17 onstration project under subsection (b)(1)(A) before  
18 the end of the five-year period described in para-  
19 graph (1) if the Secretary determines there is good  
20 cause for such termination. If the Secretary carries  
21 out such a termination, the Secretary shall award  
22 grants under such subsection to a new protection  
23 and advocacy system for the remaining duration of  
24 the grant program.

1 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
2 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry  
3 out the grant program under subsection (a) \$500,000 for  
4 each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021.

5 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) The term “protection and advocacy system”  
7 has the meaning given the term “eligible system” in  
8 section 102(2) of the Protection and Advocacy for  
9 Individuals with Mental Illness Act (42 U.S.C.  
10 10802(2)).

11 (2) The term “State” means each of the several  
12 States, territories, and possessions of the United  
13 States, the District of Columbia, and the Common-  
14 wealth of Puerto Rico.

15 (3) The term “veterans service organization”  
16 means any organization recognized by the Secretary  
17 for the representation of veterans under section  
18 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

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