

Prizes. I had the honor of touring this lab and seeing the amazing instruments that they have, such as an 800-meter-long track that is accelerating X-rays to near the speed of light. They are doing absolutely amazing science. Imagine what will grow out of this co-operation.

The Brookhaven booster synchrotron, which is what I was just referring to, can simulate cosmic radiation conditions in space and allows them to study its impact on astronaut health and spacecraft instrumentation.

In addition, H.R. 2988 requires the Secretary and the Administrator to conduct these activities in a manner consistent with the strong security provisions the Science Committee passed in the Chips and Science Act of 2022.

As the Energy Subcommittee chairman, one of my top priorities is research security, and the inclusion of this language will protect our Nation's investments from hostile foreign actors such as China and Russia.

I thank my colleague, Mr. SORENSEN, for working with me on this important legislation and continuing the bipartisan tradition of the Science Committee.

H.R. 2988 is the kind of commonsense, good governance bill that we can all agree on. It shows that Republicans and Democrats are still capable of putting political differences aside to advance meaningful bills that strengthen U.S. leadership in science and maximize the return on investment for the American taxpayer.

On a personal note, I will take a moment to thank my mother for inspiring a lifelong love of science in me. I also thank Mr. LUCAS for allowing me to be a part of science, space, and technology as it grows and shines in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, Mr. WILLIAMS worked on this bill, but so did Mr. SORENSEN, a valued member of our committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SORENSEN), a freshman Member and the only meteorologist in the House of Representatives. I think he is the first meteorologist in nearly half a century to serve, and his curiosity and expertise is really so helpful to the Science Committee, as well as his plain common sense. I thank him for his work on this bill.

Mr. SORENSEN. Mr. Speaker, as ranking member of the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee, I was thrilled to lead the DOE and NASA Interagency Research Coordination Act alongside my colleague and chairman of the Energy Subcommittee, Congressman WILLIAMS.

I would be remiss if I didn't also share that my mother gave me the wonder of what is going on above so that I could spend the first 22 years of

my professional life as a meteorologist helping explain how things work.

Also, I hope that the people at home see that this body is working together today in a bipartisan way, just like NASA and the Department of Energy have for decades and decades. They have improved our understanding of the universe by working together.

This bill seeks to build and expand upon that legacy by advancing coordination on fundamental and applied science. The collaborative research and development efforts that this bill facilitates will have a profound impact not just for my constituents but for the entire rest of the country.

As a meteorologist, I know that we need to improve climate modeling and simulation to increase our understanding of how the planet is changing. It will help us make smart decisions to change the trajectory while creating resilient communities. This takes interagency collaboration.

Most importantly, as we see here in the Science Committee, when we collaborate, we inspire a new generation of scientists and engineers. When the first humans land on Mars, they are going to rely on the things that we develop today. That is why I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

H.R. 2988, the DOE and NASA Interagency Research Coordination Act, is smart legislation that will help us stay competitive in the race to return humans to the Moon and send them to Mars.

Without key collaborations like this, we would be unable to make critical strides in our energy production and propulsion technologies. I thank Representatives Williams and Sorensen for their leadership in moving this bill forward.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2988, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### HOUSING OUR MILITARY VETERANS EFFECTIVELY ACT OF 2023

Mr. VAN ORDEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3848) to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to homelessness, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3848

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

*This Act may be cited as the "Housing our Military Veterans Effectively Act of 2023" or the "HOME Act of 2023".*

#### SEC. 2. PER DIEM PAYMENTS PROVIDED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR SERVICES FURNISHED TO HOMELESS VETERANS.

*Section 2012 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—*

*(1) in subsection (a)—*  
*(A) in paragraph (2)(B)—*  
*(i) in clause (i)(II)(aa)(BB), by striking "115 percent" and inserting "133 percent"; and*  
*(ii) by adding at the end the following:*

*"(iii) During each of fiscal years 2024 through 2026, the Secretary may waive the maximum rate for per diem payments under clause (i)(II)(aa)(BB) or (ii) and, subject to the availability of appropriations, provide such payments at a rate that does not exceed 200 percent of the rate authorized for State homes for domiciliary care under subsection (a)(1)(A) of section 1741 of this title, as the Secretary may increase from time to time under subsection (c) of that section if the Secretary notifies Congress of such waiver."*

*"(iv) The Secretary may not, pursuant to clause (iii), waive the maximum rate described in such clause for more than 50 percent of all grant recipients and eligible entities in a fiscal year.";* and

*(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:*

*"(4) The Secretary may not provide more than 12,000 per diem payments under this section in a fiscal year.";* and

*(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:*

*"(f) REPORTS REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the HOME Act of 2023, and not less frequently than twice each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the rate for per diem payments under this section that includes, for each Veterans Integrated Service Network of the Department, the following data:*

*"(1) The average rate for such a payment.*

*"(2) A list of locations where the rate for such a payment is within 10 percent of the maximum rate for such a payment authorized under this section.*

*"(3) The average length of stay by a veteran participating in a program described in section 2012(a) of this title."*

#### SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO USE OF CERTAIN FUNDS FOR IMPROVED FLEXIBILITY IN ASSISTANCE TO HOMELESS VETERANS.

