

S 734

Rural Veterans Health Care Access and Quality Act of 2009

Congress: 111 (2009–2011, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Mar 30, 2009

Current Status: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 111-76.

Latest Action: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 111-76. (Apr 22, 2009)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/senate-bill/734>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Akaka, Daniel K. [D-HI]

Party: Democratic • **State:** HI • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (2 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Baucus, Max [D-MT]	D · MT		Mar 30, 2009
Sen. Begich, Mark [D-AK]	D · AK		Mar 30, 2009

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Hearings By (full committee)	Apr 22, 2009

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Rural Veterans Health Care Access and Quality Act of 2009 - Removes the \$44,000-per-individual limit on authorized payments by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health professionals education debt reduction program. Requires notice to potential employees of their eligibility and selection for participation in such program.

Includes VA facilities in the list of medical facilities eligible for the assignment of participants under the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program.

Requires the Director of the VA's Office of Rural Health to develop an Office five-year strategic plan.

Authorizes the use of volunteer counselors as part of the Vet Center program.

Directs the Secretary to carry out a program of teleconsultation for the provision of remote mental health and traumatic brain injury assessments in VA facilities not otherwise able to provide such assessments without contracting out or reimbursing other providers for such services.

Requires the Secretary, for each Veterans Integrated Services Network, to negotiate with each party that has contracts to provide services at more than one community-based outpatient clinic in that Network to consolidate such contracts.

Directs the Secretary to designate a rural outreach coordinator at each such clinic at which not less than 50% of the veterans enrolled reside in a highly rural area. Provides for peer review of health care services and patient records within the Network.

Authorizes reimbursement for veterans' beneficiaries for air travel when it is the only practical way to reach a VA health care facility.

Directs the Secretary to carry out a pilot program on incentives for physicians who assume responsibilities of primary care and mental health services to veterans at community hospitals in health professional shortage areas.

Actions Timeline

- **Apr 22, 2009:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 111-76.
- **Mar 30, 2009:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 30, 2009:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S3988-3989)
- **Mar 30, 2009:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. (text of measure as introduced: CR S3989-3991)