

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5776

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Veterans.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 28, 2021

Mr. KAHELE (for himself, Ms. MACE, Mr. RYAN, Ms. DEAN, Ms. TITUS, Ms. JACOBS of California, Ms. NORTON, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. CASE, Mrs. LURIA, and Mrs. HAYES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Veterans.

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 “Serving Our LGBTQ
5 Veterans Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTER FOR LESBIAN, GAY,**
2 **BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER VET-**
3 **ERANS.**

4 Chapter 3 of title 38, United States Code, is amended
5 by adding at the end the following new section (and con-
6 forming the table of sections for such chapter accord-
7 ingly):

8 **“§ 324. Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,**
9 **Transgender, and Queer Veterans**

10 “(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is in the Department
11 a Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and
12 Queer Veterans. There is at the head of the Center a Di-
13 rector.

14 “(b) **DIRECTOR.**—The Director shall be a career or
15 noncareer appointee in the Senior Executive Service. The
16 Director shall be appointed for a term of six years.

17 “(c) **REPORTING.**—The Director reports directly to
18 the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary concerning the ac-
19 tivities of the Center.

20 “(d) **DUTIES.**—The Director shall perform the fol-
21 lowing functions with respect to veterans who are
22 LGBTQ:

23 “(1) Serve as principal adviser to the Secretary
24 on the adoption and implementation of policies and
25 programs affecting veterans who are LGBTQ.

1 “(2) Make recommendations to the Secretary,
2 the Under Secretary for Health, the Under Sec-
3 retary for Benefits, and other Department officials
4 for the establishment or improvement of programs in
5 the Department for which veterans who are LGBTQ
6 are eligible.

7 “(3) Promote the use of benefits authorized by
8 this title by veterans who are LGBTQ and the con-
9 duct of outreach activities to veterans who are
10 LGBTQ, in conjunction with outreach activities car-
11 ried out under chapter 77 of this title.

12 “(4) Disseminate information and serve as a re-
13 source center for the exchange of information re-
14 garding innovative and successful programs which
15 improve the services available to veterans who are
16 LGBTQ.

17 “(5) Conduct and sponsor appropriate social
18 and demographic research on the needs of veterans
19 who are LGBTQ and the extent to which programs
20 authorized under this title meet the needs of those
21 veterans, without regard to any law concerning the
22 collection of information from the public.

23 “(6) Analyze and evaluate complaints made by
24 or on behalf of veterans who are LGBTQ about the
25 adequacy and timeliness of services provided by the

1 Department and advise the appropriate official of
2 the Department of the results of such analysis or
3 evaluation.

4 “(7) Consult with, and provide assistance and
5 information to, officials responsible for administering
6 Federal, State, local, and private programs that as-
7 sist veterans, to encourage those officials to adopt
8 policies which promote the use of those programs by
9 veterans who are LGBTQ.

10 “(8) Advise the Secretary when laws or policies
11 have the effect of discouraging the use of benefits by
12 veterans who are LGBTQ.

13 “(9) Publicize the results of medical research
14 which are of particular significance to veterans who
15 are LGBTQ.

16 “(10) Provide support and administrative serv-
17 ices to advisory committees established under sub-
18 chapter III of chapter 5 of this title.

19 “(11) Perform such other duties consistent with
20 this section as the Secretary shall prescribe.

21 “(e) RESOURCES.—The Secretary shall ensure that
22 the Director is furnished sufficient resources to enable the
23 Director to carry out the functions of the Center in a time-
24 ly manner.

1 “(f) INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall include in
2 documents submitted to Congress by the Secretary in sup-
3 port of the President’s budget for each fiscal year—

4 “(1) detailed information on the budget for the
5 Center;

6 “(2) the Secretary’s opinion as to whether the
7 resources (including the number of employees) pro-
8 posed in the budget for that fiscal year are adequate
9 to enable the Center to comply with its statutory
10 and regulatory duties; and

11 “(3) a report on the activities and significant
12 accomplishments of the Center during the preceding
13 fiscal year.

14 “(g) LGBTQ DEFINED.—In this section, the term
15 ‘LGBTQ’ means lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and
16 queer.”.

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