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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study on the
Veterans Crisis Line.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BANKS of Indiana introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a
study on the Veterans Crisis Line.

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

3 **SECTION 1. STUDY ON EFFICACY OF VETERANS CRISIS**
4 **LINE.**

5 (a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall
6 conduct a study on the outcomes and the efficacy of the
7 Veterans Crisis Line during the five-year period beginning
8 January 1, 2014, based on an analysis of national suicide
9 data and data collected from the Veterans Crisis Line.

1 (b) MATTERS INCLUDED.—The study under sub-
2 section (a) shall address the following:

3 (1) The efficacy of the Veterans Crisis Line in
4 leading veterans to sustained mental health regi-
5 mens, by determining—

6 (A) the number of veterans who, after con-
7 tacting the Veterans Crisis Line and being re-
8 ferred to a suicide prevention specialist, begin
9 and continue mental health care furnished by
10 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

11 (B) the number of veterans who, after con-
12 tacting the Veterans Crisis Line and being re-
13 ferred to a suicide prevention specialist, ei-
14 ther—

15 (i) begin mental health care furnished
16 by the Secretary but do not continue such
17 care; or

18 (ii) do not begin such care.

19 (2) The visibility of the Veterans Crisis Line,
20 by determining—

21 (A) the number of veterans who contact
22 the Veterans Crisis Line and have not pre-
23 viously received hospital care or medical serv-
24 ices furnished by the Secretary; and

1 (B) the number of veterans who contact
2 the Veterans Crisis Line and have previously
3 received hospital care or medical services fur-
4 nished by the Secretary.

5 (3) The role of the Veterans Crisis Line as part
6 of the mental health care services of the Depart-
7 ment, by determining, of the veterans who are en-
8 rolled in the health care system established under
9 section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, who
10 contact the Veterans Crisis Line, the number who
11 are under the care of a mental health care provider
12 of the Department at the time of such contact.

13 (4) Whether receiving sustained mental health
14 care affects suicidality and whether veterans pre-
15 viously receiving mental health care furnished by the
16 Secretary use the Veterans Crisis Line in times of
17 crisis, with respect to the veterans described in para-
18 graph (3), by determining the time frame between
19 receiving such care and the time of such contact.

20 (5) The effectiveness of the Veterans Crisis
21 Line in assisting veterans at risk for suicide when
22 the Veterans Crisis Line is contacted by a non-vet-
23 eran, by determining, of the number of non-veterans
24 who contact the Veterans Crisis Line looking for
25 support in assisting a veteran, how many of such in-

1 individuals receive support in having a veteran begin
2 to receive mental health care furnished by the Sec-
3 retary.

4 (6) The overall efficacy of the Veterans Crisis
5 Line in preventing suicides and whether the number
6 of contacts affects the efficacy, by determining—

7 (A) the number of veterans who contact
8 the Veterans Crisis Line who ultimately commit
9 or attempt suicide; and

10 (B) of such veterans, how many times did
11 a veteran contact the Veterans Crisis Line prior
12 to committing or attempting suicide.

13 (7) The long-term efficacy of the Veterans Cri-
14 sis Line in preventing repeated suicide attempts and
15 whether the efficacy is temporary, by determining, of
16 the number of veterans who contacted the Veterans
17 Crisis Line and did not commit or attempt suicide
18 during the following six-month period, the number
19 who contacted the Veterans Crisis Line in crisis at
20 a later time and thereafter did commit or attempt
21 suicide.

22 (8) Whether referral to mental health care af-
23 fects the risk of suicide, by determining—

24 (A) the number of veterans who contact
25 the Veterans Crisis Line who are not referred

1 to, or do not continue receiving, mental health
2 care who commit suicide; and

3 (B) the number of veterans described in
4 paragraph (1)(A) who commit or attempt sui-
5 cide.

6 (9) The efficacy of the Veterans Crisis Line to
7 promote continued mental health care in those vet-
8 erans who are at high risk for suicide whose suicide
9 was prevented, by determining, of the number of vet-
10 erans who contacted the Veterans Crisis Line and
11 did not commit or attempt suicide soon thereafter,
12 the number that begin and continue to receive men-
13 tal health care furnished by the Secretary.

14 (c) SUBMISSION.—Not later than March 1, 2020, the
15 Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Af-
16 fairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate the
17 study under subsection (a).

18 (d) VETERANS CRISIS LINE DEFINED.—In this sec-
19 tion, the term “Veterans Crisis Line” means the toll-free
20 hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of
21 title 38, United States Code.