

AMENDMENT TO
RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 117-33
OFFERED BY MS. PLASKETT OF VIRGIN ISLANDS

At the end of title V, add the following:

1 **SEC. 506. STUDY ON VETERANS IN TERRITORIES OF THE**
2 **UNITED STATES.**

3 (a) GAO STUDY.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of
5 the United States shall conduct a study on the state
6 of access and barriers to benefits and services fur-
7 nished under laws administered by the Secretary of
8 Veterans Affairs to veterans in Territories of the
9 United States, including deficits in the availability
10 and accessibility of such benefits and services com-
11 pared to veterans elsewhere in the United States.

12 (2) ELEMENTS.—The study under paragraph
13 (1) shall include—

14 (A) the number of veterans in each Terri-
15 tory of the United States;

16 (B) the number of veterans in each Terri-
17 tory who are enrolled in the system of annual
18 patient enrollment of the Department of Vet-

1 erans Affairs under section 1705(a) of title 38,
2 United States Code;

3 (C) the number of veterans in each Terri-
4 tory who are eligible for services under section
5 1710 of such title but who are not enrolled as
6 described in subparagraph (B);

7 (D) a detailed description of obstacles fac-
8 ing veterans in each Territory in accessing
9 health care services, including those involving
10 the availability of such services to veterans in
11 the Territory in which the veterans reside, and
12 the distance required of veterans to journey to
13 receive services at a regional medical center of
14 the Veterans Health Administration, a commu-
15 nity-based outpatient clinic, or other full-service
16 medical facility of the Department, or death
17 center, respectively;

18 (E) a detailed description of obstacles fac-
19 ing veterans in each Territory in accessing re-
20 adjustment counseling services, including those
21 involving the availability of such services to vet-
22 erans in the Territory in which the veterans re-
23 side, and the distance required of veterans to
24 journey to receive services at a readjustment
25 counseling services center of the Department;

1 (F) a detailed description of obstacles fac-
2 ing veterans in each Territory in accessing
3 other veterans benefits, including those involv-
4 ing the availability of benefits and services to
5 veterans in the Territory in which the veterans
6 reside, and the distance required of the veterans
7 to journey to the nearest office of the Veterans
8 Benefits Administration;

9 (G) an analysis of the staffing and record-
10 keeping levels and quality of the offices of the
11 Department charged with serving veterans in
12 the Territories, including the availability of the
13 full- and part-time staff of each office to the
14 veterans they are charged with serving, and the
15 continuity of care provided by such staff to
16 such veterans;

17 (H) an analysis of the availability of the
18 Veterans Community Care Program established
19 under section 1703 of title 38, United States
20 Code, to veterans in each Territory;

21 (I) an analysis of the economic and health
22 consequences for veterans in each Territory re-
23 sulting from obstacles to accessing adequate as-
24 sistance and health care at facilities of the De-
25 partment;

1 (J) an analysis of the access to assistance
2 and health care provided to veterans in the
3 aftermath of major disasters declared in each of
4 the Territories since September 4, 2017; and

5 (K) recommendations for improving access
6 of veterans in the Territories to benefits and
7 services furnished by the Secretary, and reduc-
8 ing barriers and deficits in the availability and
9 accessibility of such benefits and services com-
10 pared to veterans elsewhere in the United
11 States.

12 (b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date
13 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of
14 the United States shall submit to Congress a final report
15 setting forth the results of the study conducted under sub-
16 section (a), including the recommendations developed
17 under paragraph (2)(K) of such subsection.

18 (c) TERRITORY DEFINED.—In this section, the term
19 “Territory” includes American Samoa, the Commonwealth
20 of the Northern Marianas Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico,
21 and the Virgin Islands.

