



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Republicans | Ranking Member Phil Roe, M.D.

H.R. 3504: The Ryan Kules Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019

Background:

Through the Specially Adaptive Housing (SAH) program, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides grants to veterans with certain service-connected disabilities to help them construct, purchase, or remodel a home to better accommodate their needs. Veterans must have experienced permanent, catastrophic, life-altering injuries - such as the loss (or loss of use) of multiple limbs – in service to be eligible for the SAH program. Eligible veterans can use a total of three SAH grants to make needed adaptations to their homes. For example, SAH grants can be used to widen doorways and hallways, to lower doorknobs and countertops, or to install wheelchair ramps, handrails, and grab bars. Current law caps the total amount of SAH funding per eligible veteran at \$85,645. In fiscal year 2018, VA funded 2,609 SAH grants at a total cost of \$41 million. While the SAH program is a tremendous benefit for veterans with serious disabilities, there have not been any major changes to the program in many years. As a result, the program's ability to adequately meet the changing, lifelong needs of disabled veterans has been called into question by several veteran service organizations.

The Ryan Kules Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019 would improve the SAH program so that it benefits more disabled veterans across their lifespan. It would allow eligible veterans to use the SAH grant a total of six times rather than three and authorize VA to provide additional SAH funding to veterans ten years after the veteran's first use of the SAH grant. It would also increase the cap on SAH payments by 15 percent, increase the number of post-9/11 veterans who are eligible for partial SAH grants, and prioritize SAH grants for veterans with certain serious illnesses.

The Message:

- Disabled veterans have lifelong needs and deserve ongoing support throughout their lives.
- The Ryan Kules Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019 would make it easier than ever before for wounded warriors to live comfortably and independently at home.