

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 682

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish a vaccine for COVID–19 to certain individuals who are not enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 10, 2021

Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. COONS, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. ROUNDS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish a vaccine for COVID–19 to certain individuals who are not enrolled in the patient enrollment system 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 “Strengthening and
5 Amplifying Vaccination Efforts to Locally Immunize all
6 Veterans and Every Spouse Act” or the “SAVE LIVES
7 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**
2 **TO FURNISH COVID-19 VACCINE TO CERTAIN**
3 **INDIVIDUALS NOT ENROLLED IN PATIENT**
4 **ENROLLMENT SYSTEM OF DEPARTMENT OF**
5 **VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
7 may furnish a vaccine for COVID-19 to a covered indi-
8 vidual during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

9 (b) PRIORITIZATION.—In furnishing vaccines for
10 COVID-19 under the laws administered by the Secretary,
11 the Secretary shall—

12 (1) prioritize the vaccination of veterans who
13 are enrolled in the patient enrollment system, vet-
14 erans who receive hospital care and medical services
15 pursuant to subsection (c)(2) of section 1705 of title
16 38, United States Code, and accompanying care-
17 givers of such veterans before the vaccination of cov-
18 ered individuals not otherwise described in this para-
19 graph; and

20 (2) only furnish vaccines for COVID-19 to cov-
21 ered individuals under this section to the extent that
22 such vaccines are available.

23 (c) TIMING OF VACCINES PROVIDED TO SPOUSES OF
24 VETERANS.—To the extent practicable, the Secretary may
25 offer a vaccine for COVID-19 under this section to the
26 spouse of a veteran to permit the provision of the vaccine

1 to the spouse near the same time that the veteran receives
 2 such vaccine from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

3 (d) VACCINE ALLOCATION.—It is the sense of Con-
 4 gress that, to the extent practicable based on the current
 5 national supply chain, the Secretary of Health and Human
 6 Services should adjust the allocation for the Department
 7 of Veterans Affairs for the vaccine for COVID–19 based
 8 on the additional eligibility of covered individuals under
 9 this section.

10 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11 (1) ACCOMPANYING CAREGIVER.—The term
 12 “accompanying caregiver” means a caregiver de-
 13 scribed in subparagraph (D), (E), or (F) of para-
 14 graph (2) who is accompanying a veteran who is re-
 15 ceiving a vaccine for COVID–19 furnished by the
 16 Department.

17 (2) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term “covered
 18 individual” means any of the following individuals:

19 (A) A veteran who is not eligible to enroll
 20 in the patient enrollment system.

21 (B) A veteran who is eligible for care
 22 under section 1724 of title 38, United States
 23 Code.

24 (C) A beneficiary under section 1781 of
 25 such title.

1 (D) A family caregiver of a veteran partici-
 2 pating in the program of comprehensive assist-
 3 ance for family caregivers under section
 4 1720G(a) of such title.

5 (E) A caregiver of a veteran participating
 6 in the program of general caregiver support
 7 services under section 1720G(b) of such title.

8 (F) A caregiver of a veteran participating
 9 in the Medical Foster Home Program, Bowel
 10 and Bladder Program, Home Based Primary
 11 Care Program, or Veteran Directed Care Pro-
 12 gram of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

13 (G) A spouse of a veteran.

14 (3) COVERED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—
 15 The term “covered public health emergency” means
 16 an emergency with respect to COVID–19 declared
 17 by a Federal, State, or local authority.

18 (4) COVID–19.—The term “COVID–19”
 19 means the coronavirus disease 2019.

20 (5) PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM.—The term
 21 “patient enrollment system” means the system of
 22 annual patient enrollment of the Department of Vet-
 23 erans Affairs established and operated under section
 24 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code.

1 (6) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the
2 meaning given that term in section 101(2) of title
3 38, United States Code.

○