

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1580

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for certain improvements in the way in which health-care resources are allocated by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 13, 1997

Mr. GILMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for certain improvements in the way in which health-care resources are allocated by the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. CRITERIA FOR REQUIRED COPAYMENT FOR**
4 **MEDICAL CARE PROVIDED BY THE DEPART-**
5 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) EXCEPTION BASED ON PRIOR CATASTROPHIC
7 HEALTH CARE EXPENSES.—Subsection (a) of section
8 1722 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

1 (1) by striking out “or” at the end of para-
2 graph (2);

3 (2) by striking out the period at the end of
4 paragraph (3) and inserting in lieu thereof “; or”;
5 and

6 (3) by adding at the end the following new
7 paragraph:

8 “(4) the veteran’s expenses for medical care (as
9 defined in section 213 of the Internal Revenue Code
10 of 1986) for the previous year are in excess of 7½
11 percent of the veteran’s adjusted gross income for
12 the previous year (as determined for purposes of the
13 personal income tax under the Internal Revenue
14 Code of 1986).”.

15 (b) ADJUSTMENT IN INCOME THRESHOLDS FOR
16 VETERANS RESIDING IN SMSAS.—Subsection (b) of such
17 section is amended by adding at the end the following new
18 paragraph:

19 “(3) The amounts in effect for purposes of this sub-
20 section for any calendar year shall be increased by 20 per-
21 cent for any veteran who resides in a Standard Metropoli-
22 tan Statistical Area (SMSA), as defined by the Bureau
23 of the Census.”.

24 (c) AMENDMENTS WITHIN EXISTING RESOURCES.—
25 The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out the

1 amendments made by this section for fiscal years 1998
2 and 1999 within the amount of funds otherwise available
3 (or programmed to be available) for medical care for the
4 Department of Veterans Affairs for those fiscal years.

5 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
6 this section shall take effect on January 1, 1998.

7 **SEC. 2. SERVICES FOR MENTALLY ILL VETERANS.**

8 (a) MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE ON CARE OF SE-
9 VERELY CHRONICALLY MENTALLY ILL VETERANS.—Sec-
10 tion 7321 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

11 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “and mem-
12 bers of the general public with expertise in the care
13 of the chronically mentally ill” in the second sen-
14 tence after “chronically mentally ill”; and

15 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
16 section:

17 “(e) The Secretary shall determine the terms of serv-
18 ice and (for members appointed from the general public)
19 the pay and allowances of the members of the committee,
20 except that a term of service may not exceed five years.
21 The Secretary may reappoint any member for additional
22 terms of service.”.

23 (b) CENTERS FOR MENTAL ILLNESS RESEARCH,
24 EDUCATION, AND CLINICAL ACTIVITIES.—Paragraph (3)

1 of section 7320(b) of such title is amended to read as fol-
2 lows:

3 “(3) The Secretary shall designate at least one center
4 under this section in each service network region of the
5 Veterans Health Administration.”.

6 **SEC. 3. ALLOCATION OF MEDICAL CARE RESOURCES FOR**
7 **THE DEPARTMENT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—(1) Chapter 81 of title 38, United
9 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 8116
10 the following new section:

11 **“§ 8117. Allocation of medical care resources**

12 “In applying the plan for the allocation of health care
13 resources (including personnel and funds) known as the
14 Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation system, developed
15 by the Secretary pursuant to the requirements of section
16 429 of Public Law 104–204 (110 Stat. 2929) and submit-
17 ted to Congress in March 1997, the Secretary shall ex-
18 clude from consideration in the determination of the allo-
19 cation of such resources the following (resources for which
20 shall be allocated in such manner as the Secretary deter-
21 mines to be appropriate):

22 “(1) Programs to provide readjustment counsel-
23 ing and treatment.

24 “(2) Programs to provide counseling and treat-
25 ment (including psychiatric care) for the mentally ill.

1 “(3) Programs relating to drug and alcohol
2 abuse and dependence.

3 “(4) Programs for the homeless.

4 “(5) Programs relating to post-traumatic stress
5 disorder.

6 “(6) Programs relating to spinal cord dysfunc-
7 tion.

8 “(7) Programs relating to AIDS.

9 “(8) Programs relating to geriatric and ex-
10 tended care.”.

11 (2) The table of sections at the beginning of such
12 chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating
13 to section 8116 the following new item:

 “8117. Allocation of medical care resources.”.

14 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 8117 of title 38,
15 United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall
16 apply with respect to the allocation of resources for each
17 fiscal year after fiscal year 1997.

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