

Whereas the strength of the United States-Republic of Korea relationship is due in large part to the approximately 2,500,000 Korean Americans that have made significant contributions to every facet of American society and leadership to now include four members of the House of Representatives: Andy Kim of New Jersey, Young Kim of California, Marilyn Strickland of Washington, and Michelle Steel of California; and

Whereas, in April 2023, President Yoon Suk Yeol will visit the United States at the invitation of President Joseph R. Biden: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) welcomes President Yoon Suk Yeol to the United States and urges both sides to use the occasion of this state visit to further deepen the close security, economic, and people-to-people ties between our nations;

(2) reaffirms the importance of the United States-Republic of Korea alliance as the linchpin to safeguarding peace, security, and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and a critical component of peace in the Indo-Pacific region;

(3) reaffirms the United States' extended deterrence commitments to the Republic of Korea and that the United States will continue to ensure that its policy and posture reflects the requirements of extended deterrence;

(4) supports ongoing efforts to further strengthen, broaden, and deepen the ironclad United States-Republic of Korea alliance, including the United States-Republic of Korea Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (2+2), the Security Consultative Meeting, and the Extended Deterrence Strategy and Consultation Group, to confront threats to the peace and safety of both nations, and to stand together for the common values and shared interests that unite us;

(5) calls for continued cooperation between the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Korea in the promotion of human rights;

(6) supports the Republic of Korea's engagement in regional diplomacy, including the launching of the ROK-ASEAN Solidarity Initiative, the Republic of Korea's participation in the Minerals Security Partnership, its joining of the Partners in the Blue Pacific, and its hosting of a summit with Pacific Island nations;

(7) endorses further Republic of Korea engagement with Quad initiatives;

(8) calls for close coordination to achieve the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the establishment of a permanent and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula;

(9) encourages close cooperation among the United States, the Republic of Korea, and Japan to address shared challenges; and

(10) recognizes the deep partnership forged over 70 years since the signing of the Mutual Defense Treaty that has underpinned security for both countries, established a durable trust, undergirded the free and open order in the Indo-Pacific, and demonstrated the benefits of robust democracies on both sides of the Pacific.

SENATE RESOLUTION 176—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF APRIL 2023 AS THE “MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD”

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 176

Whereas millions of brave United States servicemembers and veterans have dem-

onstrated their courage and commitment to freedom by serving the Armed Forces of the United States of America in active-duty posts around the world;

Whereas there are more than 1,600,000 children connected to the military across the United States;

Whereas it is only fitting that the people of the United States take time to recognize the contributions of servicemembers and veterans, celebrate their spirit, and let the men and women of the United States in uniform know that while they are taking care of us, the people of the United States are taking care of their children;

Whereas the recognition of a “Month of the Military Child” will allow the people of the United States to pay tribute to military children for their commitment, struggles, and unconditional support of United States troops;

Whereas, when a servicemember joins the military, it is a family commitment to the United States, and military children are heroes in their own way; and

Whereas a month-long salute to military children will encourage the United States to provide direct support to military children and families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of April 2023 as the “Month of the Military Child”; and

(2) urges the people of the United States to observe the Month of the Military Child with appropriate ceremonies and activities that honor, support, and show appreciation for military children.

SENATE RESOLUTION 177—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. POWELL

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 177

Whereas, in the case of *United States v. Powell*, Cr. No. 21-179, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former officers and employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for evidence relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, is authorized to provide relevant testimony in the case of *United States v. Powell*, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Mr. Schwager, and any current or former officer or employee of the

Secretary's office, in connection with the production of evidence authorized in section one of this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 178—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. KELLY

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 178

Whereas, in the case of *United States v. Kelly*, Cr. No. 21-708, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former officers and employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for evidence relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Daniel Schwager, a former employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, is authorized to provide relevant testimony in the case of *United States v. Kelly*, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Mr. Schwager, and any current or former officer or employee of the Secretary's office, in connection with the production of evidence authorized in section one of this resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 88. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 326, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a study and clinical trials on the effects of cannabis on certain health outcomes of veterans with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 88. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 326, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a study and clinical trials on the effects of cannabis on certain health outcomes of veterans with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Elizabeth Dole Veterans Programs Improvement Act of 2023”.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENTS TO HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Definitions.

Sec. 103. Coordination with Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly.

Sec. 104. Home and community based services; programs.

Sec. 105. Coordination with assistance and support services for caregivers.

Sec. 106. Development of centralized website for program information.

Sec. 107. Improvements relating to Home Maker and Home Health Aide program.

Sec. 108. Reviews and other improvements relating to home and community based services.

TITLE II—IMPROVEMENTS TO FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM

Sec. 201. Modification of family caregiver program of Department of Veterans Affairs to include services related to mental health and neurological disorders.

Sec. 202. Requirements relating to evaluations, assessments, and reassessments relating to eligibility of veterans and caregivers for family caregiver program.

Sec. 203. Authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to award grants to entities to improve provision of mental health support to family caregivers of veterans.

Sec. 204. Comptroller General report on mental health support for caregivers.

TITLE III—MEDICINAL CANNABIS RESEARCH

Sec. 301. Definitions.

Sec. 302. Department of Veterans Affairs large-scale, mixed methods, retrospective qualitative study on the effects of cannabis on certain health outcomes of veterans with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Sec. 303. Department of Veterans Affairs clinical trials on the effects of cannabis on certain health outcomes of veterans with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Sec. 304. Administration of study and clinical trials.

TITLE IV—HOUSING MATTERS

Sec. 401. Improvements to program for direct housing loans made to Native American veterans by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 402. Native community development financial institution relending program.

Sec. 403. Department of Veterans Affairs housing loan fees.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 501. Authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to award grants to States to improve outreach to veterans.

Sec. 502. Oversight of Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENTS TO HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES**SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.**

This title may be cited as the “Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act”.

SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **CAREGIVER; FAMILY CAREGIVER.**—The terms “caregiver” and “family caregiver” have the meanings given those terms under section 1720K(g) of title 38, United States Code (as added by section 104(a)(1)).

(2) **COVERED PROGRAM.**—The term “covered program”—

(A) means any program of the Department for home and community based services; and

(B) includes the programs specified in section 1720K of title 38, United States Code (as added by section 104(a)(1)).

(3) **DEPARTMENT.**—The term “Department” means the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(4) **HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES.**—The term “home and community based services”—

(A) means the services referred to in section 1701(6)(E) of title 38, United States Code; and

(B) includes services furnished under a program specified in section 1720K of such title (as added by section 104(a)(1)).

(5) **HOME BASED PRIMARY CARE PROGRAM; HOME MAKER AND HOME HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM; VETERAN DIRECTED CARE PROGRAM.**—The terms “Home Based Primary Care program”, “Home Maker and Home Health Aide program”, and “Veteran Directed Care program” mean the programs of the Department specified in subsections (d), (c), and (b) of such section 1720K, respectively.

(6) **HOME HEALTH AIDE; NATIVE AMERICAN VETERAN, TRIBAL HEALTH PROGRAM; URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATION.**—The terms “home health aide”, “Native American veteran”, “tribal health program”, and “Urban Indian organization” have the meanings given those terms in subsection (g) of such section 1720K.

(7) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(8) **VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.**—The term “veterans service organization” means any organization recognized by the Secretary under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 103. COORDINATION WITH PROGRAM OF ALL-INCLUSIVE CARE FOR THE ELDERLY.

Section 1720C of title 38, United States Code, is 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 establish a partnership with the PACE program operating in that area for the furnishing of such services.”.

SEC. 104. HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES; PROGRAMS.

