

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of assistance and benefits to veterans who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or occupying temporary housing, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BLUMENTHAL introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of assistance and benefits to veterans who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or occupying temporary housing, 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 “Veteran Housing Sta-
5 bility Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF DEFINITION OF HOMELESS VET-**
2 **ERAN FOR PURPOSES OF BENEFITS UNDER**
3 **THE LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SEC-**
4 **RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 Section 2002(1) of title 38, United States Code, is
6 amended by striking “in section 103(a) of the McKinney-
7 Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a))”
8 and inserting “in subsection (a) or (b) of section 103 of
9 the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
10 11302)”.

11 **SEC. 3. PROGRAM ON PROVISION OF INTENSIVE CASE MAN-**
12 **AGEMENT INTERVENTIONS TO HOMELESS**
13 **VETERANS WHO RECEIVE THE MOST HEALTH**
14 **CARE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
15 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

16 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VII of chapter
18 20 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by
19 adding at the end the following new section:

20 **“§ 2067. Intensive case management interventions**

21 “(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall
22 carry out a program under which the Secretary shall pro-
23 vide intensive case management interventions to covered
24 veterans.

25 “(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of the pro-
26 gram, a covered veteran is a veteran who is enrolled in—

1 “(1) the homeless registry of the Department;
2 and

3 “(2) the system of annual patient enrollment
4 established and operated by the Secretary under sec-
5 tion 1705(a) of this title.

6 “(c) LOCATION.—(1) The Secretary shall carry out
7 the program at not fewer than six locations selected by
8 the Secretary for purposes of the program as follows:

9 “(A) Not fewer than three locations in cities
10 that have the largest populations of homeless vet-
11 erans in the United States.

12 “(B) Not fewer than three locations in subur-
13 ban or rural settings.

14 “(2) In selecting locations under paragraph (1), the
15 Secretary shall only select locations in areas in which the
16 Secretary determines that there is a high degree of inter-
17 action and coordination between the Department and com-
18 munity organizations that provide housing and social serv-
19 ices for veterans, such as outreach, employment, and fi-
20 nancial assistance for homeless veterans, veterans at-risk
21 of becoming homeless, and low-income veterans.

22 “(d) PROVISION OF INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT
23 INTERVENTIONS.—(1) In carrying out the program at
24 each location selected under subsection (c), the Secretary
25 shall provide intensive case management interventions to

1 not fewer than 20 covered veterans at each such location
2 who the Secretary determines are the covered veterans at
3 such location who receive the most health care and related
4 services furnished by the Department.

5 “(2) The intensive case management interventions
6 provided to covered veterans under paragraph (1) shall in-
7 clude assistance with gaining and maintaining access to
8 such housing and services, including benefits and services
9 to which covered veterans may be entitled or eligible under
10 the laws administered by the Secretary, as may be nec-
11 essary to improve the stability of their housing and the
12 appropriateness of the health care that they receive.”.

13 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
14 tions at the beginning of chapter 20 of such title is
15 amended by inserting after the item relating to sec-
16 tion 2066 the following new item:

“2067. Intensive case management interventions.”.

17 (b) COMMENCEMENT.—Not later than September 1,
18 2016, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence
19 carrying out the program required by section 2067(a) of
20 such title, as added by subsection (a)(1).

21 (c) REPORT.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later December 1, 2018,
23 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-
24 erans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on
25 Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a

1 report on the program carried out under section
2 2067 of such title, as added by subsection (a)(1).

3 (2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under
4 paragraph (1) shall include assessments of the fol-
5 lowing:

6 (A) The types and frequencies of intensive
7 case management interventions provided under
8 the program.

9 (B) The housing status of each veteran
10 who received an intensive case management
11 intervention under the program.

12 (C) The employment status of each veteran
13 who received an intensive case management
14 intervention under the program, including a
15 comparison of the employment status of such
16 veteran before and after receiving such inter-
17 vention.

18 (D) The use by veterans who received in-
19 tensive case management interventions under
20 the program of health care and related services
21 furnished by the Department of Veterans Af-
22 fairs and the costs incurred by the Department
23 in furnishing such care and services, including
24 a comparison of the use by such veterans of
25 such care and services and the costs incurred

1 from furnishing such care and services before
2 and after receiving such interventions.

3 (E) The number of veterans who received
4 intensive case management interventions under
5 the program, disaggregated by whether the in-
6 tensive case management intervention was pro-
7 vided in a location described in subparagraph
8 (A) or (B) of section 2067(c)(1) of such title,
9 as added by subsection (a)(1).

10 (F) The costs incurred by the Department
11 in carrying out the program, disaggregated by
12 provision of intensive case management inter-
13 ventions in locations described in subpara-
14 graphs (A) and (B) of such section.

