



(Courtesy: House Armed Services Committee)

Fact Sheet: TRICARE Provisions in H.R. 5122

H.R. 5122—National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2007 passed by the House on May 10, 2006 by a vote of 396 to 31, reflects Congress' on-going commitment to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service members' benefits, including health care. Earlier, the Department of Defense proposed increasing cost shares paid by those enrolled in TRICARE Prime, Standard and TRICARE Reserve Select. Below are several of the key provisions regarding health care in H.R. 5122, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 which passed the House overwhelmingly on May 10, 2006 by a vote of 396 – 31.

- **H.R. 5122 prohibits (until December 31, 2007) the Department's ability to increase TRICARE Prime, Standard and TRICARE Reserve Select cost shares.** While the House Armed Services Committee recognizes that the military health care program faces the same escalating costs that plague the private sector, the committee was concerned with the DOD proposal to increase cost shares for military retirees enrolled in the TRICARE program and prohibits the DOD from implementing its proposed increased cost shares for TRICARE Standard, TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Reserve Select.
- **H.R. 5122 calls for an independent analysis to determine the appropriate cost-sharing formula for the TRICARE program.** To ensure that a comprehensive policy and fiscal basis for sustaining future military health care benefits are in place, H.R. 5122 recommends independent reviews by a task force, and the Government Accountability Office and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to present their findings to Congress. The moratorium placed on DOD to implement any cost-share changes until December 31, 2007, will allow the committee to assess the recommendations from an independent task force, the Comptroller General and the CBO, for a comprehensive policy and fiscal review of the military health care benefit.
- **H.R. 5122 zeroes out the costs for generic and formulary prescriptions for participants in the TRICARE pharmacy mail-order program.** In order to provide beneficiaries with the incentives to use the TRICARE mail order pharmacy program, the committee recommends that the costs for generic and formulary drugs in the mail order program would be reduced to zero. H.R. 5122 recommends modest cost share increases for generic and formulary drugs through the retail pharmacy program.
- **H.R. 5122 also adds \$735 million to the Defense Health Program to restore funding cuts included in the DOD budget request in anticipation of increased beneficiary cost shares, which as mentioned, H.R. 5122 prohibits.**
- **H.R. 5122 includes TRICARE coverage for forensic examinations following sexual assaults and domestic violence.**
- **H.R. 5122 provides TRICARE coverage for anesthesia and hospital costs for dental care provided to young children and mentally or physically challenged beneficiaries.**