

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 449

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the assignment of patient advocates at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 15, 2023

Ms. STABENOW introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the assignment of patient advocates at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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 “Veterans Patient Advoca-

5 cacy Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PATIENT ADVOCATES AT MEDICAL FACILITIES OF**
7 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7309A of title 38, United
9 States Code, is amended—

1 (1) by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as
2 subsections (f) and (g), respectively; and

3 (2) by inserting after subsection (d) the fol-
4 lowing new subsection (e):

5 “(e) NUMBER OF PATIENT ADVOCATES.—Beginning
6 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-
7 ment of the Veterans Patient Advocacy Act, the Director
8 shall ensure that—

9 “(1) there is not fewer than one patient advo-
10 cate for every 13,500 veterans enrolled in the system
11 of annual patient enrollment of the Department es-
12 tablished and operated under section 1705(a) of this
13 title; and

14 “(2) highly rural veterans may access the serv-
15 ices of patient advocates, including, to the extent
16 practicable, by assigning patient advocates to rural
17 community-based outpatient clinics.”.

18 (b) GAO REPORT.—Not later than two years after
19 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller
20 General of the United States shall submit to the Com-
21 mittee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Com-
22 mittee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representa-
23 tives a report evaluating the implementation by the Sec-
24 retary of Veterans Affairs of subsection (e) of section

1 7309A of title 38, United States Code, as added by sub-
2 section (a)(2).

