

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1205

To require a pilot program on assisting veterans service organizations and other veterans groups in developing and promoting peer support programs that facilitate community reintegration of veterans returning from active duty, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 25, 2007

Mr. SMITH (for himself and Mr. HARKIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To require a pilot program on assisting veterans service organizations and other veterans groups in developing and promoting peer support programs that facilitate community reintegration of veterans returning from active duty, 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. PILOT PROGRAM ON ASSISTING VETERANS OR-**  
4 **GANIZATIONS IN FACILITATING COMMUNITY**  
5 **REINTEGRATION OF VETERANS.**

6 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
2           Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to dem-  
3           onstrate and assess the feasibility and advisability of  
4           delivering community reintegration support and  
5           services to veterans by assisting veterans organiza-  
6           tions in developing and promoting peer support pro-  
7           grams for veterans.

8           (2) DESIGNATION.—The pilot program required  
9           by paragraph (1) shall be known as the “Heroes  
10          Helping Heroes Program”.

11          (b) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The pilot program  
12          shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning  
13          on October 1, 2007.

14          (c) SELECTION OF PILOT PROGRAM PARTICI-  
15          PANTS.—

16               (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall select  
17               not more than 20 eligible entities to participate in  
18               the pilot program.

19               (2) APPLICATION.—Each eligible entity seeking  
20               to participate in the pilot program shall submit an  
21               application to the Secretary at such time, in such  
22               manner, and accompanied by such information as  
23               the Secretary shall require.

24               (3) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select  
25               participants in the pilot program from among the

1 applicants under paragraph (1) that the Secretary  
2 determines—

3 (A)(i) have existing peer support programs  
4 that can be expanded or enhanced, and re-  
5 sources, for the delivery of community re-  
6 integration support and services to veterans (in-  
7 cluding mentoring programs, self-help groups,  
8 and Internet and other electronic-based peer  
9 support resources) that are suitable for the  
10 pilot program; or

11 (ii) have the capacity, including the skill  
12 and resources necessary, to develop and main-  
13 tain new peer support programs for the delivery  
14 of community reintegration support and serv-  
15 ices (including mentoring programs, self-help  
16 groups, and Internet and other electronic-based  
17 peer support resources) that are suitable for the  
18 pilot program; and

19 (B) have a plan to continue such peer sup-  
20 port programs after the pilot program ends.

21 (d) GRANTS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award  
23 grants to pilot program participants to develop and  
24 promote peer support programs that deliver commu-  
25 nity reintegration support and services for veterans.

1           (2) AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall ensure that  
2           the average amount of the grant awarded under  
3           paragraph (1) to a pilot program participant is not  
4           more than \$300,000 and not less than \$100,000 per  
5           fiscal year.

6           (3) MATCHING FUNDS.—A recipient of a grant  
7           under paragraph (1) shall contribute towards the de-  
8           velopment and promotion of peer support programs  
9           that deliver community reintegration support and  
10          services to veterans an amount equal to not less  
11          than ten percent of the grant awarded to such re-  
12          cipient.

13          (4) DURATION.—The duration of any grant  
14          awarded under paragraph (1) may not exceed three  
15          years.

16          (e) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant awarded to a pilot pro-  
17          gram participant pursuant to subsection (d) shall be used  
18          by the pilot program participant for costs and expenses  
19          connected with the development and promotion of peer  
20          support programs that deliver community reintegration  
21          support and services to veterans, including costs and ex-  
22          penses of the following:

23                  (1) Program staff or a coordinator of volun-  
24          teers, but not more than 50 percent of such grant

1 award may be used for such purpose in any fiscal  
2 year of such pilot program.

3 (2) Consultation services, but not more than 20  
4 percent of such grant award may be used for such  
5 purpose in any fiscal year of such pilot program.

6 (3) Program operations, including costs and ex-  
7 penses relating to the following:

8 (A) Advertising and recruiting.

9 (B) Printing.

10 (C) Training of volunteers, veterans, and  
11 staff.

12 (D) Incentives, such as food and awards.

13 (E) Overhead expenses, but not more than  
14 ten percent of such grant award may be used  
15 for such purposes.

16 (f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—In addition to the  
17 award of grants under subsection (d), the Secretary shall  
18 provide technical assistance to pilot program participants  
19 to assist them in developing and promoting peer support  
20 programs that deliver community reintegration support  
21 and services to veterans.

22 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

23 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-  
24 ty” means—

25 (A) a veterans service organization;

1 (B) a not-for-profit organization—

2 (i) the primary mission of which is to  
3 assist veterans;

4 (ii) that has been in continuous oper-  
5 ation for at least 12 months; and

6 (iii) is not a veterans service organiza-  
7 tion; or

8 (C) a partnership between an organization  
9 described in subparagraph (A) or (B) and an  
10 organization that is not described in subpara-  
11 graph (A) or (B).

12 (2) PILOT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT.—The term  
13 “pilot program participant” means an eligible entity  
14 that is selected by the Secretary, in accordance with  
15 subsection (c), to participate in the pilot program  
16 under this section.

17 (3) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.—The  
18 term “veterans service organization” means any or-  
19 ganization recognized by the Secretary for the rep-  
20 resentation of veterans under section 5902 of title  
21 38, United States Code.

22 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
23 are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of

- 1 Veterans Affairs to carry out this section, \$4,500,000 for
- 2 each of fiscal years 2008, 2009, and 2010.

