

Manager's Package
FY18 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

Bill Language

1. Bill language for Senator Durbin on VA Medical Research.
2. Bill language for Senator Murkowski on Hmong burials.
3. Bill language for Senator Coons on VSO pilot.

Report Language

1. Report language for Senator Rubio on space launch support and infrastructure modernization.
2. Report language for Senator Schatz on accidental fall prevention.
3. Report language for Senator Baldwin on the Badger Army Ammunition Plant.
4. Report language for Senator Feinstein on the KC-46 Main Operating Base 4.
5. Report language for Senator Daines on State Extended Care Facilities.
6. Report language for Senator Reed on benefits for veterans with service-connected disabilities.

*At the appropriate place in the bill,
insert:*

AMENDMENT NO. _____ Calendar No. _____

Purpose: To increase amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical and prosthetic research and to decrease amounts appropriated to the Department for general administration.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—115th Cong., 1st Sess.

S. _____

Making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

Referred to the Committee on _____ and
ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENTS intended to be proposed by Mr. DURBIN

Viz:

1 On page 28, line 13, strike "\$705,262,000" and in-
2 sert "722,262,000".

3 On page 29, line 16, strike "\$346,891,000" and in-
4 sert "\$329,891,000".

*At the appropriate place in the bill,
insert:*

1 SEC. ____ (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2402(a) of
2 title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the
3 end the following new paragraph:

4 “(10) Any individual—

5 “(A) who—

6 “(i) was naturalized pursuant to sec-
7 tion 2(1) of the Hmong Veterans’ Natu-
8 ralization Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–
9 207; 8 U.S.C. 1423 note); and

10 “(ii) at the time of the individual’s
11 death resided in the United States; or

12 “(B) who—

13 “(i) the Secretary determines served
14 honorably with a special guerrilla unit or
15 irregular forces operating from a base in
16 Laos in support of the Armed Forces of
17 the United States at any time during the
18 period beginning February 28, 1961, and
19 ending May 7, 1975; and

20 “(ii) at the time of the individual’s
21 death—

22 “(I) was a citizen of the United
23 States or an alien lawfully admitted

1 for permanent residence in the United
2 States; and

3 “(II) resided in the United
4 States.”.

5 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
6 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to an individual
7 dying on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

At the appropriate place in the bill insert:

1 SEC. ____ . The Secretary may carry out a 2-year
 2 pilot program making grants to nonprofit veterans serv-
 3 ices organizations recognized by the Secretary in accord-
 4 ance with section 5902 of title 38, United States Code,
 5 to upgrade, through construction and repair, VSO commu-
 6 nity facilities into health and wellness centers and to pro-
 7 mote and expand complementary and integrative wellness
 8 programs: *Provided*, That no single grant may exceed a
 9 total of \$500,000: *Provided further*, That the Secretary
 10 may not provide more than 20 grants during the 2-year
 11 pilot program: *Provided further*, That the recipient of a
 12 grant under this section may not use the grant to pur-
 13 chase real estate or to carry out repair of facilities leased
 14 by the recipient or to construct facilities on property
 15 leased by the recipient: *Provided further*, That the Sec-
 16 retary ensures that the grant recipients use grant funds
 17 to construct or repair facilities located in at least 10 dif-
 18 ferent geographic locations in economically depressed
 19 areas or areas designated as highly rural that are not in
 20 close proximity to Department of Veterans Affairs medical
 21 centers: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall report
 22 to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of
 23 Congress no later than 180 days after enactment of this
 24 Act, on the grant program established under this section.

Launch Support and Infrastructure Modernization

At the appropriate place in the **report**, insert the following:

Launch Support and Infrastructure Modernization.-- The Launch and Test Range System (LTRS) located at the Eastern Range (Patrick AFB, Cape Canaveral AS and Kennedy SC, FL) and the Western Range (Vandenberg AFB, CA) consists of ground based surveillance, navigation, flight operations and analysis, command and control, communications and weather assets used to support space missions. The mission is to provide DoD, NASA and commercial customers a highly reliable, integrated system to support spacecraft launch, ballistic missile and aeronautical testing. The Committee is concerned with the current state of space launch support and infrastructure as launch schedules continue to increase in tempo. The Committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a report to the congressional defense committees not later than 120 days after the enactment of this Act on the plan for the implementation of launch support and infrastructure modernization program. The report shall include a description of plans and the resources needed to improve launch support infrastructure, utilities, support equipment, and range operations; a description of plans to streamline and normalize processes, systems, and products at the Eastern and Western ranges, to ensure consistency for range users; and recommendations for improving transparency, flexibility, and responsiveness in launch scheduling.

