

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3558

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain improvements relating to inspections of Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities and improving care for women.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2017

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

---

## A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain improvements relating to inspections of Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities and improving care for women.

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 “Improve Access to  
5 Care for Our Female Veterans Act”.

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

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-  
8 ings:

1           (1) The Department of Veterans Affairs has  
2           policies in place to help ensure the privacy, safety,  
3           and dignity of women veterans when they receive  
4           care at its medical facilities.

5           (2) A Government Accountability Office report  
6           found many instances of noncompliance with such  
7           policies.

8           (3) Women veterans are the fastest growing co-  
9           hort within the veteran community.

10          (4) Women serve in every branch of the Armed  
11          Forces and represent nearly 15 percent of the mem-  
12          bers of the Armed Forces currently serving on active  
13          duty and 18 percent of members of the National  
14          Guard and reserve components.

15          (5) The number of women veterans using the  
16          medical care provided by the Department of Vet-  
17          erans Affairs is expected to increase dramatically.

18          (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-  
19          gress that—

20               (1) female veterans are put at risk by a system  
21               that is currently designed for men; and

22               (2) the Department of Veterans Affairs should  
23               follow through with commitments to ensure female  
24               veterans can access services tailored to their needs.

1 **SEC. 3. IMPROVEMENT OF INSPECTIONS OF DEPARTMENT**  
2 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITIES**  
3 **AND IMPROVEMENT OF CARE FOR WOMEN**  
4 **PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
5 **AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) IMPROVEMENT OF INSPECTIONS PROCESS.—The  
7 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall strengthen the environ-  
8 ment of care inspections process and oversight of such  
9 process by—

10 (1) expanding the list of requirements that fa-  
11 cility staff inspect for compliance to align with the  
12 women’s health handbook of the Veterans Health  
13 Administration;

14 (2) ensuring that all patient care areas of De-  
15 partment medical facilities are inspected as required;

16 (3) clarifying the roles and responsibilities of  
17 Department medical facility staff responsible for  
18 identifying and addressing compliance; and

19 (4) establishing a process to verify that non-  
20 compliance information reported by facilities to the  
21 Veterans Health Administration central office is ac-  
22 curate and complete.

23 (b) IMPROVEMENT OF CARE FOR WOMEN.—

24 (1) MONITORING OF SEX-SPECIFIC CARE SERV-  
25 ICES.—To improve care for women veterans, the  
26 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall monitor women

1 veterans’ access to sex-specific care services under  
2 current and future community care contracts. Such  
3 monitoring shall include an examination of appoint-  
4 ment scheduling and completion times, driving times  
5 to appointments, and reasons appointments could  
6 not be scheduled with community providers.

7 (2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

8 (A) The term “sex-specific care services”  
9 means mammography, maternity care, and gyn-  
10 ecology.

11 (B) The term “community care contract”  
12 means an agreement described in section  
13 101(d) of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Ac-  
14 countability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–  
15 146).

○