(a) **PROGRAMS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1720J the following new section:

“§ 1720K. Home and community based services; programs

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In furnishing non-institutional alternatives to nursing home care under 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 col-

laboration with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall carry out a program to be known as the ‘Veteran Directed Care program’ under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may enter into agreements with the providers described in paragraph (2) to provide to eligible veterans funds to obtain such in-home care services and related items that support clinical need and improve quality of life as 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) Any other entity as determined appropriate by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

“(3) In carrying out the Veteran Directed Care program, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

“(A) administer such program through each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

“(B) ensure the availability of such program in American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and any other territory or possession of the United States; and

“(C) ensure the availability of such program for eligible veterans who are Native American veterans receiving care and services furnished by the Indian Health Service, a tribal health program, an Urban Indian organization, or (in the case of a Native Hawaiian veteran) a Native Hawaiian health care system.

“(4) If a veteran participating in the Veteran Directed Care program is hospitalized, the veteran may continue to use funds under the program during a period of hospitalization in the same manner that the veteran would be authorized to use such funds under the program if the veteran were not hospitalized, as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(c) **HOME MAKER AND HOME HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM.**—(1) The Secretary shall carry out a program to be known as the ‘Home Maker and Home Health Aide program’ under which the Secretary may enter into agreements with home health agencies to provide to eligible veterans such home health aide services as may be determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(2) In carrying out the Home Maker and Home Health Aide program, the Secretary shall ensure the availability of such program—

“(A) in the locations specified in subparagraph (B) of subsection (b)(3); and

“(B) for the veteran populations specified in subparagraph (C) of such subsection.

“(d) **HOME BASED PRIMARY CARE PROGRAM.**—The Secretary shall carry out a program to be known as the ‘Home Based Primary Care program’ under which the Secretary may furnish to eligible veterans in-home health care, the provision of which is overseen by a health care provider of the Department.

“(e) **PURCHASED SKILLED HOME CARE PROGRAM.**—The Secretary shall carry out a program to be known as the ‘Purchased Skilled Home Care program’ under which the Secretary may furnish to eligible veterans such in-home care services as may be determined appropriate and selected by the Secretary for the veteran.

“(f) CAREGIVER SUPPORT.—(1) With respect to a caregiver of a veteran participating in a program under this section who is a family caregiver, the Secretary shall—

“(A) if the veteran meets the requirements of a covered veteran under section 1720G(b) of this title, provide to such caregiver the option of enrolling in the program of general caregiver support services under such section;

“(B) subject to paragraph (2), provide to such caregiver not fewer than 14 days of covered respite care each year; and

“(C) conduct on an annual basis (and, to the extent practicable, in connection with in-person services provided under the program in which the veteran is participating), a wellness check of such caregiver.

“(2) The Secretary shall provide not fewer than 30 days of covered respite care each year to any caregiver who provides services funded under the Veteran Directed Care program under subsection (b).

“(3) Covered respite care provided to a caregiver of a veteran under paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, may exceed 14 days annually or 30 days annually, respectively, if an extension is requested by the caregiver or veteran and determined medically appropriate by the Secretary.

“(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The terms ‘Aging and Disability Resource Center’, ‘area agency on aging’, and ‘State agency’ have the meanings given those terms in section 102 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3002).

“(2) The terms ‘caregiver’ and ‘family caregiver’, with respect to a veteran, have the meanings given those terms, respectively, under subsection (d) of section 1720G of this title with respect to an eligible veteran under subsection (a) of such section or a covered veteran under subsection (b) of such section, as the case may be.

“(3) The term ‘center for independent living’ has the meaning given that term in section 702 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 796a).

“(4) The term ‘covered respite care’ means, with respect to a caregiver of a veteran, respite care that—

“(A) includes 24-hour per day care of the veteran commensurate with the care provided by the caregiver;

“(B) is medically and age-appropriate; and

“(C) includes in-home care services.

“(5) The term ‘eligible veteran’ means any veteran—

“(A) for whom the Secretary determines participation in a specific program under this section is medically necessary to promote, preserve, or restore the health of the veteran; and

“(B) who absent such participation would be at increased risk for hospitalization, placement in a nursing home, or emergency room care.

“(6) The term ‘home health aide’ means an individual employed by a home health agency to provide in-home care services.

“(7) The term ‘in-home care service’ means any service, including a personal care service, provided to enable the recipient of such service to live at home.

“(8) The term ‘Native American veteran’ has the meaning given that term in section 3765 of this title.

“(9) The terms ‘Native Hawaiian’ and ‘Native Hawaiian health care system’ have the meanings given those terms in section 12 of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act (42 U.S.C. 11711).

“(10) The terms ‘tribal health program’ and ‘Urban Indian organization’ have the meanings given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such subchapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1720J the following new item: “1720K. Home and community based services: programs.”.

(b) DEADLINE FOR IMPROVED ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Veteran Directed Care program and the Home Maker and Home Health Aide program are administered through each medical center of the Department in accordance with section 1720K of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)(1)), by not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) ADMINISTRATION OF VETERAN DIRECTED CARE PROGRAM.—

(1) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall establish procedures to identify staffing needs for the Program and define the roles and responsibilities of personnel of the Program at the national, Veterans Integrated Service Network, and facility levels, including responsibilities for engagement with veterans participating in the Program, veterans interested in the Program, and providers described in section 1720K(b)(2), as added by subsection (a)(1).

(2) STAFFING MODEL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a staffing model for the administration of the Program at each medical center of the Department.

(B) STAFFING RATIO.—The Secretary shall establish a staffing ratio for administration of the Program at each facility of the Department at which the Program is carried out, which shall include a specified number of full-time equivalent employees, with no collateral duties, per number of veterans served by the Program.

(3) FUNDING FOR PROGRAM.—

(A) COST ESTIMATES.—The Secretary shall develop methods for tracking and reporting demand by veterans for and use by veterans of services under the Program to inform yearly cost estimates for the Program.

(B) SPECIFIC REQUEST.—In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the budget of the Department for any fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested for the Program.

(4) PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “Program” means the Veteran Directed Care program.

SEC. 105. COORDINATION WITH ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CAREGIVERS.

(a) COORDINATION WITH PROGRAM OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS.—

(1) COORDINATION.—Section 1720G(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(14)(A) In the case of a veteran or caregiver who seeks services under this subsection and is denied such services, or a veteran or the family caregiver of a veteran who is discharged from the program under this subsection, the Secretary shall—

“(i) if the veteran meets the requirements of a covered veteran under subsection (b), provide to such caregiver the option of enrolling in the program of general caregiver support services under such subsection;

“(ii) assess the veteran or caregiver for participation in any other available program of the Department for home and community based services (including the programs specified in section 1720K of this title) for which the veteran or caregiver may be eligible and, with respect to the veteran, store (and make accessible to the veteran) the results of such

assessment in the electronic medical record of the veteran; and

“(iii) provide to the veteran or caregiver written information on any such program identified pursuant to the assessment under clause (ii), including information about facilities, eligibility requirements, and relevant contact information for each such program.

“(B)(i) Subject to clause (ii), for each veteran or family caregiver who is discharged from the program under this subsection, a caregiver support coordinator shall provide for a smooth and personalized transition from such program to an appropriate program of the Department for home and community based services (including the programs specified in section 1720K of this title), including by integrating caregiver support across programs.

“(ii) To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall not discharge a veteran or family caregiver from the program under this subsection until appropriate home and community based services are selected by the veteran or caregiver and are being provided to the veteran and caregiver pursuant to clause (i).”.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to denials and discharges described in paragraph (14) of such section, as added by paragraph (1), occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1720G(d) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking “or a covered veteran” each place it appears and inserting “, a veteran denied or discharged as specified in paragraph (14) of such subsection, or a covered veteran”; and

(2) by striking “under subsection (a), means” each place it appears and inserting “under subsection (a) or a veteran denied or discharged as specified in paragraph (14) of such subsection, means”.

