

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 117-

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OFFERED BY MR. GONZALEZ OF OHIO

At the end of subtitle F of title V, insert the following new section:

1 SEC. 5___. PILOT PROGRAM ON ACTIVITIES UNDER THE
2 TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR A
3 REDUCTION IN SUICIDE AMONG VETERANS.

4 (a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of
5 Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly
6 carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and ad-
7 visability of providing the module described in subsection
8 (b) and the services described in subsection (c) as part
9 of the Transition Assistance Program for members of the
10 Armed Forces participating in the Transition Assistance
11 Program as a means of reducing the incidence of suicide
12 among veterans.

13 (b) MODULE.—The module described in this sub-
14 section is a three-hour module under the Transition As-
15 sistance Program for each member of the Armed Forces
16 participating in the pilot program that includes the fol-
17 lowing:

1 (1) An in-person meeting between the cohort of
2 the member and a social worker or mental health
3 provider in which the social worker or mental health
4 provider—

5 (A) counsels the cohort on specific poten-
6 tial risks confronting members after discharge
7 or release from the Armed Forces, including
8 loss of community or a support system, isola-
9 tion from family, friends, or society, identity
10 crisis in the transition from military to civilian
11 life, vulnerability viewed as a weakness, need
12 for empathy, self-medication and addiction, im-
13 portance of sleep and exercise, homelessness,
14 and reasons why veterans attempt and complete
15 suicide;

16 (B) in coordination with the Department
17 of Defense InTransition program, counsels
18 members of the cohort who have been diagnosed
19 with physical, psychological, or neurological
20 issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder,
21 traumatic brain injury, adverse childhood expe-
22 riences, depression, and bipolar disorder, on—

23 (i) the potential risks for such mem-
24 bers from such issues after discharge or
25 release; and

1 (ii) the resources and treatment op-
2 tions afforded to members for such issues
3 through the Department of Veterans Af-
4 fairs, the Department of Defense, and non-
5 profit organizations;

6 (C) counsels the cohort about the resources
7 afforded to victims of military sexual trauma
8 through the Department of Veterans Affairs;
9 and

10 (D) counsels the cohort about the manner
11 in which members might experience grief during
12 the transition from military to civilian life, and
13 the resources afforded to them for grieving
14 through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

15 (2) In coordination with the Department of
16 Veterans Affairs' Solid Start program, the provision
17 to each cohort member of contact information for a
18 counseling or other appropriate facility of the De-
19 partment of Veterans Affairs in the locality in which
20 such member intends to reside after discharge or re-
21 lease.

22 (3) The submittal by cohort members to the
23 Department of Veterans Affairs (including both the
24 Veterans Health Administration and the Veterans
25 Benefits Administration) of their medical records in

1 connection with service in the Armed Forces, wheth-
2 er or not such members intend to file a claim with
3 the Department for benefits with respect to any
4 service-connected disability.

5 (c) SERVICES.—The services described in this sub-
6 section in connection with the Transition Assistance Pro-
7 gram for each member of the Armed Forces participating
8 in the pilot program are the following:

9 (1) Not later than 90 days after the discharge
10 or release of the member from the Armed Forces, a
11 contact of the member by a social worker or behav-
12 ioral health coordinator from the Department of
13 Veterans Affairs to schedule a follow-up appoint-
14 ment with a social worker or behavioral health pro-
15 vider at the facility applicable to the member under
16 subsection (b)(2) to occur not later than 90 days
17 after such contact.

18 (2) During the appointment scheduled pursuant
19 to paragraph (1)—

20 (A) an assessment of the member to deter-
21 mine the experiences of the member with events
22 during service in the Armed Forces that could
23 lead, whether individually or cumulatively, to
24 physical, psychological, or neurological issues,

1 including issues described in subsection
2 (b)(1)(B); and

3 (B) the development of a medical treat-
4 ment plan for the member, including treatment
5 for issues identified pursuant to the assessment
6 under subparagraph (A).

7 (d) LOCATIONS.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—The pilot program shall be
9 carried out at not fewer than 10 Transition Assist-
10 ance Centers of the Department of Defense that
11 serve not fewer than 300 members of the Armed
12 Forces annually that are jointly selected by the Sec-
13 retary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Af-
14 fairs for purposes of the pilot program.

15 (2) MEMBERS SERVED.—The centers selected
16 under paragraph (1) shall, to the extent practicable,
17 be centers that, whether individually or in aggregate,
18 serve all the Armed Forces and both the regular and
19 reserve components of the Armed Forces.

20 (e) SELECTION AND COMMENCEMENT.—The Sec-
21 retary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
22 shall jointly select the locations of the pilot program under
23 subsection (d)(1) and commence carrying out activities
24 under the pilot program by not later than 120 days after
25 the date of the enactment of this Act.

1 (f) DURATION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The duration of the pilot
3 program shall be five years.

4 (2) CONTINUATION.—If the Secretary of De-
5 fense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs rec-
6 ommend in the report under subsection (g) that the
7 pilot program be extended beyond the date otherwise
8 provided by paragraph (1), the Secretaries may
9 jointly continue the pilot program for such period
10 beyond such date as the Secretaries jointly consider
11 appropriate.

12 (g) REPORTS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
14 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and
15 every 180 days thereafter during the duration of the
16 pilot program, the Secretary of Defense and the Sec-
17 retary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly submit to
18 Congress a report on the activities under the pilot
19 program.

20 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by para-
21 graph (1) shall include the following:

22 (A) A description of the members of the
23 Armed Forces who participated in the pilot pro-
24 gram during the 180-day period ending on the

1 date of such report, broken out by the fol-
2 lowing:

3 (i) Sex.

4 (ii) Branch of the Armed Forces in
5 which served.

6 (iii) Diagnosis of, or other symptoms
7 consistent with, military sexual trauma,
8 post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic
9 brain injury, depression, or bipolar dis-
10 order in connection with service in the
11 Armed Forces.

12 (B) A description of the activities under
13 the pilot program during such period.

14 (C) An assessment of the benefits of the
15 activities under the pilot program during such
16 period to veterans and family members of vet-
17 erans.

18 (D) An assessment whether the activities
19 under the pilot program as of the date of such
20 report have reduced the incidence of suicide
21 among members who participated in the pilot
22 program within one year of discharge or release
23 from the Armed Forces.

24 (E) Such recommendations as the Sec-
25 retary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans

1 Affairs jointly consider appropriate regarding
2 expansion of the pilot program, extension of the
3 pilot program, or both.

4 (h) **TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DEFINED.**—

5 In this section, the term “Transition Assistance Program”
6 means the program of assistance and other transitional
7 services carried out pursuant to section 1144 of title 10,
8 United States Code.

