

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 716

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into partnerships with public and private entities to provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 23, 2019

Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. TURNER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into partnerships with public and private entities to provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Homeless Veterans  
5 Legal Services Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PARTNERSHIPS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTI-**  
2 **TIES TO PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES TO**  
3 **HOMELESS VETERANS AND VETERANS AT**  
4 **RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 20 of title 38, United  
6 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2022  
7 the following new section:

8 **“§ 2022A. Partnerships with public and private enti-**  
9 **ties to provide legal services to homeless**  
10 **veterans and veterans at risk of home-**  
11 **lessness**

12 “(a) PARTNERSHIPS AUTHORIZED.—Subject to the  
13 availability of funds for such purpose, the Secretary shall  
14 enter into partnerships with public or private entities to  
15 fund a portion of the general legal services specified in  
16 subsection (c) that are provided by such entities to home-  
17 less veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

18 “(b) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall ensure that,  
19 to the extent practicable, partnerships under this section  
20 are made with entities equitably distributed across the ge-  
21 ographic regions of the United States, including rural  
22 communities and tribal lands.

23 “(c) LEGAL SERVICES.—Legal services specified in  
24 this subsection include legal services provided by public  
25 or private entities that address the needs of homeless vet-  
26 erans and veterans at risk of homelessness as follows:

1           “(1) Legal services related to housing, including  
2           eviction defense, representation in landlord-tenant  
3           cases, and representation in foreclosure cases.

4           “(2) Legal services related to family law, in-  
5           cluding assistance in court proceedings for child sup-  
6           port, divorce, estate planning, and family reconcili-  
7           ation.

8           “(3) Legal services related to income support,  
9           including assistance in obtaining public benefits.

10          “(4) Legal services related to criminal defense,  
11          including defense in matters symptomatic of home-  
12          lessness, such as outstanding warrants, fines, and  
13          driver’s license revocation, to reduce recidivism and  
14          facilitate the overcoming of reentry obstacles in em-  
15          ployment or housing.

16          “(5) Such other legal services as the Secretary  
17          determines appropriate.

18          “(d) CONSULTATION.—In developing and carrying  
19          out partnerships under this section, the Secretary shall,  
20          to the extent practicable—

21                 “(1) consult with veterans service organizations  
22                 and other appropriate organizations; and

23                 “(2) coordinate appropriate outreach relation-  
24                 ships with such organizations.

1       “(e) REPORTS.—The Secretary may require entities  
2 that have entered into partnerships under this section to  
3 submit to the Secretary periodic reports on legal services  
4 provided to homeless veterans and veterans who are at risk  
5 of homelessness pursuant to such partnerships.”.

6       (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
7 at the beginning of chapter 20 of such title is amended  
8 by adding after the item relating to section 2022 the fol-  
9 lowing new item:

“2022A. Partnerships with public and private entities to provide legal services  
to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.”.

