

S 2265

Rural Veterans Improvement Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Nov 10, 2015

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. (Nov 10, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2265>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Udall, Tom [D-NM]

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

Cosponsors (1 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Moran, Jerry [R-KS]	R · KS		Nov 10, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Referred To	Nov 10, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Rural Veterans Improvement Act of 2015

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shall provide mental health care to a veteran who:

- has a mental health issue resulting from post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or other health condition incurred or aggravated on active duty; and
- lives in a rural or highly rural area.

Such care may be provided by contracting with or providing payments to mental health care providers that are not VA-affiliated.

Care shall be provided if:

- a VA-affiliated mental health care provider is not available at the nearest VA medical facility and in-person and telehealth VA mental health care services are not available, or travel to a regional VA medical center is impractical or severely detrimental to the veteran's health; and
- a VA-affiliated mental health care provider has recommended a complementary and alternative therapy to a veteran who is a member of an Indian tribe or a Native Hawaiian who requests a healing method that is part of his or her cultural tradition.

The VA may:

- award grants to state veterans agencies, veterans service organizations, and tribal organizations to provide transportation to and from medical centers to veterans in rural and highly rural areas who would otherwise be eligible for payment of travel expenses by the VA; and
- carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility of providing a housing allowance to health care providers who become VA employees and accept assignment at rural or highly rural community-based outpatient clinics.

The VA shall establish a program to train health care professionals for assignment at community-based outpatient clinics that predominantly serve veterans who live in rural and highly rural areas.

The VA and the Department of Defense shall jointly establish a program to encourage members of the Armed Forces with a health care-related military occupational specialty to seek post-service employment with the Veterans Health Administration.

The VA shall:

- periodically assess rural community-based outpatient clinics to determine whether their expansion and improvement are feasible or advisable, and
- report on the feasibility of establishing a Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center or Polytrauma Network Site in each area in which the nearest such center or site is more than 300 miles away.

Actions Timeline

- **Nov 10, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **Nov 10, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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