

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1039

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve compensation for disabilities occurring in Persian Gulf War veterans, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2021

Mr. MENENDEZ introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve compensation for disabilities occurring in Persian Gulf War veterans, 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. IMPROVING COMPENSATION FOR DISABILITIES**

4 **OCCURRING IN PERSIAN GULF WAR VET-**
5 **ERANS.**

6 (a) REDUCTION IN THRESHOLD OF ELIGIBILITY.—

7 Subsection (a)(1) of section 1117 of title 38, United
8 States Code, is amended by striking “became manifest—
9 ” and all that follows through the period at the end and
10 inserting “became manifest to any degree at any time”.

1 (b) PERMANENT EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF ELIGI-
2 BILITY.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Such section is amended by
4 striking subsection (b).

5 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such section,
6 as amended by paragraph (1), is further amended—

7 (A) by redesignating subsections (c) and
8 (d) as subsections (b) and (c), respectively; and

9 (B) in subsection (a)(2)(C), by striking
10 “under subsection (d)” and inserting “under
11 subsection (c)”.

12 (c) ESTABLISHING SINGULAR DISABILITY BASED
13 QUESTIONNAIRE.—Such section, as amended by sub-
14 section (b), is further amended by inserting after sub-
15 section (c) the following new subsection (d):

16 “(d) The Secretary shall develop a Disability Benefits
17 Questionnaire (DBQ), or successor questionnaire, such
18 that if a Persian Gulf veteran presents with any one symp-
19 tom associated with Gulf War Illness, use of such ques-
20 tionnaire is mandatory for health care personnel of the
21 Department for the identification of Gulf War Illness.”.

22 (d) EXPANSION OF DEFINITION OF PERSIAN GULF
23 VETERAN.—Subsection (f) of such section is amended by
24 inserting “, Afghanistan, Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, or
25 Jordan” after “operations”.

1 (e) TRAINING.—Such section is amended by adding
2 at the end the following new subsection:

3 “(i)(1) The Secretary shall take such actions as may
4 be necessary to ensure that health care personnel of the
5 Department are appropriately trained to effectively carry
6 out this section.

7 “(2) Not less frequently than once each year, the Sec-
8 retary shall submit to Congress a report on the actions
9 taken by the Secretary to carry out paragraph (1).”.

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