15 (G) An estimate of the costs the Depart-
16 ment would have incurred for the provision of
17 health care and associated services to covered
18 veterans (as described in subsection (b) of sec-
19 tion 2067 of such title, as added by subsection
20 (a)(1)) but for the provision of intensive case
21 management interventions under the program,
22 disaggregated by provision of intensive case
23 management interventions in locations de-
24 scribed in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of sub-
25 section (c) of such section.

1 **SEC. 4. PROGRAM TO IMPROVE RETENTION OF HOUSING**
2 **BY FORMERLY HOMELESS VETERANS AND**
3 **VETERANS AT RISK OF BECOMING HOME-**
4 **LESS.**

5 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 20
7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

8 (A) by redesignating section 2013 as sec-
9 tion 2014; and

10 (B) by inserting after section 2012 the fol-
11 lowing new section 2013:

12 **“§ 2013. Program to improve retention of housing by**
13 **formerly homeless veterans and veterans**
14 **at risk of becoming homeless**

15 “(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall
16 carry out a program under which the Secretary shall pro-
17 vide case management services to improve the retention
18 of housing by veterans who were previously homeless and
19 are transitioning to permanent housing and veterans who
20 are at risk of becoming homeless.

21 “(b) GRANTS.—(1) The Secretary shall carry out the
22 program through the award of grants.

23 “(2)(A) In awarding grants under paragraph (1), the
24 Secretary shall give priority to organizations that dem-
25 onstrate a capability to provide case management services
26 as described in subsection (a), particularly organizations

1 that are successfully providing or have successfully pro-
2 vided transitional housing services using amounts provided
3 by the Secretary under sections 2012 and 2061 of this
4 title.

5 “(B) In giving priority under subparagraph (A), the
6 Secretary shall give extra priority to an organization de-
7 scribed in such subparagraph that—

8 “(i) voluntarily stops receiving amounts pro-
9 vided by the Secretary under sections 2012 and
10 2061 of this title; and

11 “(ii) converts a facility that the organization
12 used to provide transitional housing services into a
13 facility that the organization uses to provide perma-
14 nent housing that meets housing quality standards
15 established under section 8(o)(8)(B) of the United
16 States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C.
17 1437f(o)(8)(B)).

18 “(C) In any case in which a facility, with respect to
19 which a person received a grant for construction, rehabili-
20 tation, or acquisition under section 2011 of this title, is
21 converted as described in subparagraph (B)(ii), such con-
22 version shall be considered to have been carried out pursu-
23 ant to the needs of the Department and such person shall
24 not be considered in non-compliance with the terms of
25 such grant by reason of such conversion.”.

1 disaggregated by each recipient of a grant
2 under such section.

3 (B) The percentage of veterans who re-
4 ceived case management services under the pro-
5 gram who were not in permanent housing at
6 the end of the program, disaggregated by hous-
7 ing status and reason for failing to retain per-
8 manent housing under the program.

9 (C) The use by veterans who received case
10 management services under the program of
11 housing assistance furnished by the Department
12 of Veterans Affairs, including a comparison of
13 the use of such assistance by such veterans be-
14 fore and after receiving such services.

15 (D) An assessment of the employment sta-
16 tus of veterans who received case management
17 services under the program, including a com-
18 parison of the employment status of such vet-
19 erans before and after receiving such services.

20 **SEC. 5. EXPANSION OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF**
21 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2041 of title 38, United
23 States Code, is amended—

24 (1) in the section heading, by adding at the end
25 the following: “, **veterans in temporary hous-**

1 **ing, and very low-incoming veteran fami-**
2 **lies”**; and

3 (2) in subsection (a)—

4 (A) in paragraph (1), in the matter before
5 subparagraph (A), by striking “To assist home-
6 less veterans and their families in acquiring
7 shelter” and inserting “To assist homeless vet-
8 erans and their families, veterans and their
9 families who are at risk of becoming homeless,
10 and very low-income veteran families (as de-
11 fined in section 2044(f) of this title) in acquir-
12 ing shelter, in acquiring and transitioning to
13 permanent housing, and in maintaining occu-
14 pancy in permanent housing”;

15 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “home-
16 less veterans” and inserting “veterans and fam-
17 ilies described in paragraph (1)”;

18 (C) in paragraph (3)(B)—

19 (i) in clause (i), by striking “solely as
20 a shelter primarily for homeless veterans
21 and their families” and inserting “to pro-
22 vide permanent or transitional housing for
23 veterans and families described in para-
24 graph (1)”;

1 (ii) in clause (iii), by striking “and”
2 at the end;

3 (iii) by redesignating clause (iv) as
4 clause (v);

5 (iv) by inserting after clause (iii) the
6 following new clause (iv):

7 “(iv) ensure that veterans who receive
8 housing at the property also receive referrals
9 for the benefits and services to which they may
10 be entitled or eligible under this title, and”; and

11 (v) in clause (v), as redesignated by
12 clause (iii) of this subparagraph, by strik-
13 ing “homeless veterans” and inserting
14 “veterans and families described in para-
15 graph (1)”.

