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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To direct the Secretary of Defense and the Secretaries of the military departments to encourage female members who separate or retire from the Armed Forces during fiscal year 2020 to participate in the Women's Health Transition Training pilot program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. HOULAHAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Defense and the Secretaries of the military departments to encourage female members who separate or retire from the Armed Forces during fiscal year 2020 to participate in the Women's Health Transition Training 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Servicewomen’s Health
3 Transition Training Act of 2019”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

5 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

6 (1) Women are now the fastest growing cohort
7 of veterans and are expected to double in population
8 by 2045.

9 (2) Women comprise approximately 2,000,000
10 veterans in the United States and 10 percent of the
11 total veteran population.

12 (3) Women veterans are nearly two times more
13 likely to commit suicide than civilian women.

14 (4) On average, women do not connect with the
15 Veterans Health Administration until 2.7 years after
16 separating from military service.

17 (5) Female veterans have a higher rate of
18 homelessness than their male counterparts.

19 (6) One in five female members of the Armed
20 Forces report experiencing military sexual trauma.

21 (b) STATEMENT OF POLICY OBJECTIVES.—It is in
22 the national interest of the United States to ensure female
23 veterans receive a high quality of care by promoting pro-
24 grams and initiatives that—

1 (1) educate women separating from active duty
2 in the Armed Forces of the services available to
3 them through the Department of Veterans Affairs;

4 (2) encourage women to enroll in the system of
5 enrollment of the Veterans Health Administration;
6 and

7 (3) increase the number of women receiving
8 health care from the Veterans Health Administra-
9 tion.

10 (c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Con-
11 gress that the Department of Veterans Affairs, in piloting
12 the Women’s Health Transition Assistance Program, has
13 found that the pilot program has—

14 (1) educated hundreds of women, 99 percent of
15 whom would recommend the program to others, in
16 the process of separating or retiring from the Armed
17 Forces, of the care they can receive from the De-
18 partment of Veterans Affairs;

19 (2) improved awareness among pilot program
20 participants of services available from the Depart-
21 ment of Veterans Affairs by 56 percent; and

22 (3) increased pilot program participants’ intent
23 to enroll with the Department of Veterans Affairs by
24 13.1 percent, increased pilot program participants’
25 intent to use Veteran Affairs health care services by

1 15.6 percent, and increased pilot program partici-
2 pants' intent to use Veterans Affairs suicide preven-
3 tion services, if needed, by 19.3 percent.

4 **SEC. 3. PARTICIPATION IN THE WOMEN'S HEALTH TRANSI-**
5 **TION TRAINING PILOT PROGRAM OF THE DE-**
6 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall di-
8 rect—

9 (1) the Secretaries of the military departments
10 to encourage female members who separate or retire
11 from the Armed Forces during fiscal year 2020 to
12 participate in the Women's Health Transition Train-
13 ing pilot program of the Department of Veterans Af-
14 fairs at locations selected by the Secretaries of the
15 military departments; and

16 (2) commanders of military installations that
17 have centers for the Transition Assistance Program
18 under sections 1142 and 1144 of title 10, United
19 States Code, to advertise the Women's Health Tran-
20 sition Training pilot program to female members de-
21 scribed in paragraph (1).

22 (b) REPORT.—Not later than February 1, 2021, the
23 Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary
24 of Veterans Affairs, shall submit to Congress a report re-

1 regarding participation described in subsection (a). The re-
2 port shall include the following:

3 (1) The number of participants in the pilot pro-
4 gram.

5 (2) The number of pilot program sessions and
6 the locations at which the sessions were held.

7 (3) Available metrics including course satisfac-
8 tion and improved awareness of health services fur-
9 nished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

10 (4) Barriers to expanding the pilot program to
11 reach more female members of the Armed Forces.

12 (5) Barriers to offering the pilot program online
13 to reach female members of the Armed Forces who
14 cannot attend in person.

15 (6) Recommendations for legislation to improve
16 or expand the pilot program.