

## HR 1954

Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2017

**Congress:** 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

**Chamber:** House

**Policy Area:** Armed Forces and National Security

**Introduced:** Apr 5, 2017

**Current Status:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

**Latest Action:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel. (Apr 24, 2017)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1954>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Rep. Pingree, Chellie [D-ME-1]

**Party:** Democratic • **State:** ME • **Chamber:** House

### Cosponsors (16 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Del. Sablan, Gregorio Kilili Camacho [D-MP-At Large]	D · MP		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. Brownley, Julia [D-CA-26]	D · CA		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. DeLauro, Rosa L. [D-CT-3]	D · CT		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. Esty, Elizabeth H. [D-CT-5]	D · CT		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. Peters, Scott H. [D-CA-52]	D · CA		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. Rush, Bobby L. [D-IL-1]	D · IL		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. Takano, Mark [D-CA-41]	D · CA		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. Titus, Dina [D-NV-1]	D · NV		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. Tsongas, Niki [D-MA-3]	D · MA		Apr 5, 2017
Rep. McGovern, James P. [D-MA-2]	D · MA		Dec 21, 2017
Rep. Moore, Gwen [D-WI-4]	D · WI		Dec 21, 2017
Rep. Wilson, Frederica S. [D-FL-24]	D · FL		Dec 21, 2017
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Jan 17, 2018
Rep. Gallego, Ruben [D-AZ-7]	D · AZ		Apr 10, 2018
Rep. Poliquin, Bruce [R-ME-2]	R · ME		May 23, 2018
Rep. Dingell, Debbie [D-MI-12]	D · MI		Oct 19, 2018

### Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Armed Services Committee	House	Referred to	Apr 24, 2017
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Referred to	Apr 6, 2017

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
115 S 833	Identical bill	Jul 11, 2017: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 115-320.

Summary (as of Apr 5, 2017)

Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2017

This bill expands Department of Defense (DOD) sexual trauma counseling and treatment to include: (1) cyber harassment of a sexual nature, and (2) members of the Armed Forces on active duty for training or inactive duty training.

The bill sets forth the standard of proof, which may be rebutted, in the case of a veteran who claims that a covered mental health condition was incurred in or aggravated by military sexual trauma during active service. The reasons for granting or denying service-connection in each case shall be recorded in full.

DOD shall ensure that: (1) in a compensation claim for post-traumatic stress disorder based on sexual assault, battery, cyber harassment, or harassment experienced during active military service, non-DOD evidence may corroborate the veteran's account of such assault, battery, or harassment; and (2) behavior changes may be considered as corroborating evidence.

DOD shall: (1) report annually through 2027 on submitted claims to identify and track the consistency of decisions across regional offices, (2) inform members of the Armed Forces of their eligibility for services at Vet Centers, and (3) ensure that Sexual Assault Response Coordinators advise members of the Armed Forces who report instances of military sexual trauma about their eligibility for Vet Center services.

Actions Timeline

- **Apr 24, 2017:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.
- **Apr 6, 2017:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.
- **Apr 5, 2017:** Introduced in House
- **Apr 5, 2017:** Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.