(c) REVIEW RELATING TO CAREGIVER CONTACT.—The Secretary shall conduct a review of the capacity of the Department to establish a streamlined system for contacting all caregivers enrolled in the program of general caregiver support services under section 1720G(b) of title 38, United States Code, to provide to such caregivers program updates and alerts relating to emerging services for which such caregivers or the veterans for which they provide care may be eligible.

SEC. 106. DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRALIZED WEBSITE FOR PROGRAM INFORMATION.

(a) CENTRALIZED WEBSITE.—The Secretary shall develop and maintain a centralized and publicly accessible internet website of the Department as a clearinghouse for information and resources relating to covered programs.

(b) CONTENTS.—The website under subsection (a) shall contain the following:

(1) A description of each covered program.

(2) An informational assessment tool that enables users to—

(A) assess the eligibility of a veteran, or a caregiver of a veteran, for any covered program; and

(B) receive information, as a result of such assessment, on any covered program for which the veteran or caregiver (as the case may be) may be eligible.

(3) A list of required procedures for the directors of medical facilities of the Department to follow in determining the eligibility and suitability of veterans for participation in a covered program, including procedures applicable to instances in which the resource constraints of a facility (or of a community in which a facility is located) may result in the inability to address the health needs of a

veteran under a covered program in a timely manner.

(c) **UPDATES.**—The Secretary shall ensure the website under subsection (a) is updated on a periodic basis.

SEC. 107. IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO HOME MAKER AND HOME HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM.

(a) **PILOT PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITIES WITH SHORTAGE OF HOME HEALTH AIDES.**—

(1) **PROGRAM.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall carry out a pilot program under which the Secretary shall provide home maker and home health aide services to veterans who reside in communities with a shortage of home health aides.

(2) **LOCATIONS.**—The Secretary shall select 10 geographic locations in which the Secretary determines there is a shortage of home health aides at which to carry out the pilot program under paragraph (1).

(3) **NURSING ASSISTANTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out the pilot program under paragraph (1), the Secretary may hire nursing assistants as new employees of the Department, or reassign nursing assistants who are existing employees of the Department, to provide to veterans in-home care services (including basic tasks authorized by the State certification of the nursing assistant) under the pilot program, in lieu of or in addition to the provision of such services through non-Department home health aides.

(B) **RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PROGRAMS.**—Nursing assistants hired or reassigned under subparagraph (A) may provide services to a veteran under the pilot program under paragraph (1) while serving as part of a health care team for the veteran under the Home Based Primary Care program or any other program as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(4) **DURATION.**—The pilot program under paragraph (1) shall be for a duration of three years.

(5) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than one year prior to the termination of the pilot program under paragraph (1), 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 results of the pilot program as of the date of the report and the feasibility and advisability of extending the pilot program or making the pilot program permanent.

(b) **REPORT ON USE OF FUNDS.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, 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 containing, with respect to the period beginning in fiscal year 2011 and ending in fiscal year 2022, the following:

(1) An identification of the amount of funds that were included in a budget of the Department during such period for the provision of in-home care to veterans under the Home Maker and Home Health Aide program in effect during such period but were not expended for the provision of such care, disaggregated by medical center of the Department for which such unexpended funds were budgeted.

(2) An identification of the number of veterans for whom, during such period, the hours during which a home health aide was authorized to provide services to the veteran under such program were reduced, including a detailed description of why such reduction occurred, such as clinical need or provider availability.

(c) **UPDATED GUIDANCE ON PROGRAM.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act,

the Secretary shall issue updated guidance for the Home Maker and Home Health Aide program.

(2) **MATTERS TO INCLUDE.**—Guidance updated under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A process for the transition of veterans from the Home Maker and Home Health Aide program to other covered programs.

(B) A requirement for the directors of the medical facilities of the Department to complete such process whenever a veteran with care needs has been denied services from home health agencies under the Home Maker and Home Health Aide program as a result of the clinical needs or behavioral issues of the veteran.

SEC. 108. REVIEWS AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES.

(a) **OFFICE OF GERIATRIC AND EXTENDED CARE.**—

(1) **REVIEW OF PROGRAMS.**—The Under Secretary for Health of the Department shall conduct a review of each program administered through the Office of Geriatric and Extended Care of the Department or the Caregiver Support Program Office of the Department, or any successor office, to—

(A) ensure consistency in program management;

(B) eliminate service gaps at the medical center level;

(C) ensure the clinical needs of veterans are being met;

(D) ensure the availability of, and the access by veterans to, home and community based services, including for veterans living in rural areas; and

(E) ensure proper coordination between covered programs.

(2) **ASSESSMENT OF STAFFING NEEDS.**—The Secretary shall conduct an assessment of the staffing needs of the Office of Geriatric and Extended Care of the Department and the Caregiver Support Program Office of the Department, or any successor office.

(3) **GOALS FOR GEOGRAPHIC ALIGNMENT OF CARE.**—

(A) **ESTABLISHMENT OF GOALS.**—The Director of the Office of Geriatric and Extended Care and the head of the Caregiver Support Program Office, or the head of any successor office, shall establish quantitative goals to enable aging or disabled veterans who are not located near medical centers of the Department to access extended care services (including by improving access to home and community based services for such veterans).

(B) **IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE.**—Each goal established under subparagraph (A) shall include a timeline for the implementation of the goal at each medical center of the Department.

(4) **GOALS FOR IN-HOME SPECIALTY CARE.**—The Director of the Office of Geriatric and Extended Care and the head of the Caregiver Support Program Office, or the head of any successor office, shall establish quantitative goals to address the specialty care needs of veterans through in-home care, including by ensuring the education of home health aides and caregivers of veterans in the following areas:

(A) Dementia care.

(B) Care for spinal cord injuries and diseases.

(C) Ventilator care.

(D) Other specialty care areas as determined by the Secretary.

(5) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, 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 containing the findings of the review under paragraph (1), the results of the assessment

under paragraph (2), and the goals established under paragraphs (3) and (4).

(b) **REVIEW OF INCENTIVES AND EFFORTS RELATING TO HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES.**—

(1) **REVIEW.**—The Secretary shall conduct a review of the following:

(A) The financial and organizational incentives and disincentives for the directors of medical centers of the Department to establish or expand covered programs at such medical centers.

(B) Any incentives or disincentives for such directors to provide to veterans home and community based services in lieu of institutional care.

(C) The efforts taken by the Secretary to enhance spending of the Department for extended care by balancing spending between institutional care and home and community based services.

(D) The plan of the Under Secretary for Health of the Department to accelerate efforts to enhance spending as specified in subparagraph (C), to match the progress of similar efforts taken by the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services with respect to spending of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for extended care.

(2) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, 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 findings of the review under paragraph (1).

(c) **REVIEW OF RESPITE CARE SERVICES.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall conduct a review of the use, availability, cost, and effectiveness of the respite care services furnished by the Secretary under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, to include—

(1) the frequency in which Department is unable to meet the need for such services;

(2) a detailed description of why the Department is unable to meet the need for such services; and

(3) a detailed description of the actions the Department has taken or plans to take to ensure that the need for such services is met.

(d) **COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES.**—

(1) **FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON CAREGIVER SUPPORT.**—

(A) **FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—The Secretary shall solicit from the entities described in subparagraph (B) feedback and recommendations regarding opportunities for the Secretary to enhance home and community based services for veterans and caregivers of veterans, including through the potential provision by the entity of care and respite services to veterans and caregivers who may not be eligible for any program under section 1720G of title 38, United States Code, or section 1720K of such title (as added by section 104(a)(1)), but have a need for assistance.

