

## Plan to Expand Chiropractic Services in VA Clears Senate Committee

The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) applauds the U.S. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee for including provisions of the Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act ([S.422](#)), a bill that would improve veteran health care by expanding the availability of chiropractic services to more VA medical centers, in omnibus veterans' legislation.

The omnibus bill, the Veterans' Educational Transition Act of 2013 (S. 944), is designed to assist veterans' transition to normal life after their service is complete. It was approved by the committee on July 24 and will now go to the Senate floor for a final vote. Details of the chiropractic provisions included in the bill will be available when the committee issues its report in upcoming weeks.

Introduced by Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), S. 422 aims to increase patient access to the services provided by chiropractic physicians, which are currently available at less than a third of the 160 VA medical centers nationwide.

Further, repeated reports from the Veterans Health Administration indicate that more than half of all veterans returning from the Middle East and Southwest Asia who have sought VA health care were treated for symptoms associated with musculoskeletal ailments - the top complaint of those tracked for these reports. In a statement released after the chiropractic provisions cleared the committee vote, Sens. Blumenthal and Moran noted that veterans suffering from these types of conditions can be successfully and cost-effectively treated by doctors of chiropractic.

"Those who have made sacrifices for our country - especially veterans, active-duty military and their family members - deserve access to the best health care available, which includes the services provided by doctors of chiropractic," said ACA President Keith Overland, DC. "The Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act is a step in the right direction, and we give special thanks to Sens. Blumenthal and Moran for championing it."

Prior to collaborative efforts between the chiropractic profession, its congressional allies and VA, eligible veterans were referred to doctors of chiropractic serving in private practice outside the VA health care system.

"When we work together we can accomplish so much," said R. Jerry DeGrado, DC, chair of the Chiropractic Summit Government Relations Committee. "This is a great success not only for our profession and the patients we serve, but also for our heroes who deserve care for all they have sacrificed."

Rep. Mike Michaud (D-Maine), a ranking member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, introduced a companion bill in the U.S. House of Representatives, [H.R. 921](#).

Chiropractic physicians, chiropractic students and chiropractic supporters can [contact their congressional representatives](#) and urge them to cosponsor H.R. 921 to ensure the initiative passes this Congress.

*Source: American Chiropractic Association*

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