

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2014

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 15, 2023

Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Ms. ERNST, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. SULLIVAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To ensure that certain members of the Armed Forces who served in female cultural support teams receive proper credit for such service, 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. CREDIT FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE**
4 **ARMED FORCES WHO SERVED IN FEMALE**
5 **CULTURAL SUPPORT TEAMS.**

6 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

7 (1) In 2010, the Commander of United States
8 Special Operations Command established the Cul-
9 tural Support Team Program to overcome signifi-

1 cant intelligence gaps during the Global War on Ter-
2 ror.

3 (2) From 2010 through 2021, approximately
4 310 female members, from every Armed Force,
5 passed and were selected as members of female cul-
6 tural support teams, and deployed with special oper-
7 ations forces.

8 (3) Members of female cultural support teams
9 served honorably, demonstrated commendable cour-
10 age, overcame such intelligence gaps, engaged in di-
11 rect action, and suffered casualties during the Glob-
12 al War on Terror.

13 (4) The Federal Government has a duty to rec-
14 ognize members and veterans of female cultural sup-
15 port teams who volunteered to join the Armed
16 Forces, to undergo arduous training for covered
17 service, and to execute dangerous and classified mis-
18 sions in the course of such covered service.

19 (5) Members who performed covered service
20 have sought treatment from the Department of Vet-
21 erans Affairs for traumatic brain injuries, post-trau-
22 matic stress, and disabling physical trauma incurred
23 in the course of such covered service, but have been
24 denied such care.

1 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
2 gress that individuals who performed covered service per-
3 formed exceptional service to the United States.

4 (c) MILITARY SERVICE: RECORDS; CALCULATION OF
5 RETIRED PAY.—Not later than one year after the date
6 of the enactment of this Act, each Secretary concerned
7 shall—

8 (1) ensure that the performance of covered
9 service is included in—

10 (A) the military service record of each indi-
11 vidual who performed covered service; and

12 (B) the computation of retired pay for
13 each individual who performed covered service;
14 and

15 (2) transmit to the Secretary of Veterans Af-
16 fairs a list of each veteran who performed covered
17 service whose military service record was modified
18 pursuant to paragraph (1).

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

21 (1) DETERMINATION OF SERVICE CONNEC-
22 TION.—Upon the filing of a claim by an individual
23 described in paragraph (3)(C) for service-connected
24 disability or death incurred or aggravated in the

1 course of covered service, the Secretary of Veterans
2 Affairs shall—

3 (A) determine whether such disability or
4 death was service-connected; and

5 (B) adjust the computation of any dis-
6 ability compensation awarded accordingly.

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

12 (3) EFFECTIVE DATE OF AWARD.—

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

18 (B) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding sub-
19 section (g) of such section, the Secretary shall
20 determine the effective date of an award based
21 on a claim under this subsection for an indi-
22 vidual described in subparagraph (C) by treat-
23 ing the date on which the individual filed the
24 initial claim specified in clause (i) of such sub-

1 paragraph as the date on which the individual
2 filed the claim so awarded under this section.

3 (C) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—An indi-
4 vidual described in this subparagraph is an in-
5 dividual who performed covered service, or a
6 survivor of such an individual—

7 (i) who, before the date of the enact-
8 ment of this Act, submitted a claim for
9 service-connected disability or death of
10 such individual;

11 (ii) whose such claim was denied by
12 reason of the claim not establishing that
13 the disability or death was service-con-
14 nected;

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

20 (iv) whose such claim is approved pur-
21 suant to this subsection.

22 (4) PROCESSING OF CLAIMS.—The Secretary of
23 Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary
24 of Defense, shall improve training and guidance for

1 employees who may process a claim under this sub-
2 section.

3 (5) OUTREACH.—

4 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
5 conduct outreach to inform individuals who per-
6 formed covered service (and survivors of such
7 individuals) that they may submit supplemental
8 claims for service-connected disability or death
9 incurred or aggravated in the course of covered
10 service.

11 (B) ELEMENTS.—Outreach conducted pur-
12 suant to subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-
13 lowing:

14 (i) Contact individuals described in
15 subparagraph (A), especially individuals
16 who are veterans included in the list trans-
17 mitted pursuant to subsection (c)(2) and
18 survivors of such veterans, directly to in-
19 form them of the treatment of covered
20 service described in subsection (d)(2) and
21 that they may submit supplemental claims
22 as described in such subparagraph.

23 (ii) Publishing on the internet website
24 of the Department a notice that such indi-

1 viduals may elect to file a supplemental
2 claim.

3 (iii) Notifying, in writing or by elec-
4 tronic means, veterans service organiza-
5 tions of the ability of such individuals to
6 file a supplemental claim.

7 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, AIR, OR SPACE
9 SERVICE.—The term “active military, naval, air, or
10 space service” has the meaning given such term in
11 section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

12 (2) COVERED SERVICE.—The term “covered
13 service” means service—

14 (A) as a member of the Armed Forces;

15 (B) in a female cultural support team;

16 (C) with the personnel development skill
17 identifier of R2J or 5DK, or any other valida-
18 tion methods, such as valid sworn statements,
19 officer and enlisted performance evaluations,
20 training certificates, or records of an award
21 from completion of tour with a cultural support
22 team; and

23 (D) during the period beginning on Janu-
24 ary 1, 2010, and ending on August 31, 2021.

1 (3) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Sec-
2 retary concerned” has the meaning given such term
3 in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.

4 (4) SERVICE-CONNECTED.—The term “service-
5 connected” has the meaning given such term in sec-
6 tion 101 of title 38, United States Code.

7 (5) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the
8 meaning given such term in section 101 of title 38,
9 United States Code.

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