(B) **COVERED ENTITIES.**—The entities described in this subparagraph are veterans service organizations and nonprofit organizations with a focus on caregiver support or long-term care (as determined by the Secretary).

(2) **COLLABORATION FOR NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS.**—The Secretary shall collaborate with the Director of the Indian Health Service and representatives from tribal health programs and Urban Indian organizations to ensure the availability of home and community based services for Native American veterans, including Native American veterans receiving health care and medical services under multiple health care systems.

TITLE II—IMPROVEMENTS TO FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM

SEC. 201. MODIFICATION OF FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCLUDE SERVICES RELATED TO MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1720G of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 105, is further amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)(C)(ii), by striking “neurological” and inserting “a neurological disorder”;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II), by inserting “, including through public or private entities” before the semicolon; and

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(v)(I) For purposes of determining the amount and degree of personal care services provided under clause (i) with respect to a veteran described in subclause (II), the Secretary shall take into account relevant documentation evidencing the provision of personal care services with respect to the veteran during the preceding three-year period.

“(II) A veteran described in this subclause is a veteran whose need for personal care services as described in paragraph (2)(C) is based in whole or in part on—

“(aa) a diagnosis of mental illness or history of suicidal ideation that puts the veteran at risk of self-harm; or

“(bb) a neurological disorder.”; and

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

“(15) The Secretary shall establish a process and requirements for clinicians of facilities of the Department—

“(A) to document incidents in which an eligible veteran participating in the program established under paragraph (1)—

“(i) presents at such a facility for treatment for an emergent or urgent mental health crisis; or

“(ii) is assessed by such a clinician to be at risk for suicide; and

“(B) to provide such documentation, including any safety plans developed and referrals made to a suicide prevention coordinator of the Department, to such program.”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)(B), by striking “neurological” and inserting “a neurological disorder”; and

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5);

(B) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph (4):

“(4) the term ‘neurological disorder’ means a disease of the brain, spinal cord, nerves, or neuromuscular system.”; and

(C) in paragraph (5)(B), as redesignated by subparagraph (A), by striking “neurological” and inserting “a neurological disorder”.

(b) TIMING FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSES.—

(1) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(A) establish the process and requirements required under paragraph (15) of section 1720G(a) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1)(B); and

(B) submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a description of such process and requirements.

(2) CERTIFICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall require all clinicians of facilities of the Department to certify to the Secretary that the clinician understands the process and re-

quirements established under paragraph (1)(A).

(B) FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term “facilities of the Department” has the meaning given that term in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 202. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO EVALUATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, AND REASSESSMENTS RELATING TO ELIGIBILITY OF VETERANS AND CAREGIVERS FOR FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 1720G of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 201(a)(1), is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(16)(A) For purposes of conducting evaluations and assessments to determine eligibility of a veteran and caregiver for the program established under paragraph (1) or conducting reassessments to determine continued eligibility for such program, the Secretary shall—

“(i) take into account relevant documentation and medical records generated by Department and non-Department health care providers, including qualified mental health professionals and neurological specialists;

“(ii) if the caregiver of the veteran claims that the serious injury or need for personal care services of the veteran as described in paragraph (2) is based in whole or in part on psychological trauma or another mental disorder, ensure—

“(I) a qualified mental health professional that treats the veteran participates in the evaluation process; and

“(II) a qualified mental health professional participates in the assessment or reassessment process; and

“(iii) if the caregiver of the veteran claims that the serious injury or need for personal care services of the veteran as described in paragraph (2) is based in whole or in part on a neurological disorder, ensure—

“(I) a neurological specialist that treats the veteran participates in the evaluation process; and

“(II) a neurological specialist participates in the assessment or reassessment process.

“(B)(i) The Secretary shall establish an appropriate time limit during a 24-hour period for the active participation of a veteran in an evaluation, assessment, or reassessment to determine eligibility of the veteran for the program established under paragraph (1).

“(ii) In determining an appropriate time limit for a veteran under clause (i), the Secretary shall—

“(I) take into consideration necessary accommodations for the veteran stemming from the disability or medical condition of the veteran; and

“(II) consult with the primary care provider, neurological specialist, or qualified mental health professional that is treating the veteran.

“(C) The Secretary shall not require the presence of a veteran during portions of an evaluation, assessment, or reassessment to determine eligibility of the veteran for the program established under paragraph (1) that only require the active participation of the caregiver.

“(D)(i) The Secretary shall make reasonable efforts to assist a caregiver and veteran in obtaining evidence necessary to substantiate the claims of the caregiver and veteran in the application process for evaluation, assessment, or reassessment for the program established under paragraph (1).

“(ii)(I) As part of the assistance provided to a caregiver or veteran under clause (i), the Secretary shall make reasonable efforts to obtain relevant private records that the

caregiver or veteran adequately identifies to the Secretary.

“(II) Whenever the Secretary, after making reasonable efforts under subclause (I), is unable to obtain all of the relevant records sought, the Secretary shall notify the caregiver and veteran that the Secretary is unable to obtain records with respect to the claim, which shall include—

“(aa) an identification of the records the Secretary is unable to obtain;

“(bb) a brief explanation of the efforts that the Secretary made to obtain such records; and

“(cc) an explanation that the Secretary will make a determination based on the evidence of record and that this clause does not prohibit the submission of records at a later date if such submission is otherwise allowed.

“(III) The Secretary shall make not fewer than two requests to a custodian of a private record in order for an effort to obtain such record to be treated as reasonable under subclause (I), unless it is made evident by the first request that a second request would be futile in obtaining such record.

“(iii) Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, the Secretary—

“(I) shall encourage a caregiver and veteran to submit relevant private medical records of the veteran to the Secretary to substantiate the claims of the caregiver and veteran in the application process for evaluation, assessment, or reassessment for the program established under paragraph (1) if such submission does not burden the caregiver or veteran; and

“(II) may require the caregiver or veteran to authorize the Secretary to obtain such relevant private medical records if such authorization is required to comply with Federal, State, or local law.

“(17)(A) The Secretary, in consultation with a health care provider, neurological specialist, or qualified mental health professional that is treating a veteran, shall waive the reassessment requirement for the veteran for participation in the program established under paragraph (1) if—

“(i) the serious injury of the veteran under paragraph (2) is significantly caused by a degenerative or chronic condition; and

“(ii) such condition is unlikely to improve the dependency of the veteran for personal care services.

“(B) The Secretary shall require a health care provider, neurological specialist, or qualified mental health professional that is treating a veteran to certify at appropriate intervals determined by the Secretary the clinical decision of the provider, specialist, or professional under subparagraph (A).

“(C) The Secretary may rescind a waiver under subparagraph (A) with respect to a veteran and require a reassessment of the veteran if a health care provider, neurological specialist, or qualified mental health professional that is treating the veteran makes a clinical determination that the level of dependency of the veteran for personal care services has diminished since the last certification of the clinical decision of the provider, specialist, or professional under subparagraph (B).”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Subsection (d) of such section, as amended by section 201(a)(3), is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6);

(2) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph (5):

“(5) The term ‘neurological specialist’ means a neurologist, neuropsychiatrist, psychiatrist, geriatrician, certified brain injury specialist, neurology nurse, neurology

nurse practitioner, neurology physician assistant, or such other licensed medical professional as the Secretary considers appropriate.”; and

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

“(7) The term ‘qualified mental health professional’ means a psychiatrist, psychologist, licensed clinical social worker, psychiatric nurse, licensed professional mental health counselor, or other licensed mental health professional as the Secretary considers appropriate.”.

