

HR 5666

Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2021

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Oct 21, 2021

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health. (Nov 2, 2021)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5666>

Sponsor

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

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

Cosponsors (21 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. Brownley, Julia [D-CA-26]	D · CA		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. DelBene, Suzan K. [D-WA-11]	D · WA		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. Dingell, Debbie [D-MI-12]	D · MI		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. Kilmer, Derek [D-WA-6]	D · WA		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. Kuster, Ann M. [D-NH-2]	D · NH		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. McGovern, James P. [D-MA-2]	D · MA		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. Rush, Bobby L. [D-IL-1]	D · IL		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. Titus, Dina [D-NV-1]	D · NV		Oct 21, 2021
Rep. Pappas, Chris [D-NH-1]	D · NH		Feb 8, 2022
Rep. Kind, Ron [D-WI-3]	D · WI		Mar 3, 2022
Del. Sablan, Gregorio Kilili Camacho [D-MP-At Large]	D · MP		Mar 16, 2022
Rep. Neguse, Joe [D-CO-2]	D · CO		Mar 16, 2022
Rep. Bourdeaux, Carolyn [D-GA-7]	D · GA		May 3, 2022
Rep. Perlmutter, Ed [D-CO-7]	D · CO		May 3, 2022
Rep. Vargas, Juan [D-CA-51]	D · CA		May 3, 2022
Rep. Dean, Madeleine [D-PA-4]	D · PA		May 11, 2022
Rep. Tlaib, Rashida [D-MI-13]	D · MI		May 11, 2022
Rep. Levin, Mike [D-CA-49]	D · CA		Jul 20, 2022
Rep. Malinowski, Tom [D-NJ-7]	D · NJ		Jul 20, 2022
Rep. DeGette, Diana [D-CO-1]	D · CO		Sep 30, 2022

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Armed Services Committee	House	Referred To	Oct 21, 2021
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Referred to	Nov 2, 2021

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
117 S 3025	Identical bill	Mar 1, 2022: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 289.

Summary (as of Oct 21, 2021)

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 revise its regulations to update the definition of MST to include matters relating to technological abuse.

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 VA and the Government Accountability Office to report on access to such care for MST survivors.

Actions Timeline

- **Nov 2, 2021:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.
- **Oct 21, 2021:** Introduced in House
- **Oct 21, 2021:** 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.