

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1783

To revive and expand the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 29, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To revive and expand the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

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 “Improving Veterans
5 Access to Quality Care Act of 2017”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC AND**
2 **ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF ADVANCED
4 DEGREE PROGRAMS TO EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF
5 CARE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with
6 institutions of higher education to develop partnerships for
7 the establishment or expansion of programs of advanced
8 degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to improve
9 and enhance the availability of high quality prosthetic and
10 orthotic care for veterans.

11 (b) REPORT.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
13 after the effective date specified in subsection (d),
14 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-
15 erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on
16 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a
17 report setting forth a plan for carrying out sub-
18 section (a).

19 (2) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—The Secretary
20 shall develop the plan required under paragraph (1)
21 in consultation with veterans service organizations,
22 institutions of higher education with accredited de-
23 gree programs in prosthetics and orthotics, and rep-
24 resentatives of the prosthetics and orthotics field.

25 (c) FUNDING.—

1 (1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

2 There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal
3 year 2017 for the Department of Veterans Affairs,
4 \$5,000,000 to carry out this section.

5 (2) AVAILABILITY.—The amount authorized to
6 be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain avail-
7 able for expenditure until September 30, 2020.

8 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect
9 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-
10 ment of this Act.

11 **SEC. 3. PROVISION OF FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY FOR**
12 **ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES,**
13 **PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS, AND OTHER HEALTH**
14 **CARE PROFESSIONALS OF THE DEPARTMENT**
15 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

16 (a) FULL PRACTICE AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of
17 Veterans Affairs shall provide full practice authority to ad-
18 vanced practice registered nurses, physician assistants,
19 and such other licensed health care professionals of the
20 Department of Veterans Affairs as is consistent with the
21 education, training, and certification of such health care
22 professionals.

23 (b) INAPPLICABILITY OF STATE LIMITATIONS.—Full
24 practice authority shall be provided by the Secretary under
25 subsection (a) to health care professionals described in

1 that subsection without regard to any limitation that
2 would otherwise be imposed on the health care practice
3 of such professionals by a licensing or credentialing body
4 of a State or otherwise under State law.

5 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) The term “advanced practice registered
7 nurse” has the meaning given that term in section
8 5509(e)(1) of Public Law 111–148 (42 U.S.C.
9 1395ww note).

10 (2) The term “full practice authority” means—

11 (A) with respect to an advanced practice
12 registered nurse, the full scope of practice for
13 the area of nursing practiced by the advanced
14 practice registered nurse as determined by the
15 national professional association or organiza-
16 tion, a successor association or organization, or
17 any other appropriate entity as determined by
18 the Secretary for such area of nursing;

19 (B) with respect to a physician assistant,
20 the full scope of practice for the area of medi-
21 cine practiced by the physician assistant as de-
22 termined by the national professional associa-
23 tion or organization, a successor association or
24 organization, or any other appropriate entity as

determined by the Secretary for such area of medicine; and

(C) with respect to any other licensed health care professional not specified in subparagraph (A) or (B), the full scope of practice for the area of medicine practiced by the licensed health care professional as determined by the national professional association or organization, a successor association or organization, or any other appropriate entity as determined by the Secretary for such area of medicine.

(3) The term “physician assistant” has the meaning given that term in section 1861(aa)(5)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa)(5)(A)).

SEC. 4. TRANSFER OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDER CREDENTIALING DATA FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In a case in which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs hires a covered health care provider, the Secretary of Defense shall, after receiving a request from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the credentialing data of the Secretary of Defense relating to

1 such health care provider, transfer to the Secretary of Vet-
2 erans Affairs such credentialing data.

3 (b) COVERED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.—For pur-
4 poses of this section, a covered provider is a health care
5 provider who—

6 (1) is or was employed by the Secretary of De-
7 fense;

8 (2) provides or provided health care related
9 services as part of such employment; and

10 (3) was credentialed by the Secretary of De-
11 fense.

12 (c) POLICIES AND REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of
13 Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall estab-
14 lish such policies and promulgate such regulations as may
15 be necessary to carry out this section.

16 (d) CREDENTIALING DEFINED.—In this section, the
17 term “credentialing” means the systematic process of
18 screening and evaluating qualifications and other creden-
19 tials, including licensure, required education, relevant
20 training and experience, and current competence and
21 health status.

22 (e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect
23 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-
24 ment of this Act.

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