

S 3025

Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2021

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Oct 20, 2021

Current Status: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 289.

Latest Action: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 289. (Mar 1, 2022)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3025>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Tester, Jon [D-MT]

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

Cosponsors (1 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Murkowski, Lisa [R-AK]	R · AK		Oct 20, 2021

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Reported By	Mar 1, 2022

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
117 HR 5666	Identical bill	Nov 2, 2021: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.

Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2021

This bill modifies and implements policies and procedures related to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care and benefits for veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma (MST), which is generally defined as physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment that occurred while the veteran was serving in the military.

The VA must report on MST in the digital age.

In the case of any veteran who claims that a covered mental health condition (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder) based on MST was incurred or aggravated by active service, the VA must accept specified diagnoses and evidence as proof of service-connection.

The VA may not deny a veteran's claim of compensation for a covered mental health condition based on MST without first (1) advising the veteran that nonmilitary evidence and behavioral evidence may constitute credible corroborating evidence, and (2) allowing the veteran an opportunity to furnish the corroborating evidence or advise the VA of potential sources of such evidence.

The Veterans Benefits Administration must conduct an annual special focus review on the accuracy of the processing of claims for disability compensation for disabilities relating to MST.

Additionally, the bill (1) expands access to mental health care at VA facilities for survivors of MST, and (2) requires the Government Accountability Office to report on access to such care for individuals who have experienced MST.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 1, 2022:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Reported by Senator Tester with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. Without written report.
- **Mar 1, 2022:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 289.
- **Dec 15, 2021:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.
- **Oct 20, 2021:** Introduced in Senate
- **Oct 20, 2021:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.