

115TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 5191

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish Alzheimer's Disease research, education, and clinical centers.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 7, 2018

Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish Alzheimer's Disease research, education, and clinical centers.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RE-**  
4 **SEARCH, EDUCATION, AND CLINICAL CEN-**  
5 **TERS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 73 of title 38, United  
7 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 7330B  
8 the following new section:

1 **“§ 7330C. Alzheimer’s Disease research, education,**  
2 **and clinical centers.**

3 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTERS.—(1) The Sec-  
4 retary, upon the recommendation of the Under Secretary  
5 for Health, shall designate not less than three Department  
6 health-care facilities as the locations for centers of Alz-  
7 heimer’s Disease research, education, and clinical activi-  
8 ties.

9 “(2) Subject to the availability of appropriations for  
10 such purpose, the Secretary shall establish and operate  
11 centers of Alzheimer’s Disease research, education, and  
12 clinical activities centers at the locations designated pursu-  
13 ant to paragraph (1).

14 “(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATION.—(1) The  
15 Secretary may not designate a Department health-care fa-  
16 cility as a location for a center under subsection (a) unless  
17 the peer review panel established under subsection (c) has  
18 determined under that subsection that the proposal sub-  
19 mitted by such facility as a location for a new center under  
20 subsection (a) is among those proposals that meet the  
21 highest competitive standards of scientific and clinical  
22 merit.

23 “(2) The Secretary may not designate a Department  
24 health-care facility as a location for a center under sub-  
25 section (a) unless the Secretary (upon the recommenda-  
26 tion of the Under Secretary for Health) determines that

1 the facility has (or may reasonably be anticipated to de-  
2 velop) each of the following:

3           “(A) An arrangement with an accredited med-  
4 ical school that provides education and training in  
5 neurology and with which the Department health-  
6 care facility is affiliated under which residents re-  
7 ceive education and training in innovative diagnosis  
8 and treatment of chronic neurodegenerative diseases  
9 and forms of dementia, including Alzheimer’s Dis-  
10 ease.

11           “(B) The ability to attract the participation of  
12 scientists who are capable of ingenuity and creativity  
13 in health-care research efforts.

14           “(C) An advisory committee composed of vet-  
15 erans and appropriate health-care and research rep-  
16 resentatives of the Department health-care facility  
17 and of the affiliated school or schools to advise the  
18 directors of such facility and such center on policy  
19 matters pertaining to the activities of the center dur-  
20 ing the period of the operation of such center.

21           “(D) The capability to conduct effectively eval-  
22 uations of the activities of such center.

23           “(E) The capability to coordinate (as part of an  
24 integrated national system) education, clinical, and

1 research activities within all facilities with such cen-  
2 ters.

3 “(F) The capability to jointly develop a consor-  
4 tium of providers with interest in treating Alz-  
5 heimer’s Disease and other forms of dementia, at fa-  
6 cilities without centers established under subsection  
7 (a) in order to ensure better access to state-of-the-  
8 art diagnosis, care, and education for neurodegener-  
9 ative disorders throughout the health-care system of  
10 the Department.

11 “(G) The capability to develop a national repos-  
12 itory in the health-care system of the Department  
13 for the collection of data on health services delivered  
14 to veterans seeking care for neurodegenerative dis-  
15 eases, including Alzheimer’s Disease and dementia.

16 “(H) A scientific specialization in a field of re-  
17 search likely to be transformative to the development  
18 of a cure or treatment for Alzheimer’s Disease, in-  
19 cluding the capability to study the connection be-  
20 tween Alzheimer’s Disease and Down Syndrome.

21 “(c) PEER REVIEW PANEL.—(1) The Under Sec-  
22 retary for Health shall establish a panel to assess the sci-  
23 entific and clinical merit of proposals that are submitted  
24 to the Secretary for the establishment of centers under  
25 this section.

1       “(2)(A) The membership of the panel shall consist  
2 of experts in neurodegenerative diseases, including Alz-  
3 heimer’s Disease and forms of dementia. At least one  
4 member of the panel shall include an expert on the connec-  
5 tion between Down Syndrome and Alzheimer’s Disease.

6       “(B) Members of the panel shall serve for a period  
7 of no longer than two years, except as specified in sub-  
8 paragraph (C).

9       “(C) Of the members first appointed to the panel,  
10 one-half shall be appointed for a period of three years and  
11 one-half shall be appointed for a period of two years, as  
12 designated by the Under Secretary at the time of appoint-  
13 ment.

14       “(3) The panel shall review each proposal submitted  
15 to the panel by the Under Secretary and shall submit its  
16 views on the relative scientific and clinical merit of each  
17 such proposal to the Under Secretary.

18       “(4) The panel shall not be subject to the Federal  
19 Advisory Committee Act.

20       “(d) PRIORITY OF FUNDING.—Before providing  
21 funds for the operation of a center designated under this  
22 section at a Department health-care facility, the Secretary  
23 shall ensure that each Alzheimer’s Disease center at a fa-  
24 cility so designated is receiving adequate funding to enable  
25 that center to function effectively in the areas of Alz-

1 heimer’s Disease research, education, and clinical activi-  
2 ties.

3       “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
4 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be  
5 necessary for the support of the research and education  
6 activities of the centers established pursuant to subsection  
7 (a). The Under Secretary for Health shall allocate to such  
8 centers from other funds appropriated generally for the  
9 Department medical services account and medical and  
10 prosthetics research account, as appropriate, such  
11 amounts as the Under Secretary for Health determines  
12 appropriate.

13       “(f) AWARD COMPETITIONS.—Activities of clinical  
14 and scientific investigation at each center established  
15 under subsection (a) shall be eligible to compete for the  
16 award of funding from funds appropriated for the Depart-  
17 ment medical and prosthetics research account. Such ac-  
18 tivities shall receive priority in the award of funding from  
19 such account insofar as funds are awarded to projects for  
20 research in Alzheimer’s Disease and other forms of de-  
21 mentia.”.

22       (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
23 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting

- 1 after the item relating to section 7330B the following new
- 2 item:

“7330C. Alzheimer’s Disease research, education, and clinical centers.”.

