

AMENDMENT NO. 1768

(Purpose: To authorize the Secretary of Defense to carry out a pilot program for providing cognitive rehabilitative therapy services under the TRICARE program)

Strike section 731 and insert the following:

SEC. 731. PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE PROVISION OF COGNITIVE REHABILITATIVE THERAPY SERVICES UNDER THE TRICARE PROGRAM.

(a) In General.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense may, in consultation with the entities and officials referred to in subsection (d), carry out a pilot program under the TRICARE program to determine the feasibility and advisability of expanding the availability of cognitive rehabilitative therapy services for members or former members of the Armed Forces described in subsection (b).

(b) Covered Members and Former Members.—A member or former member of the Armed Forces is described in this subsection if—

(1) the member or former member—

(A) is otherwise eligible for medical care under the TRICARE program;

(B) has been diagnosed with a moderate to severe traumatic brain injury incurred in the line of duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom;

(C) is retired or separated from the Armed Forces for disability under chapter 61 of title 10, United States Code; and

(D) is referred by a qualified physician for cognitive rehabilitative therapy; and

(2) cognitive rehabilitative therapy is not reasonably available to the member or former member through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) Elements of Pilot Program.—The Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with the entities and officials referred to in subsection (d), develop for inclusion in the pilot program the following:

(1) Procedures for access to cognitive rehabilitative therapy services.

(2) Qualifications and supervisory requirements for licensed and certified health care professionals providing such services.

(3) A methodology for reimbursing providers for such services.

(d) Entities and Officials to Be Consulted.—The entities and officials referred to in this subsection are the following:

(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(2) The Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury.

(3) Relevant national organizations with experience in treating traumatic brain injury.

(e) Report.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report—

(1) evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot program in providing increased access to safe, effective, and quality cognitive rehabilitative therapy services for members and former members of the Armed Forces described in subsection (b); and

(2) making recommendations with respect to the effectiveness of cognitive rehabilitative therapy services and the appropriateness of including such services as a benefit under the TRICARE program.

(f) TRICARE Program Defined.—The term “TRICARE program” has the meaning given that term in section 1072(7) of title 10, United States Code.

(g) Funding.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 1403 for the Defense Health Program, not more than \$5,000,000 may be available to carry out the pilot program under this section.