

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 221

To direct the Secretary of Defense to carry out a grant program to increase cooperation on post-traumatic stress disorder research between the United States and Israel.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 4, 2021

Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. ERNST, and Mr. CARDIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Defense to carry out a grant program to increase cooperation on post-traumatic stress disorder research between the United States and Israel.

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 “United States-Israel
5 PTSD Collaborative Research Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) The Department of Veterans Affairs reports
9 that between 11 and 20 percent of veterans who

1 served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation
2 Enduring Freedom have post-traumatic stress dis-
3 order (PTSD) in a given year. In addition, that fig-
4 ure amounts to about 12 percent of Gulf War vet-
5 erans and up to 30 percent of Vietnam veterans.

6 (2) The Department of Veterans Affairs reports
7 that among women veterans of the conflicts in Iraq
8 and Afghanistan, almost 20 percent have been diag-
9 nosed with PTSD.

10 (3) In the United States, it is thought that 70
11 percent of Americans have experienced at least one
12 traumatic event in their lifetime, and approximately
13 20 percent of those persons have struggled or con-
14 tinue to struggle with symptoms of PTSD.

15 (4) Studies show that PTSD has links to home-
16 lessness and substance abuse in the United States.
17 The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that
18 approximately 11 percent of the homeless population
19 are veterans and the Substance Abuse and Mental
20 Health Services Administration estimates that about
21 7 percent of veterans have a substance abuse dis-
22 order.

23 (5) Our ally Israel, under constant attack from
24 terrorist groups, experiences similar issues with
25 Israeli veterans facing PTSD symptoms. Tel Aviv

1 University's National Center for Traumatic Stress
2 and Resilience found that 5 to 8 percent of combat
3 soldiers experience some form of PTSD, and during
4 wartime, that figure rises to 15 to 20 percent.

5 (6) Current treatment options in the United
6 States focus on cognitive therapy, exposure therapy,
7 or eye movement desensitization and reprocessing,
8 but the United States must continue to look for
9 more effective treatments. Several leading Israeli
10 hospitals, academic institutions, and nonprofits dedi-
11 cate research and services to treating PTSD.

12 **SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM FOR INCREASED COOPERATION**
13 **ON POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER RE-**
14 **SEARCH BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND**
15 **ISRAEL.**

16 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
17 gress that the Secretary of Defense, acting through the
18 Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury Re-
19 search Program, should seek to explore scientific collabo-
20 ration between American academic institutions and non-
21 profit research entities, and Israeli institutions with exper-
22 tise in researching, diagnosing, and treating post-trau-
23 matic stress disorder.

24 (b) GRANT PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Defense, in
25 coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and

1 the Secretary of State, shall award grants to eligible enti-
 2 ties to carry out collaborative research between the United
 3 States and Israel with respect to post-traumatic stress dis-
 4 orders. The Secretary of Defense shall carry out the grant
 5 program under this section in accordance with the agree-
 6 ment titled “Agreement Between the Government of the
 7 United States of America and the Government of Israel
 8 on the United States-Israel Binational Science Founda-
 9 tion”, dated September 27, 1972.

10 (c) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive a
 11 grant under this section, an entity shall be an academic
 12 institution or a nonprofit entity located in the United
 13 States.

14 (d) AWARD.—The Secretary shall award grants
 15 under this section to eligible entities that—

16 (1) carry out a research project that—

17 (A) addresses a requirement in the area of
 18 post-traumatic stress disorders that the Sec-
 19 retary determines appropriate to research using
 20 such grant; and

21 (B) is conducted by the eligible entity and
 22 an entity in Israel under a joint research agree-
 23 ment; and

24 (2) meet such other criteria that the Secretary
 25 may establish.

1 (e) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant
2 under this section, an eligible entity shall submit an appli-
3 cation to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and
4 containing such commitments and information as the Sec-
5 retary may require.

6 (f) GIFT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may accept,
7 hold, and administer, any gift of money made on the con-
8 dition that the gift be used for the purpose of the grant
9 program under this section. Such gifts of money accepted
10 under this subsection shall be deposited in the Treasury
11 in the Department of Defense General Gift Fund and shall
12 be available, subject to appropriation, without fiscal year
13 limitation.

14 (g) REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the
15 date on which an eligible entity completes a research
16 project using a grant under this section, the Secretary
17 shall submit to Congress a report that contains—

18 (1) a description of how the eligible entity used
19 the grant; and

20 (2) an evaluation of the level of success of the
21 research project.

22 (h) TERMINATION.—The authority to award grants
23 under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7

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1 years after the date on which the first such grant is
2 awarded.

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