

115TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 2668

To require a pilot program on the earning by special operations forces medics of credits towards a physician assistant degree.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 12, 2018

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. RUBIO) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To require a pilot program on the earning by special operations forces medics of credits towards a physician assistant degree.

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 EARNING BY SPECIAL OP-**  
4 **ERATIONS FORCES MEDICS OF CREDITS TO-**  
5 **WARDS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT DEGREE.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall  
7 conduct a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advis-  
8 ability of partnerships between special operations forces  
9 and institutions of higher education with appropriate ac-

1 creditation, and health care systems if determined appro-  
2 priate by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program,  
3 through which special operations forces medics earn credit  
4 toward the accredited master's degree of physician assist-  
5 ant for military operational work and training performed  
6 by the medics.

7 (b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall conduct the  
8 pilot program for a period not to exceed five years.

9 (c) CLINICAL TRAINING.—Partnerships under sub-  
10 section (a) shall permit medics participating in the pilot  
11 program to conduct clinical training at medical facilities  
12 of the Department of Defense and the civilian sector in  
13 order to meet the increasing demand for highly trained  
14 health care providers at such facilities.

15 (d) EVALUATION.—The evaluation of work and train-  
16 ing performed by medics for which credits are earned  
17 under the pilot program shall comply with civilian clinical  
18 evaluation and accreditation standards applicable to the  
19 awarding of master's degrees of physician assistant.

20 (e) REPORTS.—

21 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days  
22 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
23 retary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on  
24 Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Rep-  
25 resentative a report that shall include the following:

1 (A) A comprehensive framework for the  
2 military education to be provided to special op-  
3 erations forces medics under the pilot program,  
4 including courses of instruction at institutions  
5 of higher education with appropriate accredita-  
6 tion and any health care systems participating  
7 in the pilot program.

8 (B) Metrics to be used to assess the effec-  
9 tiveness of the pilot program.

10 (C) A description of the mechanisms to be  
11 used by the Department, medics, or both to  
12 cover the costs of education received by medics  
13 under the pilot program through institutions of  
14 higher education or health care systems, includ-  
15 ing payment by the Department in return for a  
16 military service commitment, tuition or other  
17 educational assistance (including scholarships,  
18 grants, or financial aid) by the Department, use  
19 by medics of post-9/11 educational assistance  
20 available through the Department of Veterans  
21 Affairs, and any other mechanisms the Sec-  
22 retary considers appropriate for purposes of the  
23 pilot program.

24 (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days  
25 after completion of the pilot program, the Secretary

1 shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services  
2 of the Senate and the House of Representatives a  
3 final report on the pilot program. The report shall  
4 include the following:

5 (A) An evaluation of the pilot program  
6 using the metrics of assessment set forth pursu-  
7 ant to paragraph (1)(B).

8 (B) An assessment of the utility of the  
9 funding mechanisms set forth pursuant to para-  
10 graph (1)(C).

11 (C) An assessment of the effects of the  
12 pilot program on recruitment and retention of  
13 medics for special operations forces.

14 (D) An assessment of the feasibility and  
15 advisability of extending one or more authori-  
16 ties for joint professional military education  
17 under chapter 107 of title 10, United States  
18 Code, to warrant officers or enlisted personnel,  
19 and if the Secretary considers the extension of  
20 any such authorities feasible and advisable, rec-  
21 ommendations for legislative or administrative  
22 action to so extend such authorities.

23 (f) CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHORITIES.—Nothing in  
24 this section may be construed to—

1           (1) authorize an officer or employee of the Fed-  
2           eral Government to create, endorse, or otherwise  
3           incentivize a particular curriculum or degree track;  
4           or

5           (2) require, direct, review, or control a State or  
6           educational institution, or the instructional content,  
7           curriculum, and related activities of a State or edu-  
8           cational institution.

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