

**House Committee on Veterans' Affairs**  
**119<sup>th</sup> Congress Member Day Hearing**  
**December 4, 2025**  
**Testimony of Rep. Lauren Underwood**

Thank you, Chairman Bost and Ranking Member Takano, for the opportunity to testify about urgently needed legislation to support the health and wellbeing of our nation's veterans.

While I currently sit on the House Appropriations Committee, I previously had the honor of serving on the House Veterans Affairs Committee during the 116th and 117th Congresses. Serving veterans is one of the greatest privileges we have as Members of Congress, and I am honored to serve our veterans both on and off this committee.

That's why I am so excited about the momentum behind my bipartisan, bicameral Lactation Spaces for Veteran Moms Act, which I'm proud to lead in the House, in partnership with Senators Rosen and Murkowski. As a nurse, I know the health benefits of breastfeeding for moms and babies. My bill ensures that every VA medical center contains a clean, private space specifically designated for nursing for veterans and their families. Just a few weeks ago, the Senate passed this bill by unanimous consent! I look forward to working with this committee to bring it to the House floor as soon as possible.

I am also honored to testify again today on one of the first bills I introduced in Congress with my friend Senator Duckworth: the Copay Fairness for Veterans Act. Earlier this year, the bill passed out of the subcommittee, and I look forward to working with you to advance it through full committee consideration.

At a time when research shows that veterans face worse health outcomes than the general public and have a higher burden of chronic diseases,<sup>1</sup> no veteran should go without ready access to preventive health care services that can improve their health and quality of life. For nearly fifteen years, civilians have accessed preventive services without copays thanks to the ACA — but veterans receiving care through VA still do

not have that guarantee. That means they may be charged for mammograms, cancer screenings, diabetes care, and screenings for depression and anxiety. That's not fair to the folks who have served our country. My bill will fix this injustice and fulfill our promise to our veterans.

Finally, I am excited to share that I am preparing to reintroduce the Maternal Health for Veterans Act, which was reported out of the Health Subcommittee last Congress. The United States is in a worsening maternal health crisis — and veteran moms are dying. My bipartisan bill authorizes \$15 million per year for VA's maternity care programs and requires annual public reporting and recommendations on maternal health from VA. I am eager to work with you to advance this bill as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to collaborate on these important pieces of legislation to better serve our veterans. I yield back.