SEC. 203. AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO AWARD GRANTS TO ENTITIES TO IMPROVE PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TO FAMILY CAREGIVERS OF VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 104(a)(1), is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1720L. Grants to provide mental health support to family caregivers of veterans

“(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to provide for assistance by the Secretary to entities to carry out programs that improve the provision of mental health support to the family caregivers of veterans participating in the family caregiver program.

“(b) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may award grants to carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance mental health counseling, treatment, or support to the family caregivers of veterans participating in the family caregiver program.

“(c) APPLICATION.—(1) To be eligible for a grant under this section, an entity shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) A detailed plan for the use of the grant.

“(B) A description of the programs or efforts through which the entity will meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (g).

“(C) A description of how the entity will distribute grant amounts equitably among areas with varying levels of urbanization.

“(d) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall seek to ensure that grants awarded under this section are equitably distributed among entities located in States with varying levels of urbanization.

“(e) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize awarding grants under this section that will serve the following areas:

“(1) Areas with high rates of veterans enrolled in the family caregiver program.

“(2) Areas with high rates of—

“(A) suicide among veterans; or

“(B) referrals to the Veterans Crisis Line.

“(f) REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—Any grant awarded under this section shall be used—

“(1) to expand existing programs, activities, and services;

“(2) to establish new or additional programs, activities, and services; or

“(3) for travel and transportation to facilitate carrying out paragraph (1) or (2).

“(g) OUTCOME MEASURES.—(1) The Secretary shall develop and provide to each entity that receives a grant under this section written guidance on the following:

“(A) Outcome measures.

“(B) Policies of the Department.

“(2) In developing outcome measures under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the following goals:

“(A) Increasing the utilization of mental health services among family caregivers of veterans participating in the family caregiver program.

“(B) Reducing barriers to mental health services among family caregivers of veterans participating in such program.

“(h) TRACKING REQUIREMENTS.—(1) The Secretary shall establish appropriate tracking requirements with respect to the entities receiving a grant under this section.

“(2) Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on such tracking requirements.

“(i) PERFORMANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall—

“(1) review the performance of each entity that receives a grant under this section; and

“(2) make information regarding such performance publicly available.

“(j) REMEDIATION PLAN.—(1) In the case of an entity that receives a grant under this section and does not meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (g), the Secretary shall require the entity to submit to the Secretary a remediation plan under which the entity shall describe how and when it plans to meet such outcome measures.

“(2) The Secretary may not award a subsequent grant under this section to an entity described in paragraph (1) unless the Secretary approves the remediation plan submitted by the entity under such paragraph.

“(k) FUNDING REQUEST.—In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the budget of the Department for any fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested to be appropriated for that fiscal year to carry out this section.

“(l) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2025 \$50,000,000 to carry out this section.

“(m) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The terms ‘caregiver’ and ‘family caregiver’ have the meanings given those terms in section 1720G(d) of this title.

“(2) The term ‘family caregiver program’ means the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers under section 1720G(a) of this title.

“(3) The term ‘Veterans Crisis Line’ means the toll-free hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of this title.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such subchapter, as amended by section 104(a)(2), is further amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“1720L. Grants to provide mental health support to family caregivers of veterans.”.

SEC. 204. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR CAREGIVERS.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States 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 provision of mental health support to caregivers of veterans.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the need for mental health support among caregivers participating in the caregiver programs.

(2) An assessment of options for mental health support in facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs and in the community for caregivers participating in the caregiver programs.

(3) An assessment of the availability and accessibility of mental health support in fa-

cilities of the Department and in the community for caregivers participating in the caregiver programs.

(4) An assessment of the awareness among caregivers of the availability of mental health support in facilities of the Department and in the community for caregivers participating in the caregiver programs.

(5) An assessment of barriers to mental health support in facilities of the Department and in the community for caregivers participating in the caregiver programs.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CAREGIVER.—The term “caregiver” has the meaning given that term in section 1720G(d) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) CAREGIVER PROGRAMS.—The term “caregiver programs” means—

(A) the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers under subsection (a) of section 1720G of title 38, United States Code; and

(B) the program of support services for caregivers under subsection (b) of such section.

TITLE III—MEDICINAL CANNABIS RESEARCH

SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) COVERED VETERAN.—The term “covered veteran” means a veteran who is enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 302. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LARGE-SCALE, MIXED METHODS, RETROSPECTIVE QUALITATIVE STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF CANNABIS ON CERTAIN HEALTH OUTCOMES OF VETERANS WITH CHRONIC PAIN AND POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, through the Office of Research and Development of the Department of Veterans Affairs, shall carry out a large-scale, mixed methods, retrospective, and qualitative study on the effects of cannabis on the health outcomes of covered veterans diagnosed with chronic pain and covered veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

(2) OBSERVATIONAL STUDY.—The study required by paragraph (1) shall be conducted as an observational study on the effects of cannabis use on the health of covered veterans.

(3) ELEMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The study required by paragraph (1) shall—

(i) triangulate a range of data sources;

(ii) compare the positive and negative health outcomes of covered veterans who use cannabis, utilizing outcomes that can be measured in an electronic health record of the Department and through data sets of the Department relating to claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary;

(iii) elicit the positive and negative outcomes of cannabis use for covered veterans through semi-structured interviews;

(iv) estimate current and future health system needs to address positive and negative outcomes of cannabis use for covered veterans;

(v) include a qualitative, open-ended survey provided to covered veterans who have sought care from the Department for chronic pain or post-traumatic stress disorder during the five-year period preceding the survey; and

(vi) include an assessment of—

(I) all records within the Veterans Health Administration for covered veterans participating in the study; and

(II) all records within the Veterans Benefits Administration for covered veterans participating in the study.

(B) **HEALTH OUTCOMES.**—A comparison of health outcomes under subparagraph (A)(ii) shall include an assessment of the following:

(i) The reduction or increase in opiate use or dosage.

(ii) The reduction or increase in benzodiazepine use or dosage.

(iii) The reduction or change in use of other types of medication.

(iv) The reduction or increase in alcohol use.

(v) The reduction or increase in the prevalence of substance abuse disorders.

(vi) Sleep quality.

(vii) Osteopathic pain (including pain intensity and pain-related outcomes).

(viii) Agitation.

(ix) Quality of life.

(x) Mortality and morbidity.

(xi) Hospital readmissions.

(xii) Any newly developed or exacerbated health conditions, including mental health conditions.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall commence the implementation of the study required by subsection (a)(1).

(c) **DURATION OF STUDY.**—The study required by subsection (a)(1) shall be carried out for an 18-month period.

(d) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the completion of the study required by subsection (a)(1), 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 study.

(2) **ABILITY TO CONDUCT CLINICAL TRIALS.**—The Secretary shall include in the report required by paragraph (1) an assessment of whether the Secretary is able to meet the criteria necessary to conduct the clinical trials required under section 303, including consideration of subsection (e)(1) of such section.

SEC. 303. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLINICAL TRIALS ON THE EFFECTS OF CANNABIS ON CERTAIN HEALTH OUTCOMES OF VETERANS WITH CHRONIC PAIN AND POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER.

(a) **CLINICAL TRIALS REQUIRED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If the Secretary indicates in the report required by section 302(d) that the Secretary is able to meet the criteria necessary to proceed to clinical trials, commencing not later than 180 days after the submittal of that report, the Secretary shall carry out a series of clinical trials on the effects of cannabis appropriate for investigative use, as determined by the Food and Drug Administration under section 505(i) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355(i)), on the health outcomes of covered veterans diagnosed with chronic pain and covered veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—The clinical trials required by paragraph (1) shall include, as appropriate, an evaluation of key symptoms, clinical outcomes, and conditions associated with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder, which may include—

(A) with respect to covered veterans diagnosed with chronic pain, an evaluation of the effects of the use of cannabis on—

(i) osteopathic pain (including pain intensity and pain-related outcomes);

(ii) the reduction or increase in opioid use or dosage;

(iii) the reduction or increase in benzodiazepine use or dosage;

(iv) the reduction or increase in alcohol use;

(v) the reduction or increase in the prevalence of substance use disorders;

(vi) inflammation;

(vii) sleep quality;

(viii) agitation;

(ix) quality of life;

(x) exacerbated or new mental health conditions; and

(xi) suicidal ideation.

