AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 118–10

OFFERED BY MR. NUNN OF IOWA

At the end of subtitle C of title XVIII, insert the following:

SEC. 18__. PILOT PROGRAM ON ACTIVITIES UNDER THE
PRE-SEPARATION TRANSITION PROCESS OF
MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES FOR A REDUCTION IN SUICIDE AMONG VETERANS.

(a) Pilot Program Required.—The Secretary of
Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly
carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and ad-
visability of providing the module described in subsection
(b) and services under subsection (c) as part of the pre-
separation transition process for members of the Armed
Forces as a means of reducing the incidence of suicide
among veterans.

(b) Module.—

(1) In General.—The module described in this
subsection shall include the following:

(A) An in-person meeting between a cohort
of members of the Armed Forces participating
in the pilot program and a social worker or nurse in which the social worker or nurse—

(i) educates the cohort on resources for and specific potential risks confronting such members after discharge or release from the Armed Forces, including—

(I) loss of community or a support system;

(II) isolation from family, friends, or society;

(III) identity crisis in the transition from military to civilian life;

(IV) vulnerability viewed as a weakness;

(V) need for empathy;

(VI) self-medication and addiction;

(VII) importance of sleep and exercise;

(VIII) homelessness; and

(IX) risk factors contributing to attempts of suicide and deaths by suicide;

(ii) educates the cohort on—
(I) the signs and symptoms of suicide risk and physical, psychological, or neurological issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, chronic pain, sleep disorders, substance use disorders, adverse childhood experiences, depression, bipolar disorder, and socio-ecological concerns, such as homelessness, unemployment, and relationship strain;

(II) the potential risks for members of the Armed Forces from such issues after discharge or release from the Armed Forces; and

(III) the resources and treatment options available to such members for such issues through the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and non-profit organizations;

(iii) educates the cohort about the resources available to victims of military sexual trauma through the Department of Veterans Affairs; and
(iv) educates the cohort about the manner in which members might experience challenges during the transition from military to civilian life, and the resources available to them through the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and other organizations.

(B) The provision to each member of the cohort of contact information for a counseling or other appropriate facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs in the locality in which such member intends to reside after discharge or release.

(C) The submittal by each member of the cohort to the Department of Veterans Affairs (including both the Veterans Health Administration and the Veterans Benefits Administration) of their medical records in connection with service in the Armed Forces, whether or not such members intend to file a claim with the Department for benefits with respect to any service-connected disability.

(2) COMPOSITION OF COHORT.—Each cohort participating in the module described in this sub-
section shall be comprised of not fewer than 50 individuals.

(c) SERVICES.—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide to each individual participating in the pilot program the following services:

(1) During the transition process and prior to discharge or release from the Armed Forces, a one-on-one meeting with a social worker or nurse of the Department of Veterans Affairs who will—

(A) conduct an assessment of the individual regarding eligibility to receive health care or counseling services from the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(B) for those eligible, or likely to be eligible, to receive health care or counseling services from the Department of Veterans Affairs—

(i) identify and provide contact information for an appropriate facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs in the locality in which such individual intends to reside after discharge or release;

(ii) facilitate registration or enrollment in the system of patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs
under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, if applicable;

(iii) educate the individual about care, benefits, and services available to the individual through the Veterans Health Administration; and

(iv) coordinate health care based on the health care needs of the individual, if applicable, to include establishing an initial appointment, at the election of the individual, to occur not later than 90 days after the date of discharge or release of the member from the Armed Forces.

(2) For each individual determined ineligible for care and services from the Department of Veterans Affairs during the transition process, the Secretary of Defense shall conduct an assessment of the individual to determine the needs of the individual and appropriate follow-up, which shall be identified and documented in the appropriate records of the Department of Defense.

(3) During the appointment scheduled pursuant to paragraph (1)(B)(iv), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct an assessment of the individual to determine the needs of the individual and appro-
appropriate follow-up, which shall be identified and documented in the appropriate records of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) MODULE AND MEETING.—The module under subsection (b) and the one-on-one meeting under subsection (c)(1) shall be carried out at not fewer than 10 locations of the Department of Defense that serve not fewer than 300 members of the Armed Forces annually that are jointly selected by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for purposes of the pilot program.

(2) ASSESSMENT AND APPOINTMENT.—The assessment under subsection (c)(2) and the appointment under subsection (c)(3) may occur at any location determined appropriate by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, as the case may be.

(3) MEMBERS SERVED.—The locations selected under paragraph (1) shall, to the extent practicable, be locations that, whether individually or in aggregate, serve all the Armed Forces and both the regular and reserve components of the Armed Forces.

c) SELECTION AND COMMENCEMENT.—The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
shall jointly select the locations of the pilot program under subsection (d)(1) and commence carrying out activities under the pilot program by not later than September 30, 2024.

(f) DURATION.—The duration of the pilot program shall be five years.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the commencement of the pilot program, and annually thereafter during the duration of the pilot program, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the activities under the pilot program.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The demographic information of the members and former members of the Armed Forces who participated in the pilot program during the one-year period ending on the date of such report.

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

(C) An assessment of the benefits of the activities under the pilot program during such
period to members and former members of the Armed Forces.

(D) An assessment of whether the activities under the pilot program as of the date of such report have met the targeted outcomes of the pilot program among members and former members who participated in the pilot program within one year of discharge or release from the Armed Forces.

(E) Such recommendations as the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs jointly consider appropriate regarding the feasibility and advisability of expansion of the pilot program, extension of the pilot program, or both.

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

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.