16 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
17 at the beginning of chapter 20 of such title is amended
18 by striking the item relating to section 2041 and inserting
19 the following new item:

“2041. Housing assistance for homeless veterans, veterans in temporary hous-
ing, and very low-income veteran families.”.

20 **SEC. 6. OUTREACH RELATING TO INCREASING THE**
21 **AMOUNT OF HOUSING AVAILABLE TO VET-**
22 **ERANS.**

23 The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in collabora-
24 tion with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Develop-

1 ment, public housing authorities, tribally designated hous-
2 ing entities, realtors, landlords, property management
3 companies, developers, and such other persons as the Sec-
4 retary considers appropriate, conduct outreach to realtors,
5 landlords, property management companies, and devel-
6 opers to educate them about the housing needs of veterans
7 and the benefits of having veterans as tenants.

8 **SEC. 7. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CENTER ON HOME-**
9 **LESSNESS AMONG VETERANS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VII of chapter 20 of
11 title 38, United States Code, as amended by section
12 3(a)(1), is further amended by adding at the end the fol-
13 lowing new section:

14 **“§ 2068. National Center on Homelessness Among Vet-**
15 **erans**

16 “(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The Secretary shall establish
17 and operate a center to carry out the functions described
18 in subsection (b).

19 “(2) The center establish under paragraph (1) shall
20 be known as the ‘National Center on Homelessness Among
21 Veterans’.

22 “(3) To the degree practicable, the Secretary shall
23 operate the center established under paragraph (1) inde-
24 pendently of the other programs of the Department that
25 address homelessness among veterans.

1 “(b) FUNCTIONS.—The functions described in this
2 subsection are as follows:

3 “(1) To carry out and promote research into
4 the causes and contributing factors to veteran home-
5 lessness.

6 “(2) To assess the effectiveness of programs of
7 the Department to meet the needs of homeless vet-
8 erans.

9 “(3) To identify and disseminate best practices
10 with regard to housing stabilization, income support,
11 employment assistance, community partnerships,
12 and such other matters as the Secretary considers
13 appropriate with respect to addressing veteran
14 homelessness.

15 “(4) To integrate evidence-based and best prac-
16 tices, policies, and programs into programs of the
17 Department for homeless veterans and veterans at-
18 risk of homelessness and to ensure that the staff of
19 the Department and community partners can imple-
20 ment such practices, policies, and programs.

21 “(5) To serve as a resource center for, and pro-
22 mote and seek to coordinate the exchange of infor-
23 mation regarding, all research and training activities
24 carried out by the Department and by other Federal

1 and non-Federal entities with respect to veteran
2 homelessness.”.

3 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
4 at the beginning of chapter 20 of such title, as amended
5 by section 3(a)(2), is further amended by inserting after
6 the item relating to section 2067 the following new item:
“2068. National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans.”.

7 **SEC. 8. ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS TO GRANT AND**
8 **PER DIEM PROGRAMS OF DEPARTMENT OF**
9 **VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

10 Section 2012 of title 38, United States Code, is
11 amended—

12 (1) in subsection (a)(1), in the matter before
13 subparagraph (A), by inserting “and except as oth-
14 erwise provided in this section” after “such pur-
15 pose”; and

16 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
17 section:

18 “(e) REVIEW AND CONDITIONAL RENEWAL.—(1)
19 Each year, the Secretary shall review each grant recipient
20 and eligible entity that received a per diem payment under
21 this section for a service furnished to a veteran during
22 the one-year period preceding the review to evaluate the
23 performance of the grant recipient or eligible entity during
24 that period with respect to—

1 “(A) the success of the grant recipient or eligi-
2 ble entity in assisting veterans obtain, transition
3 into, and retain permanent housing; and

4 “(B) increasing the income of veterans, whether
5 by helping veterans obtain employment or by helping
6 veterans obtain income-related benefits to which
7 such veterans may be eligible or entitled.

8 “(2) For any grant recipient or eligible entity whose
9 performance was evaluated for a year under paragraph
10 (1), the Secretary may only provide per diem under this
11 section to that grant recipient or eligible entity in the fol-
12 lowing year if the Secretary determines that such perform-
13 ance merits continued receipt of per diem under this sec-
14 tion.

15 “(3) The Secretary shall establish uniform perform-
16 ance targets throughout the United States for all grant
17 recipients and eligible entities that receive per diem pay-
18 ments under this section for purposes of evaluating the
19 performance of each such grant recipient and eligible enti-
20 ty under this subsection.”.