(B) with respect to covered veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, an evaluation of the effects of the use of cannabis on—

(i) the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as established by or derived from the clinician administered PTSD scale, the PTSD checklist, the PTSD symptom scale, the post-traumatic diagnostic scale, and other applicable methods of evaluating symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder;

(ii) the reduction or increase in benzodiazepine use or dosage;

(iii) the reduction or increase in alcohol use;

(iv) the reduction or increase in the prevalence of substance use disorders;

(v) mood;

(vi) anxiety;

(vii) social functioning;

(viii) agitation;

(ix) suicidal ideation; and

(x) sleep quality, including frequency of nightmares and night terrors.

(3) **OPTIONAL ELEMENTS.**—The clinical trials required by paragraph (1) may include, as appropriate, an evaluation of the effects of the use of cannabis to treat chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder on other symptoms, clinical outcomes, and conditions not covered by paragraph (2), which may include—

(A) pulmonary function;

(B) cardiovascular events;

(C) head, neck, and oral cancer;

(D) testicular cancer;

(E) ovarian cancer;

(F) transitional cell cancer;

(G) intestinal inflammation;

(H) motor vehicle accidents; or

(I) spasticity.

(b) **LONG-TERM OBSERVATIONAL STUDY.**—The Secretary may carry out a long-term observational study of the participants in the clinical trials required by subsection (a).

(c) **TYPE OF CANNABIS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out the clinical trials required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall study varying forms of cannabis, including whole plant raw material and extracts, and may study varying routes of administration.

(2) **PLANT CULTIVARS.**—Of the varying forms of cannabis required under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall study plant cultivars with varying ratios of tetrahydrocannabinol to cannabidiol.

(d) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) develop a plan to implement this section and submit such plan to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(2) issue any requests for proposals the Secretary determines appropriate for such implementation.

(e) **TERMINATION OF CLINICAL TRIALS.**—

(1) **CLINICAL GUIDELINE REQUIREMENTS OR EXCESSIVE RISK.**—The Secretary may terminate the clinical trials required by subsection (a) if the Secretary determines that the Department of Veterans Affairs is unable to meet clinical guideline requirements necessary to conduct such trials or the clinical trials would create excessive risk to participants.

(2) **COMPLETION UPON SUBMITTAL OF FINAL REPORT.**—The Secretary may terminate the clinical trials required by subsection (a) upon submittal of the final report required under subsection (f)(2).

(f) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **PERIODIC REPORTS.**—During the five-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of clinical trials required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit periodically, but not less frequently than annually, to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives reports on the implementation of this section.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the completion of the five-year period specified in paragraph (1), 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 final report on the implementation of this section.

SEC. 304. ADMINISTRATION OF STUDY AND CLINICAL TRIALS.

(a) **DEMOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION.**—In carrying out the study required by section 302 and the clinical trials required by section 303, the Secretary shall ensure representation in such study and trials of demographics that represent the population of veterans in the United States, as determined by the most recently available data from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census.

(b) **DATA PRESERVATION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the study required by section 302 and the clinical trials required by section 303 include a mechanism to ensure—

(1) the preservation of all data, including all data sets and survey results, collected or used for purposes of such study and trials in a manner that will facilitate further research; and

(2) registration of such data in the database of privately and publicly funded clinical studies maintained by the National Library of Medicine (or successor database).

(c) **ANONYMOUS DATA.**—The Secretary shall ensure that data relating to any study or clinical trial conducted under this Act is anonymized and cannot be traced back to an individual patient.

(d) **EFFECT ON OTHER BENEFITS.**—The eligibility or entitlement of a covered veteran to any other benefit under the laws administered by the Secretary or any other provision of law shall not be affected by the participation of the covered veteran in the study under section 302, a clinical trial under section 303(a), or a study under section 303(b).

(e) **EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.**—Nothing in this Act shall affect or modify—

(1) the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.);

(2) section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262); or

(3) the authority of the Commissioner of Food and Drugs and the Secretary of Health and Human Services—

(A) under—

(i) the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or

(ii) section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262); or

(B) to promulgate Federal regulations and guidelines pertaining to cannabidiol, marijuana, or other subject matter addressed in this title.

TITLE IV—HOUSING MATTERS

SEC. 401. IMPROVEMENTS TO PROGRAM FOR DIRECT HOUSING LOANS MADE TO NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **GENERAL AUTHORITIES AND REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) DIRECT HOUSING LOANS TO NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS.—Section 3762(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(a) The Secretary may make a direct housing loan to a Native American veteran under this subchapter if the Secretary ensures the following:

“(1) That each Native American veteran to whom the Secretary makes a direct housing loan under this subchapter—

“(A) holds, possesses, or purchases using the proceeds of the loan a meaningful interest in a lot or dwelling (or both) that is located on trust land; and

“(B) will purchase, construct, or improve (as the case may be) a dwelling on the lot using the proceeds of the loan.

“(2) That each such Native American veteran will convey to the Secretary by an appropriate instrument the interest referred to in paragraph (1)(A) as security for a direct housing loan under this subchapter.

“(3) That the Secretary, including the Secretary's employees or agents, may enter upon the trust land for the purposes of carrying out such actions as the Secretary determines are necessary, including—

“(A) to evaluate the advisability of the loan;

“(B) to monitor any purchase, construction, or improvements carried out using the proceeds of the loan; and

“(C) to manage any servicing or post-foreclosure activities, including acquisition, property inspections, and property management.

“(4) That there are established standards and procedures that apply to the foreclosure of the interest conveyed by a Native American veteran pursuant to paragraph (2), including—

“(A) procedures for foreclosing the interest; and

“(B) procedures for the resale of the lot or dwelling (or both) purchased, constructed, or improved using the proceeds of the loan.

“(5) That the loan is made in a responsible and prudent manner, subject to standards and procedures as are necessary for the reasonable protection of the financial interests of the United States.”.

(2) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING, AGREEMENTS, AND DETERMINATIONS.—Section 3762(b) of such title is amended to read as follows:

“(b)(1) To carry out the purpose of subsection (a), the Secretary may—

“(A) enter into a memorandum of understanding with a tribal organization, other entity, or individual;

“(B) rely on agreements or determinations of other Federal agencies to guarantee, insure, or make loans on trust land; and

“(C) enter into other agreements or take such other actions as the Secretary determines necessary.

“(2) If the Secretary determines that the requirements under subsection (a) are not being enforced by a tribal organization, other entity, or individual that is a party to any memorandum of understanding, agreement, or determination described in paragraph (1), the Secretary may cease making new direct housing loans to Native Americans veterans under this subchapter within the area of the authority of the tribal organization, other entity, or individual (as the case may be).”.

(b) DIRECT LOANS TO NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS TO REFINANCE EXISTING MORTGAGE LOANS.—Section 3762(h) of such title is amended to read as follows:

“(h) The Secretary may make direct loans to Native American veterans in order to enable such veterans to refinance existing mortgage loans for any of the following purposes:

“(1) To refinance an existing loan made under this section, if the loan—

“(A) meets the requirements set forth in subparagraphs (B), (C), and (E) of paragraph (1) of section 3710(e) of this title;

“(B) will bear an interest rate at least one percentage point less than the interest rate borne by the loan being refinanced; and

“(C) complies with paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 3710(e) of this title, except that for the purposes of this subsection the reference to subsection (a)(8) of section 3710 of this title in such paragraphs (2) and (3) shall be deemed to be a reference to this subsection.

