



CONCERNED
VETERANS
FOR AMERICA

Statement of
Concerned Veterans for America
before the
House Veterans' Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on Health
on
Pending and Draft Legislation

April 23, 2015

Draft Legislation on Reproductive Treatment for Disabled Veterans

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the reproductive treatment provided to certain disabled veterans.

CVA has no position on this legislation.

Draft Legislation Requiring an Annual VHA Report

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit an annual report on the Veterans Health Administration and the furnishing of hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

CVA supports the principles of the legislation, which requires more detailed reporting from VHA in important areas where data have been lacking. In order to ensure accountability, it is important that VHA report its performance numbers in a way that enables decision-makers and veterans to assess their efficiency and efficacy.

A CBO report released last December which examined the comparative cost of VA-provided healthcare versus and private-sector healthcare notes that “Comparing health care costs in the VHA system and the private sector is difficult partly because the Department of Veterans Affairs

(VA), which runs VHA, has provided limited data to the Congress and the public about its costs and operational performance”.¹

This legislation would be an important step towards making sure that the VHA and the VA become more transparent institutions, which would benefit both the taxpayers and the veterans. While CVA remains committed to comprehensive reform of VHA and the Department of Veterans Affairs, these reporting requirements are an important step toward more accountability and better care for our veterans.

CVA supports this legislation.

Draft Legislation: *The Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015*

To establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

CVA has no position on this legislation.

HR 271: *The Cover Act*

To establish a commission to examine the evidence-based therapy treatment model used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for treating mental illnesses of veterans and the potential benefits of incorporating complementary alternative treatments available in non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities within the community.

CVA has no position on this legislation.

HR 627: *To Expand of Definition of Homelessness*

To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the definition of homeless veteran for purposes of benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

CVA has no position on this legislation.

¹ Congressional Budget Office. (2014). Comparing the Costs of the Veterans’ Health Care System With Private-Sector Costs (CBO Publication No. 49763). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved from https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49763-VA_Healthcare_Costs.pdf

HR 1369: Veterans Access to Extended Care Act of 2015

To modify the treatment of agreements entered into by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish nursing home care, adult day health care, or other extended care services, and for other purposes.

CVA believes that this legislation represents a good step forward in alleviating the problems that the Department of VA has in providing veterans access to the care that they need and increasing the partnership between VA and private sector care, by simplifying the process that non-VA providers must go through to enable them to provide extended care to veterans. CVA strongly believes that it is important to ensure that there are more choices for veterans regarding the services that are available to them within the current overall institutional arrangement, and that VA should work with private-sector healthcare providers in effective ways to ensure that veterans receive the quality of care they deserve. This legislation is in keeping with that goal.

CVA supports this legislation.

HR 1575: Retreat Counseling for Women Veterans

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make permanent the pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.

CVA has no position on this legislation.