*(a) USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may use amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of Veterans Affairs to carry out section 2011, 2012, 2031, or 2061 of title 38, United States Code, to provide to a covered veteran, as the Secretary determines necessary—*

*(1) food, shelter, clothing, blankets, and hygiene items required for the safety and survival of the veteran;*

*(2) transportation required to support the stability and health of the veteran for appointments with service providers, the conduct of housing searches, and the obtainment of food and supplies; and*

*(3) tablets, smartphones, disposable phones, and related service plans required to support the stability and health of the veteran through the*

maintenance of contact with service providers, prospective landlords, and family members.

(b) **HOMELESS VETERANS ON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LAND.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may collaborate, to the extent practicable, with one or more organizations to manage the use of land of the Department of Veterans Affairs for homeless veterans for living and sleeping.

(2) **FORMS OF COLLABORATION.**—Collaboration under paragraph (1) may include the provision by either the Secretary or the head of the organization concerned of food services and security for property, buildings, and other facilities owned or controlled by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every six months thereafter until the date specified in subsection (d), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that includes, with respect to the period covered by such report—

(1) a statement, disaggregated by each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, of the amount of funds under this section—

(A) each such medical center requested from the Secretary; and

(B) to which the Secretary provided each such medical center;

(2) data, disaggregated by each such medical center, relating to how each such medical center used amounts provided by the Secretary under this section;

(3) the number of covered veterans to which the Secretary provided assistance under this section;

(4) the total amount of assistance the Secretary provided to covered veterans pursuant to subsection (a)(3) for communications equipment, broken down by the type of equipment provided;

(5) the total amount of assistance the Secretary provided covered veterans pursuant to subsection (a)(2) for ridesharing;

(6) the number of covered veterans who received such assistance; and

(7) a description, for each rideshare used by a covered veteran with such assistance, of the reasons such covered veteran used such rideshare.

(8) the number of covered veterans who lived or slept on Department land;

(9) the amount of funds used to make available Department land for covered veterans to live and sleep;

(10) the number of Department employees whose primary responsibilities involved providing services for covered veterans living or sleeping on Department land;

(11) the average length of time a covered veteran lived or slept on Department land, and

(12) the period of time the Secretary expects Department land will be made available for covered veterans to live and sleep.

(d) **SUNSET.**—The authority under this section shall terminate on September 30, 2024.

(e) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section, the term “covered veteran” means—

(1) a homeless veteran; and

(2) a veteran participating in the program carried out under section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)).

#### **SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN HOUSING LOAN FEES.**

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 14, 2031” each place it appears and inserting “May 18, 2032”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. VAN ORDEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

#### **GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. VAN ORDEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3848, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. VAN ORDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3848, as amended, offered by my friend and colleague, Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER, from the great State of Oregon.

The HOME Act is a data-driven solution to build on efforts across multiple Congresses to bring veterans out of homelessness and to get them back on track.

Just last week, the VA announced that they housed more than 38,000 homeless veterans in 2023—and that is a great improvement—due to the incredible private organizations that work with the VA to find veterans homes.

□ 1615

However, our efforts must continue.

No veteran should be without a warm place to call home. Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER's bill would rightfully increase the grant and per diem rate for homelessness providers around the country to keep rates in line with inflation.

This bill would also authorize the VA to fund rides through ride-share partnerships to transport homeless veterans to their VA healthcare appointments, search for and find permanent housing, a key Democratic request to move this bill forward on the House floor.

Additionally, this bill funds communication devices, including smartphones and tablets, so our veterans can pursue employment opportunities, make appointments, and stay in contact with their families, to help prevent the self-isolation that often precedes veteran suicide.

It is critical to get these programs running again so veterans can continue to be housed and get to their appointments, whether it is for physical or mental health care. We need to get our veterans back on track. This is a hand up not a handout.

We have seen firsthand the success of the Grant and Per Diem Program in housing veterans. This VA grant program shows that public and private partnerships between the government and private sector can work.