“(2) To refinance an existing mortgage loan not made under this section on a dwelling owned and occupied by the veteran as the veteran's home, if all of the following requirements are met:

“(A) The loan will be secured by the same dwelling as was the loan being refinanced.

“(B) The loan will provide the veteran with a net tangible benefit.

“(C) The nature and condition of the property is such as to be suitable for dwelling purposes.

“(D) The amount of the loan does not exceed either of the following:

“(i) 100 percent of the reasonable value of the dwelling, with such reasonable value determined under the procedures established by the Secretary under subsection (d)(2).

“(ii) An amount equal to the sum of the balance of the loan being refinanced and such closing costs (including any discount points) as may be authorized by the Secretary to be included in the loan.

“(E) Notwithstanding subparagraph (D), if a loan is made for both the purpose of this paragraph and to make energy efficiency improvements, the loan must not exceed either of the following:

“(i) 100 percent of the reasonable value of the dwelling as improved for energy efficiency, with such reasonable value determined under the procedures established by the Secretary under subsection (d)(2).

“(ii) The amount referred to under subparagraph (D)(ii), plus the applicable amount specified under section 3710(d)(2) of this title.

“(F) The loan meets all other requirements the Secretary may establish under this subchapter.

“(G) The existing mortgage being refinanced is a first lien on the property and secured of record.

“(3) To refinance an existing mortgage loan to repair, alter, or improve a dwelling owned by the veteran and occupied by the veteran as the veteran's home, if all of the following requirements are met:

“(A) The loan will be secured by the same dwelling as was the loan being refinanced.

“(B) The nature and condition of the property is such as to be suitable for dwelling purposes, and the repair, alteration, or improvement substantially protects or improves the basic livability or utility of such property.

“(C) The amount of the loan, including the costs of repairs, alterations, and improvements, does not exceed either of the following:

“(i) 100 percent of the reasonable value of the dwelling as repaired, altered, or improved, with such reasonable value determined under the procedures established by the Secretary under subsection (d)(2).

“(ii) An amount equal to the sum of—

“(I) the balance of the loan being refinanced;

“(II) the actual cost of repairs, alterations, or improvements; and

“(III) such closing costs (including any discount points) as may be authorized by the Secretary to be included in the loan.

“(D) The loan meets all other requirements the Secretary may establish under this subchapter.

“(E) The existing mortgage loan being refinanced is a first lien on the property and secured of record.”.

(c) EXPANSION OF OUTREACH PROGRAM ON AVAILABILITY OF DIRECT HOUSING LOANS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS.—Section 3762(i)(2) of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(G) Pursuant to subsection (g)(4), assisting Native American veterans in qualifying for mortgage financing by—

“(i) partnering with local service providers, such as tribal organizations, tribally designated housing entities, Native community development financial institutions, and nonprofit organizations, for conducting outreach, homebuyer education, housing counseling, and post-purchase education; and

“(ii) providing other technical assistance as needed.

“(H) Attending conferences and conventions conducted by the network of Native community development financial institutions and other Native American homeownership organizations to provide information and training to Native community development financial institutions about the availability of the relending program under section 3762A of this title.”.

(d) ADEQUATE PERSONNEL.—Section 3762 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(k) The Secretary shall assign a sufficient number of personnel of the Department dedicated to carrying out the authority of the Secretary under this subchapter, including construction and valuation specialists to assist with issues unique to new construction and renovations on trust land.”.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3765 of such title is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

“(C) is located in the State of Alaska within a region established under section 7(a) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1606(a));”;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(E) is defined by the Secretary of the Interior and recognized by the United States as land over which an Indian Tribe has governmental dominion; or

“(F) is on any land that the Secretary determines is provided to Native American veterans because of their status as Native Americans.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(6) The term ‘community development financial institution’ has the meaning given that term in section 103 of the Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1994 (12 U.S.C. 4702).

“(7) The term ‘Indian Tribe’ means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

“(8) The term ‘Native community development financial institution’ means any entity—

“(A) that has been certified as a community development financial institution by the Secretary of the Treasury;

“(B) that is not less than 51 percent owned or controlled by Native Americans; and

“(C) for which not less than 51 percent of the activities of the entity serve Native Americans.

“(9) The term ‘net tangible benefit’ shall have such meaning as the Secretary determines appropriate, but shall include the refinancing of an interim construction loan.

“(10) The term ‘other technical assistance’ means services to assist a Native American veteran to navigate the steps necessary for securing a mortgage loan on trust land, including pre-development activities related to utilities, identifying appropriate residential construction services, and obtaining lease clearances and title status reports from the applicable tribal organization or the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

“(11) The term ‘tribally designated housing entity’ has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4103).”

(f) **INTEREST RATE REDUCTION FINANCING LOAN.**—Section 3729(b)(4)(F) of such title is amended by striking “3762(h)” and inserting “3762(h)(1)”.

(g) **REGULATIONS.**—Section 3761 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this subchapter.”

SEC. 402. NATIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTION RELENDING PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter V of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 3762 the following new section:

“§ 3762A. Native community development financial institution relending program

“(a) **PURPOSE.**—The Secretary may make a loan to a Native community development financial institution for the purpose of allowing the institution to relend loan amounts to qualified Native American veterans, subject to the requirements of this section.

“(b) **STANDARDS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall establish standards to be used in evaluating whether to make a loan to a Native community development financial institution under this section.

“(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In establishing standards under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall ensure that a Native community development financial institution—

“(A) is able to originate and service loans for single-family homes;

“(B) is able to operate the relending program in a manner consistent with the mission of the Department to serve veterans; and

“(C) uses loan amounts received under this section only for the purpose of relending, as described in subsection (c), to Native American veterans.

“(c) **RELENDING REQUIREMENTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A Native community development financial institution that receives a loan under this section shall use the loan amounts to make loans to Native American veterans residing on trust land.

“(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—A loan to a Native American veteran made by a Native community development financial institution under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) be limited either to the purpose of purchase, construction, or improvement of a dwelling located on trust land or to the refinancing of an existing mortgage loan for a dwelling on trust land, consistent with the requirements of section 3762(h) of this title; and

“(B) comply with such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines are nec-

essary to protect against predatory lending, including the interest rate charged on a loan to a Native American veteran.

“(d) **REPAYMENT.**—A loan made to a Native community development financial institution under this section shall—

“(1) be payable to the Secretary upon such terms and conditions as are prescribed in regulations pursuant to this subchapter; and

“(2) bear interest at a rate of one percent.

“(e) **OVERSIGHT.**—Subject to notice and opportunity for a hearing, whenever the Secretary finds with respect to loans made under subsections (a) or (c) that any Native community development financial institution has failed to maintain adequate loan accounting records, to demonstrate proper ability to service loans adequately, or to exercise proper credit judgment, or that such Native community development financial institution has willfully or negligently engaged in practices otherwise detrimental to the interest of veterans or of the Government, the Secretary may take such actions as the Secretary determines necessary to protect veterans or the Government, such as requiring immediate repayment of any loans made under subsection (a) and the assignment to the Secretary of loans made under subsection (c).”

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 37 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3762 the following new item:

“3762A. Native community development financial institution relending program.”

(c) **NATIVE AMERICAN VETERAN HOUSING LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT.**—Section 3763 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) Of amounts available in the Account, the Secretary may use for loans made under section 3762A of this title—

“(1) in fiscal year 2024, not more than \$5,000,000; and

“(2) in any fiscal year after fiscal year 2024, an amount as determined necessary by the Secretary to meet the demand for such loans.”

