

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3580

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report assessing the billing practices of the Department of Defense for care received under the TRICARE program and at military medical treatment facilities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2020

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report assessing the billing practices of the Department of Defense for care received under the TRICARE program and at military medical treatment facilities, 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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Department of Defense
5 Healthcare Billing Report Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

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

1 (1) Through the TRICARE program (as de-
2 fined in section 1072 of title 10, United States
3 Code), the Department of Defense provides health
4 care benefits and services to approximately
5 9,500,000 beneficiaries.

6 (2) The Department of Defense is not struc-
7 tured as a typical health care provider, which can
8 lead to complicated billing practices and strict dead-
9 lines for members of the Armed Forces, former
10 members of the Armed Forces, and their depend-
11 ents, as well as for providers.

12 (3) Numerous findings issued by the Inspector
13 General of the Department of Defense between 2014
14 and 2019 describe the third-party collection program
15 of the Department as inadequately managed, result-
16 ing in substantial uncollected funds that could be
17 used to improve the quality of health care at mili-
18 tary medical treatment facilities.

19 (4) Numerous press reports have found that the
20 Federal Government aggressively collects unpaid
21 debts from uninsured or low-income civilian patients
22 who happen to receive treatment at a military med-
23 ical treatment facility, even though providing that
24 treatment often benefits military readiness by pro-
25 viding experience to military medical professionals.

1 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
2 gress that it is in the national interest of the United States
3 to ensure members of the Armed Forces, former members
4 of the Armed Forces, and their dependents receive high-
5 quality health care, and that Federal agencies prioritize
6 fairness and accessibility when administering health care.

7 **SEC. 3. REPORT ON BILLING PRACTICES FOR HEALTH**
8 **CARE FROM DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.**

9 (a) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date
10 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of
11 the United States shall submit to Congress a report as-
12 sessing the billing practices of the Department of Defense
13 for care received under the TRICARE program or at mili-
14 tary medical treatment facilities.

15 (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph
16 (1) shall include the following:

17 (1) A description of the extent to which data is
18 being collected and maintained on whether bene-
19 ficiaries under the TRICARE program have other
20 forms of health insurance.

21 (2) A description of the extent to which the
22 Secretary of Defense has implemented the rec-
23 ommendations of the Inspector General of the De-
24 partment of Defense to improve collections of third-
25 party payments for care at military medical treat-

1 ment facilities and a description of the impact such
2 implementation has had on beneficiaries.

3 (3) A description of the extent to which the
4 process used by managed care support contractors
5 under the TRICARE program to adjudicate third-
6 party liability claims is efficient and effective, includ-
7 ing with respect to communication with beneficiaries.

8 (c) TRICARE PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section,
9 the term “TRICARE program” has the meaning given
10 that term in section 1072 of title 10, United States Code.

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