Accidental Window Fall Prevention

At the appropriate place in the **report**, insert the following:

Accidental window fall prevention. -- The Committee is concerned about the risks of unintentional falls from windows in military family housing. Deaths and injuries often occur when children push against window screens or climb onto furniture located near an open window. Therefore, not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Committee directs the Department of Defense to update its Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) for Family Housing (UFC 4-711-01) to require that all new and existing residential buildings have corrosion-resistant screens that meet the ANSI/SMA6001 specifications for at least Medium loads, or successor standard; or that windows shall be equipped with window fall prevention screens, guards, or other devices that comply with ASTM F2006 or ASTM F2090, or a successor standard.

The Committee also directs the Department of Defense, in updating its UFC for family housing, to: (1) specify that military housing privatization partners shall be required to include window fall prevention screens, guards, or other devices for military housing and shall not be allowed to seek waivers or exemptions; (2) conduct an oversight program to ensure that all military housing be equipped with window fall prevention screens, guards, or other devices; and (3) establish an awareness campaign that educates families on window fall risks and window fall prevention measures. The Secretary of each military department shall brief the Committee within one year of enactment of this Act on the following: (a) the extent to which the Secretary is in compliance with the requirements of the updates to UFC 4-711-01; and (b) a plan for retrofitting existing military family housing units that are not in compliance with the revised UFC 4-711-01.

Badger Army Ammunition Plant

At the appropriate place in the **report**, insert the following:

Badger Army Ammunition Plant.— In 2011, an Army Feasibility Study concluded that an offsite drinking water treatment system was needed as part of a comprehensive groundwater cleanup remedy for the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant [BAAP]. Accordingly, in 2015, the Town of Merrimac, Wisconsin, designed and approved a sanitation district required by the Army to support such a system, and as recently as May 2016, the Army noted in writing that “design of the municipal drinking water system has been initiated.” Recently, however, the Army reversed its plans to construct and operate the drinking water system. The Committee is concerned about this decision, its potential to delay the provision of clean drinking water to homes near the site, and the Army’s lack of public communication regarding the decision.

Therefore, the Committee expects the Army to conduct required human health risk assessments expeditiously, and if needed, use expedited contracting authorities. Additionally, the Committee urges the Army to hold regular public meetings to update and engage with local stakeholders. The Committee expects the Army to integrate local priorities in its remediation plans. Furthermore, within 90 days of the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to the Committee a report and provide a corresponding briefing regarding the Army’s rationale and process for approving plans to construct and operate a drinking water system and its subsequent decision to terminate such plans, as well as the Army’s completed and planned actions for environmental restoration at the site.

KC -46 Main Operating Base 4

On page 19 of the report, in the paragraph beginning with “KC-46 Main Operating Base 4,” after the word “Base” in the second to last sentence, strike the rest of the paragraph and insert:

“pending further review, and directs the Air Force to promptly provide an updated schedule for these projects.”

State Extended Care Facilities

At the appropriate place in the **report**, insert the following:

“Similarly, the Department should also prioritize large rural states where veterans may live hundreds of miles from the next nearest facility.”

Benefits for Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities

At the appropriate place in the **report**, insert the following:

Benefits for Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities.—The Committee notes that many veterans are eligible for a full discharge of their federal student loan debt due to a service-connected disability, but have not received the benefits Congress intended. Under Section 437 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, borrowers who have been determined by the Secretary to be unemployable due to a service-connected condition are eligible for a full discharge of their liability to repay their loans and are not required to submit additional documentation. Beginning in April 2016, the Department of Education established a secure data sharing agreement with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to identify federal student loan borrowers who also receive the relevant disability payments that qualify them for loan forgiveness under the Total and Permanent Disability (TPD) loan discharge program. Approximately 387,000 disabled borrowers were positively identified with SSA in the first set of matches. However, this data sharing did not include veterans who are also eligible for loan discharge and have submitted appropriate documentation to the Department. As a result, too many eligible veterans with severe service-connected disabilities have been left out of this streamlined path to loan discharge due to a lack of communication between the Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, and federal student loan servicers. Therefore, the Department is directed, in coordination with the Department of Education (including its student loan servicers), to make every practical effort to automate the application of loan discharge to eligible veterans using information in existing federal databases at the Departments of Education and Veterans Affairs in a timely manner so that veterans can receive the benefits due under law. The Department is directed to submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress no later than 90 days after enactment of this act on the plan of action for implementing this automation process.