SEC. 403. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HOUSING LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, as most recently amended by section 204 of the Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2022 (division U of Public Law 117-328), is further amended by striking “November 14, 2031” each place it appears and inserting “March 14, 2032”.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 501. AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO AWARD GRANTS TO STATES TO IMPROVE OUTREACH TO VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 63 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 6307 and 6308 and sections 6308 and 6309, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 6306 the following new section 6307:

“§ 6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans

“(a) **PURPOSE.**—It is the purpose of this section to provide for assistance by the Secretary to States to carry out programs that improve outreach and assistance to veterans and the spouses, children, and parents of veterans, to ensure that such individuals are fully informed about, and assisted in applying for, any veterans and veterans-related benefits and programs (including State veterans programs) for which they may be eligible.

“(b) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary may award grants to States—

“(1) to carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance—

“(A) outreach activities; or

“(B) activities to assist in the development and submittal of claims for veterans and veterans-related benefits; or

“(2) to increase the number of county or tribal veterans service officers serving in the State by hiring new, additional such officers.

“(c) **APPLICATION.**—(1) To be eligible for a grant under this section, a State shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) A detailed plan for the use of the grant.

“(B) A description of the programs through which the State will meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i).

“(C) A description of how the State will distribute grant amounts equitably among counties with varying levels of urbanization.

“(D) A plan for how the grant will be used to meet the unique needs of American Indian veterans, Alaska Native veterans, or Native Hawaiian veterans, elderly veterans, and veterans from other underserved communities.

“(d) **DISTRIBUTION.**—The Secretary shall seek to ensure that grants awarded under this section are equitably distributed among States with varying levels of urbanization.

“(e) **PRIORITY.**—The Secretary shall prioritize awarding grants under this section that will serve the following areas:

“(1) Areas with a critical shortage of county or tribal veterans service officers.

“(2) Areas with high rates of—

“(A) suicide among veterans; or

“(B) referrals to the Veterans Crisis Line.

“(f) **USE OF COUNTY OR TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS.**—A State that receives a grant under this section to carry out an activity described in subsection (b)(1) shall carry out the activity through—

“(1) a county or tribal veterans service officer of the State; or

“(2) if the State does not have a county or tribal veterans service officer, or if the county or tribal veterans service officers of the State cover only a portion of that State, an appropriate entity of a State, local, or tribal government, or another publicly funded entity, as determined by the Secretary.

“(g) **REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.**—Any grant awarded under this section shall be used—

“(1) to expand existing programs, activities, and services;

“(2) to hire new, additional county or tribal veterans service officers; or

“(3) for travel and transportation to facilitate carrying out paragraph (1) or (2).

“(h) **AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.**—A grant under this section may be used to provide education and training, including on-the-job training, for State, county, local, and tribal government employees who provide (or when trained will provide) veterans outreach services in order for those employees to obtain accreditation in accordance with procedures approved by the Secretary.

“(i) **OUTCOME MEASURES.**—(1) The Secretary shall develop and provide to each State that receives a grant under this section written guidance on the following:

“(A) Outcome measures.

“(B) Policies of the Department.

“(2) In developing outcome measures under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the following goals:

“(A) Increasing the use of veterans and veterans-related benefits, particularly among vulnerable populations.

“(B) Increasing the number of county and tribal veterans service officers recognized by

the Secretary for the representation of veterans under chapter 59 of this title.

“(j) TRACKING REQUIREMENTS.—(1) With respect to each grant awarded under this section, the Secretary shall track the use of veterans and veterans-related benefits among the population served by the grant, including the average period of time between the date on which a veteran applies for such a benefit and the date on which the veteran receives the benefit, disaggregated by type of benefit.

“(2) Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the information tracked under paragraph (1).

“(k) PERFORMANCE REVIEW.—(1) The Secretary shall—

“(A) review the performance of each State that receives a grant under this section; and

“(B) make information regarding such performance publicly available.

“(l) REMEDIATION PLAN.—(1) In the case of a State that receives a grant under this section and does not meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i), the Secretary shall require the State to submit a remediation plan under which the State shall describe how and when it plans to meet such outcome measures.

“(2) The Secretary may not award a subsequent grant under this section to a State described in paragraph (1) unless the Secretary approves the remediation plan submitted by the State.

“(m) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘county or tribal veterans service officer’ includes a local equivalent veterans service officer.

“(2) The term ‘Veterans Crisis Line’ means the toll-free hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of this title.

“(n) FUNDING REQUEST.—In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the Department budget for any fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested to be appropriated for that fiscal year to carry out this section.

“(o) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025, \$50,000,000 to carry out this section.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 of such title is amended by striking the items relating to sections 6307 and 6308 and inserting the following new items:

“6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans.

“6308. Outreach for eligible dependents.

“6309. Biennial report to Congress.”

SEC. 502. OVERSIGHT OF COST OF WAR TOXIC EXPOSURES FUND.

(a) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later July 1, 2023, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a plan for obligating and expending amounts in the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund established by section 324(a) of title 38, United States Code.

(b) CONTENTS.—The plan submitted pursuant to subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A detailed explanation for how the Secretary interprets “the delivery of veterans’ health care associated with exposure to environmental hazards” for purposes of section 324(c)(1) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) A list of the medical services most commonly sought from the Department in connection with exposure to environmental haz-

ards in the active military, naval, air, or space service.

(3) A list of the medical conditions for which services described in paragraph (2) of this subsection are most commonly sought from the Department.

(4) A detailed explanation of how the Secretary interprets “expenses incident to the delivery of veterans’ health care and benefits associated with exposure to environmental hazards” for purposes of paragraph (2) of such section.

(5) A list of the expenses described in paragraph (4) of this subsection.

(6) A detailed description of how the Secretary interprets “medical and other research relating to exposure to environmental hazards” for purposes of paragraph (3) of such section.

(7) A list of the research described by such paragraph.

(8) A detailed plan for tracking the following:

(A) The health care furnished to individuals who became eligible for or entitled to such health care because of a provision of or amendment made by the Honoring our PACT Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-168; 136 Stat. 1759).

(B) Reliance by toxic-exposed veterans on health care provided to such veterans pursuant to the Honoring our PACT Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-168; 136 Stat. 1759).

(C) The costs incurred by the Department for the furnishing of health care to toxic-exposed veterans for conditions that can be reasonably attributed to toxic exposure.

(c) MONTHLY REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two weeks after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once every month thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report detailing the obligations and expenditures by the Secretary with respect to the amounts in the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund, disaggregated by obligations and expenditures of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Administration, including with respect to information technology, general administration, operating expenses, and research.

(2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, the Committee on the Budget, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, the Committee on the Budget, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(d) ANNUAL AUDITS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall conduct an audit of the obligation and expenditure of amounts in the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund.

(e) COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives an interim report and a final report on the degree to which the Secretary follows and executes the plan submitted pursuant to subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the methodology the Secretary uses to create an annual budget for the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund for inclusion in each budget of the President submitted to Congress for a fiscal year pur-

suant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code.

(B) Identification of such adverse consequences to programs of the Department as the Comptroller General may find is created by the implementation of such Fund.

(C) An assessment of the long-term viability of the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund, including budgetary implications on future authorizing and appropriations legislation.

(D) Recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as may resolve or mitigate the adverse consequences identified pursuant to subparagraph (B) or any long-term viability issues that may be identified pursuant to the assessment required by subparagraph (C).

(f) DEFINITIONS OF TOXIC EXPOSURE AND TOXIC-EXPOSED VETERAN.—In this section, the terms “toxic exposure” and “toxic-exposed veteran” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I have 13 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 9:45 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 10 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 3:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.