I thank Speaker Emeritus MCCARTHY, for originally proposing the increase in the GPD rate during the COVID-19 era. The original rate was sufficient, but due to inflationary pressures that have been exerted by Bidenomics, it is now unfortunately not. Bidenomics has caused a tremendous amount of hardship for Americans, particularly homeless veterans.

Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER's bill will combat the impact of the

Biden administration's rising inflation head-on by increasing homelessness providers' grants to account for the out-of-control inflation. The grant rate increase is especially important now with the news that homelessness is up 11 percent nationwide.

Just 2 weeks ago, the VA's annual Suicide Prevention Report revealed that the suicide rate for VHA users with indications of homelessness increased by over 38 percent from 2020 to 2021. In 2021, the suicide rate for homeless veterans using VHA was 186.5 percent higher than veterans who are housed.

That is a staggering number and underscores how important it is to continue our work to get veteran homelessness and suicide to functional zero. We, as a country, must utilize innovative thinking and approaches to confront these disturbing trends as we work to find an upstream solution to prevent veterans from becoming homeless in the first place. The HOME Act is a fiscally responsible way to start.

I appreciate all the homelessness stakeholders, such as the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and the New England Center and Home for Veterans who have worked with the committee to ensure we brought a great bill to the floor today. Without their input, the important changes we made at my subcommittee would not have been possible.

I also thank my friends, the full committee ranking member, Mr. TAKANO, and my ranking member, Mr. LEVIN, for working across the aisle and getting to a “yes” back in July at our last full committee markup.

Passing this bill with strong bipartisan support will show our Senate colleagues that we have a united front on this issue. I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues to continue to provide for homeless veterans by including this bill in a larger bicameral, bipartisan package.

Chairman BOST made a commitment to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle that he would ensure we would get this fixed.

We, as members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, gave our word that we would do everything in our power to help those who have defended this Nation and given us the ability to live in freedom. Today, we take great strides to keep it.

Once again, under Chairman BOST's leadership, Congress will come together with a practical solution to do the right thing for the men and women who have served.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3848, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 3848, as amended, the Housing our Military Veterans Effectively, or HOME Act.

I have conflicting emotions as I finally stand here advocating for the

passage of the HOME Act. On one hand, I am elated to finally see this language move forward that will ultimately get more veterans off the street and into housing. That is my goal here, to end veteran homelessness. On the other hand, I remain frustrated with the length of time it took this body to take up this bill and the fact that I will have to be back on the floor next year advocating for the same authorities here to be extended yet again since most of this bill expires on September 30, 2024.

Last week, VA announced they met their goal to house 38,000 veterans this calendar year several months early. I am very proud of this accomplishment, but unfortunately, this does not reflect the full picture of the reality we face related to veteran homelessness in our country.

HUD's 2023 Point-in-Time Count will be released soon. Based on initial reports from communities across the country, it will likely show a dramatic increase in veteran homelessness. We are losing ground. The VA is doing incredible work to get veterans into housing, but when one veteran gets housed, another is falling into homelessness.

We need to bolster the prevention tools the VA and providers have to quickly address a veteran's housing insecurity the moment it occurs. The Democratic-led authorities in the HOME Act are those very tools.

This bill, which includes two Democratic bills, from Congresswomen CHERFILUS-McCORMICK and WILLIAMS, gives the VA and its community providers the flexibilities and resources they need to effectively house veterans experiencing homelessness and at risk of becoming homeless.

However, the bill before us today isn't perfect. It has technical flaws that we quickly brought to the attention of our Republican colleagues, but they refused to fix it. If we send the language we are considering today over to the Senate, the Senate will have to amend the language, pass it, and send it back to the House for final passage, leaving more time that the VA and providers operate without these authorities, more time that homeless veterans go without, and more time that homeless veterans spend on the street.

I need not say to all in this Chamber that we know that December is upon us. I spoke in the Chamber just a few weeks ago about the fact that winter was upon us and yet we had not passed the HOME Act.

I am really disappointed by this unforced error of being in a position where we find ourselves here on the floor to pass an empty gesture. We reported this bill out to the House in July. As happens, there have been additional changes that needed to be made. We had agreement with the Senate on these changes, yet the majority chose not to proceed with the agreement. We are here on a bill that is not going anywhere any time soon.

The reality of this situation is that Republicans are playing games and using homeless veterans as their pawns. Homeless veterans do not have time for games. Maybe it seems easy because these most vulnerable veterans don't have lobbyists stating their case or advocating their case. Every night they spend on the street is a night this Congress could have prevented. These are our most vulnerable veterans, in the most vulnerable situations, and we owe it to them to keep our word to send the VA the resources they need to help them.

