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COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Jeff Miller, Chairman, 335 Cannon House Office Building, Washington D.C. 20515

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CONTACT: Amy Mitchell (202) 225-3527

Veteran Sexual Assault Prevention Legislation Advances to Full Committee

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, the Subcommittee on Health favorably reported five bills to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Among the bills expected to be taken up at the September 8th Full Committee markup, is H.R. 2074, the Veterans Sexual Assault Prevention Act, introduced by Representative Ann Marie Buerkle, Subcommittee Chairwoman on Health.

“The Veterans Sexual Assault Prevention Act (H.R. 2074) would require VA to establish a comprehensive policy on the reporting and tracking of sexual assault and other safety incidents and create a fundamentally safer environment for our honored veterans and hard-working VA employees,” stated Representative Buerkle. “This legislation is supported by the Service Women’s Action Network, and Veterans Service Organizations including AMVETS, the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Vietnam Veterans of America.”

The Veterans Sexual Assault Prevention Act was introduced in response to a June report by the Government Accountability Office that found 284 sexual assaults had occurred at VA residential programs between 2007 and 2010.

“Abusive behavior like the kind documented by GAO is unacceptable in any form, but for it to be found in what should be an environment of caring for our honored veterans is simply intolerable,” said Buerkle. “Today, we are one step closer to ensuring this type of abuse does not happen again.”

The five pieces of legislation favorably reported to the full Committee are:

H.R. 1154: VETS Dog Act (introduced by Representative Carter).

H.R. 1855: Veterans’ Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitative Services’ Improvements Act of 2011 (introduced by Representative Walz)—as amended.

H.R. 2074: Veterans Sexual Assault Prevention Act (introduced by Representative Buerkle).

H.R. 2530: To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for increased flexibility in establishing rates for reimbursement of State homes by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for nursing home care provided to veterans (introduced by Representative Michaud).

H.R. 2646: Veterans Health Care Facilities Capital Improvement Act (introduced by Representative Johnson of Ohio)—as amended.

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