

H.R.1753 - To ensure that certain members of the Armed Forces who served in female cultural support teams receive proper credit for such service.

118th Congress (2023-2024) |

Sponsor: [Rep. Issa, Darrell E. \[R-CA-48\]](#) (Introduced 03/23/2023)

Committees: House - Armed Services; Veterans' Affairs

Latest Action: House - 12/19/2024 Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H. Rept. 118-938, Part I. ([All Actions](#))

Tracker:



Summary(1) **Text(1)** Actions(9) Titles(1) Amendments(0) Cosponsors(31) Committees(2) Related Bills(1)



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Introduced in House (03/23/2023)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1753

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 23, 2023

Mr. ISSA (for himself, Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia, Mr. CROW, and Ms. HOULAHAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To ensure that certain members of the Armed Forces who served in female cultural support teams receive proper credit for such service.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CREDIT FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO SERVED IN FEMALE CULTURAL SUPPORT TEAMS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) In 2010, the Commander of United States Special Operations Command established the Cultural Support Team Program to overcome significant intelligence gaps during the Global War on Terror.

(2) From 2010 through 2021, approximately 310 female members, from every Armed Force, passed and were selected as members of female cultural support teams, and deployed with special operations forces.

(3) Members of female cultural support teams served honorably, demonstrated commendable courage, overcame such intelligence gaps, engaged in direct action, and suffered casualties during the Global War on Terror.

(4) The Federal Government has a duty to recognize members and veterans of female cultural support teams who volunteered join the Armed Forces, to undergo arduous training for covered service, and to execute dangerous and classified missions in the course of such covered service.

(5) Members who performed covered service have sought treatment from the Department of Veterans Affairs for traumatic brain injuries, post-traumatic stress, and disabling physical trauma incurred in the course of such covered service, but have been denied such care.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the Sense of Congress that individuals who performed covered service performed exceptional service to the United States.

(c) **MILITARY SERVICE: RECORDS; CALCULATION OF RETIRED PAY.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned shall ensure that the performance of covered service is included in—

(1) the military service record of each individual who performed covered service; and

(2) the computation of retired pay for each individual who performed covered service.

(d) **CLAIMS FOR VETERANS BENEFITS ARISING FROM COVERED SERVICE.**—

(1) **DETERMINATION OF SERVICE CONNECTION.**—Upon the filing of a claim by an individual described in paragraph (3)(C) for service-connected disability or death incurred or aggravated in the course of covered service, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall determine whether such disability or death was service-connected.

(2) **TREATMENT OF COVERED SERVICE.**—In the consideration of a claim under this subsection, the Secretary shall treat covered service as engagement in combat with the enemy in the course of active military, naval, air, or space service.

(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE OF AWARD.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided by subparagraph (B), the effective date of an award under this subsection shall be determined in accordance with section 5110 of title 38, United States Code.

(B) **EXCEPTION.**—Notwithstanding subsection (g) of such section, the Secretary shall determine the effective date of an award based on a claim under this subsection for an individual described in subparagraph (C) by treating the date on which the individual filed the initial claim specified in clause (i) of such subparagraph as the date on which the individual filed the claim so awarded under this section.

(C) **ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.**—An individual described in this subparagraph is an individual who performed covered service, or a survivor of such an individual—

(i) who, before the date of the enactment of this Act, submitted a claim for service-connected disability or death of such individual;

(ii) whose such claim was denied by reason of the claim not establishing that the disability or death was service-connected;

(iii) who submits a claim during the period of three years beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, for the same condition covered by the prior claim under clause; and

(iv) whose such claim is approved pursuant to this subsection.

(4) **PROCESSING OF CLAIMS.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall improve training and guidance for employees who may process a claim under this subsection.

(5) **OUTREACH.**—The Secretary shall conduct outreach to inform individuals who performed covered service (and survivors of such individuals) that they may submit supplemental claims for service-connected disability or death incurred or aggravated in the course of covered service. Such outreach shall include the following:

(A) The Secretary shall publish on the internet website of the Department a notice that such individuals may elect to file a supplemental claim.

(B) The Secretary shall notify, in writing or by electronic means, veterans service organizations of the ability of such individuals to file a supplemental claim.

(e) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term “covered service” means service—

(A) as a member of the Armed Forces;

(B) in a female cultural support team;

(C) with the personnel development skill identifier of R2J or 5DK; and

(D) during the period beginning on January 1, 2010, and ending on August 31, 2021.

(2) The terms “active military, naval, air, or space service” and “service-connected” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(3) The term “Secretary concerned” has the meaning given such term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.