For some homeless veterans, this is literally a matter of life or death.

At the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity legislative hearing on this bill earlier this year, we heard directly from the VA about a homeless veteran who was imminently considering taking his life by suicide before the VA intervened and got him the help he needed using the authorities this bill would reauthorize.

The VA's recent Suicide Prevention Report indicated that homeless veterans are 186 percent more likely to die by suicide than any other veteran. These Democratic-led provisions are suicide prevention tools. They are life-saving. In only 12 days from when the authorities in this bill lapsed at the end of the public health emergency, between May 11, 2023, and May 23, 2023, the VA was forced to cancel over 42,000 rides that supported over 18,000 veterans to attend 10,000 medical appointments. Just 12 days caused that big of an impact. Here we are, 207 days later, and I can barely fathom how many homeless veterans went without in that period.

If we are going to help homeless veterans, we need a hotline-ready bill to send to the Senate. By hotline, we are talking about the Senate hotline for House bills that have been passed and are ready to pass the Senate because they have no flaws, no substantive flaws.

Why aren't we sending to the Senate hotline-ready bills from the House of Representatives when we know the language that needs to be put in those bills has all been agreed to by the four corners? Senators TESTER and SCHUMER both assured me last week that if we sent the Senate both of the four-corners agreed-upon language for this bill and for the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act, they would get these bills onto the Senate hotline so that they have a chance of getting to the President's desk by Christmas.

As we enter the holiday season and a cold winter, we should take our duty to help homeless veterans as seriously as possible. We must do all we can to get these veterans housed and off the streets during the coldest months of the year. We did have a choice here. We had a choice.

Instead, we have before us here a flawed bill that the Senate will have to amend and send back to us. We can end veteran homelessness. It is a choice

that Congress can make to fully fund the resources and authorities that the VA and its partners need to get veterans into stable permanent housing.

We saw proof of this during the pandemic, one of the most difficult times in our country's recent history, when we actually reduced veteran homelessness by 11 percent. We know what works. We know that the Democratic-led flexibilities and authorities included in the HOME Act will reduce homelessness.

I must register my disagreement with what my colleague from Wisconsin has claimed, that the grant and per diem rates were adequate. They were never adequate. It was because of the flexibilities we included during the health emergency that we were able to address the always inadequate levels of funding. It is a falsehood to try to claim that it was about inflation. No, these program per diem rates for the many, many organizations out there that help our veterans across the country were never adequate.

We had an opportunity to move forward a compromise today, but a different choice was made. I am going to hope against hope that somehow this bill does get to the President before the end of the year and that we don't have it on our conscience that we made homeless veterans suffer any more than they already have.

I will ask my colleagues to support H.R. 3848, as amended, today, and I will also say a prayer that we see through to doing the right thing.

I would submit to my colleagues on the other side, after all, isn't that why we are here, to do the right thing?

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN ORDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER).

Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER. Mr. Speaker, on any given night, there are around 1,400 Oregon veterans who go to sleep without a roof over their heads. This is heartbreaking and unacceptable. We owe it to our veterans to do better. They stepped up to serve our country, and it is our responsibility to ensure they are cared for in return.

That is why I introduced the HOME Act, which would lift veterans out of homelessness. To account for recent inflation, this legislation increases financial assistance for nonprofit organizations that provide transitional housing to veterans in need.

The financial assistance offered would be higher in areas with elevated rates of suicide among veterans. It also creates a new stipend for homeless veterans. This could be used to buy food, clothing, and even cell phones to help them communicate with family members and healthcare providers.

I thank the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for his support and the chairman of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. VAN ORDEN) for his leadership on this issue.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this much-needed legislation. Together, we can empower our Nation's heroes and ensure they all have a place to call home.

I have been on this job for 10 months, and I do have hope that we will continue to move forward for our veterans and do everything that we can every day we are in this job to support them.

□ 1630

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, I wish that we could be sending over to the Senate today a hot-line-ready bill.

We knew what we had to put into this bill. The majority knew what corrections needed to be made. By tradition, subsequent to the vote that we took today, we could have done those corrections and had a bill that could have gone on the Senate hotline. Absent any Senator's objection, it could have been sent to the President's desk for sure by the Christmas holiday.

By some miracle something could happen. There could be a heating of the conscience. There is a conscious choice being made today to not send the Senate a bill that is substantively freed from the flaws that we could have fixed.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I hope against hope that we still can get this done by the end of the year.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN ORDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to remind my great friend and colleague from the State of California, as the previous ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee where the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the White House were held by his party, that this could have been passed in this period of time.

