

Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H.R. 2724, with an Amendment

(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a new text)

117TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 2724

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for peer support specialists for claimants who are survivors of military sexual trauma, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 2021

Mr. DELGADO (for himself and Ms. MACE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for peer support specialists for claimants who are survivors of military sexual trauma, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PROCESSING OF**
2 **CLAIMS BY VETERANS FOR COMPENSATION**
3 **FOR CERTAIN MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS**
4 **BASED ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1166 of title 38, United
6 States Code, is amended—

7 (1) by striking “or air service” both places it
8 appears and inserting “air, or space service”;

9 (2) in subsection (a)—

10 (A) in the heading, by striking “IN GEN-
11 ERAL” and inserting “PROCESSING”;

12 (B) by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-
13 retary”; and

14 (C) by adding at the end the following new
15 paragraphs:

16 “(2) A peer support specialist of the Department—

17 “(A) shall not be responsible for providing any
18 assistance to a veteran regarding a claim described
19 in paragraph (1), other than counseling services,
20 guidance, and support, pursuant to duties deter-
21 mined by the Under Secretary for Health; and

22 “(B) shall not participate in the adjudication of
23 such a claim.”;

24 (3) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as
25 subsections (c) and (d), respectively;

1 (4) by inserting, after subsection (a), the fol-
2 lowing new subsection (b):

3 “(b) REFERRALS TO MST COORDINATORS.—The
4 Secretary shall include, in forms for claims described in
5 subsection (a), an option for a veteran to elect to be re-
6 ferred to a military sexual trauma coordinator of the Vet-
7 erans Health Administration at the facility of the Depart-
8 ment nearest to the residence of such veteran.”; and

9 (5) in subsection (c), as redesignated—

10 (A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-
11 retary”; and

12 (B) by adding at the end the following new
13 paragraphs:

14 “(2) The Secretary shall ensure that peer support
15 specialists of the Department receive annual training on
16 how to provide peer support regarding military sexual
17 trauma.

18 “(3) The Secretary shall provide annual training, re-
19 garding the processing of claims described in subsection
20 (a), to the following individuals:

21 “(A) Military sexual trauma coordinators of the
22 Veterans Health Administration.

23 “(B) Peer support specialists of the Depart-
24 ment.”;

25 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

1 (1) SECTION HEADING.—The heading of such
2 section is amended by striking “**Specialized**
3 **teams to evaluate claims**” and inserting
4 “**Claims**”.

5 (2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections
6 at the beginning of chapter 11 of such title is
7 amended by striking the item relating to section
8 1166 and inserting the following:

“1166. Claims involving military sexual trauma.”.