In that period of time under Democratic control, the per diem rate was set at 125 percent by Speaker Emeritus KEVIN MCCARTHY and was agreed to by the now ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

As many Members of this body have been sitting for a decade or multiple decades, I was serving in the United States Navy, freezing outside in combat, and now a veteran. There is a difference between the life experiences.

The time for talk and political sharpshooting each other is over. The time to act is now. In fact, I do agree with my colleague that we cannot allow another veteran to go homeless as winter is upon us here.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask Mr. TAKANO and the other Democrats on that side of the aisle to join me, as I will join them, in working collectively as Members of this body to ensure that everything that is done here is for a higher purpose. The higher purpose is making sure that those who have protected our

lives, as we live in freedom, are able to live in peace and prosperity. If they need a hand up, they get it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIMENEZ). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. VAN ORDEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3848, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### ELIZABETH DOLE HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES FOR VETERANS AND CAREGIVERS ACT OF 2023

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 542) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve certain programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs for home- and community-based services for veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 542

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ‘‘Elizabeth Dole Home- and Community-Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act of 2023’’ or the ‘‘Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023’’.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Increase of expenditure cap for non-institutional care alternatives to nursing home care.
- Sec. 3. Coordination with Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly.
- Sec. 4. Home- and community-based services: programs.
- Sec. 5. Coordination with assistance and support services for caregivers.
- Sec. 6. Development of centralized website for program information.
- Sec. 7. Improvements relating to Home-maker and Home Health Aide program.
- Sec. 8. Reviews and other improvements relating to home- and community-based services.
- Sec. 9. Modification of certain housing loan fees.
- Sec. 10. Definitions.

#### SEC. 2. INCREASE OF EXPENDITURE CAP FOR NONINSTITUTIONAL CARE ALTERNATIVES TO NURSING HOME CARE.

(a) INCREASE OF EXPENDITURE CAP.—Section 1720C(d) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ‘‘The total cost’’ and inserting ‘‘(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the total cost’’;

(2) by striking ‘‘65 percent’’ and inserting ‘‘100 percent’’; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

‘‘(2)(A) The total cost of providing services or in-kind assistance in the case of any veteran described in subparagraph (B) for any fiscal year under the program may exceed 100 percent of the cost that would otherwise have been incurred as specified in paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines, based on a consideration of clinical need, geographic market factors, and such other matters as the Secretary may prescribe through regulation, that such higher total cost is in the best interest of the veteran.

‘‘(B) A veteran described in this subparagraph is a veteran with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a spinal cord injury, or a condition the Secretary determines to be similar to such conditions.’’.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to fiscal years beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 3. COORDINATION WITH PROGRAM OF ALL-INCLUSIVE CARE FOR THE ELDERLY.

Section 1720C of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 2, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

‘‘(f) In furnishing services to a veteran under the program conducted pursuant to subsection (a), if a medical center of the Department through which such program is administered is located in a geographic area in which services are available to the veteran under a PACE program (as such term is defined in sections 1894(a)(2) and 1934(a)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395eee(a)(2); 1396u-4(a)(2))), the Secretary shall seek to enter into an agreement with the PACE program operating in that area for the furnishing of such services.’’.

#### SEC. 4. HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES: PROGRAMS.

(a) PROGRAMS.—Chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1720J the following new section (and conforming the table of sections at the beginning of such chapter accordingly):

#### ‘‘§ 1720K. Home- and community-based services: programs

‘‘(a) IN GENERAL.—In furnishing non-institutional alternatives to nursing home care pursuant to the authority of section 1720C of this title (or any other authority under this chapter or other provision of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs), the Secretary shall carry out each of the programs specified in this section in accordance with such relevant authorities except as otherwise provided in this section.

‘‘(b) VETERAN-DIRECTED CARE PROGRAM.—(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in collaboration with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall carry out a program to be known as the ‘‘Veteran-Directed Care program’’. Under such program, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may enter into agreements with the providers described in paragraph (2) to provide to eligible veterans funds, to the extent practicable, to obtain such in-home care services and related items as may be determined appropriate by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and selected by the veteran, including through the veteran hiring individuals to provide such services and items or directly purchasing such services and items.

‘‘(2) The providers described in this paragraph are the following:

‘‘(A) An Aging and Disability Resource Center, an area agency on aging, or a State agency.

‘‘(B) A center for independent living.

‘‘(C) An Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving assistance under title VI of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3057 et seq.).