

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1139

To amend the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019 to modify and reauthorize the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 26, 2025

Mr. MORAN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019 to modify and reauthorize the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Helping Optimize Pre-  
5 vention and Engagement for Heroes Act of 2025” or the  
6 “HOPE for Heroes Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. MODIFICATIONS TO AND REAUTHORIZATION OF**  
2 **THE STAFF SERGEANT PARKER GORDON FOX**  
3 **SUICIDE PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM OF**  
4 **THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) **COORDINATION BY SECRETARY.**—Subsection (b)  
6 of section 201 of the Commander John Scott Hannon Vet-  
7 erans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019 (38  
8 U.S.C. 1720F note; Public Law 116–171) is amended, in  
9 the second sentence, by striking “the Office of Mental  
10 Health and Suicide Prevention” and inserting “the Assist-  
11 ant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services”.

12 (b) **USE OF GRANT FUNDS.**—Subsection (c) of such  
13 section is amended—

14 (1) in the subsection heading, by inserting “;  
15 **USE OF GRANT FUNDS**” after “**GRANTS**”;

16 (2) in paragraph (2)(A)—

17 (A) by striking “a maximum” and insert-  
18 ing “except as provided in paragraph (3), a  
19 maximum”; and

20 (B) by striking “\$750,000” and inserting  
21 “\$1,000,000”; and

22 (3) by adding at the end the following new  
23 paragraphs:

24 “(3) **ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.**—

25 “(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may  
26 award amounts to a grantee in addition to the

1 maximum amount under paragraph (2)(A)  
2 based on a performance-based metric estab-  
3 lished by the Secretary.

4 “(B) PERFORMANCE.—The performance-  
5 based metric established under subparagraph  
6 (A) with respect to a grantee shall be based on  
7 the number of individuals who go through the  
8 intake process to receive suicide prevention  
9 services from the grantee under this section.

10 “(C) LIMIT.—The additional amount au-  
11 thorized under subparagraph (A) may not ex-  
12 ceed \$500,000 per grantee per fiscal year.

13 “(4) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—For any grant  
14 awarded under this section—

15 “(A) not more than 30 percent of the  
16 grant funds may be spent on administrative  
17 costs; and

18 “(B) not more than five percent of the  
19 grant funds may be spent on food and bev-  
20 erages.”.

21 (c) COORDINATION BY GRANT RECIPIENTS.—Sub-  
22 section (e)(3) of such section is amended—

23 (1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and  
24 (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively; and

1           (2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the fol-  
2           lowing new subparagraph (B):

3                   “(B) coordinate with the Secretary to de-  
4           velop a plan for communication between the en-  
5           tity and local suicide prevention coordinators  
6           regarding whether veterans receiving assistance  
7           under this section from the entity are attending  
8           appointments to ensure continuity of care;”.

9           (d) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Sub-  
10          section (g) of such section is amended—

11                   (1) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “, includ-  
12          ing training on how to properly use the Columbia  
13          Protocol (also known as the Columbia-Suicide Sever-  
14          ity Rating Scale (C-SSRS))” after “management”;  
15          and

16                   (2) by adding at the end the following new  
17          paragraph:

18                   “(3) TRAINING FOR DEPARTMENT EMPLOY-  
19          EES.—The Secretary shall provide training to em-  
20          ployees of the Department on the grant program  
21          under this section.”.

22           (e) BRIEFING FOR LOCAL VAMCs.—Subsection (h)  
23          of such section is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
24          lowing new paragraph:

1           “(5) BRIEFING FOR LOCAL VAMCS.—Not less  
2 frequently than once per calendar quarter, the Sec-  
3 retary shall provide, to the appropriate personnel of  
4 each medical center of the Department located not  
5 more than 100 miles from the primary location of a  
6 recipient of a grant under this section, a briefing  
7 about the grant program under this section in order  
8 to improve coordination between such recipient and  
9 personnel.”.

10          (f) DURATION.—Subsection (j) of such section is  
11 amended by striking “the date that is three years after  
12 the date on which the first grant is awarded under this  
13 section” and inserting “September 30, 2030”.

14          (g) INTERIM REPORT.—Subsection (k)(1)(B) of such  
15 section is amended by adding at the end the following new  
16 clause:

17                           “(xiii) A description of the Secretary’s  
18 compliance with the requirement to train  
19 employees of the Department under sub-  
20 section (g)(3).”.

21          (h) EMERGENT SUICIDE CARE.—Subsection (n) of  
22 such section is amended—

23                   (1) by striking “When the Secretary” and in-  
24 serting the following:

25                   “(1) IN GENERAL.—When the Secretary”; and

1           (2) by adding at the end the following new  
2 paragraph:

3           “(2) EMERGENT SUICIDE CARE.—If the Sec-  
4 retary does not provide mental health or behavioral  
5 health care services under paragraph (1) to an eligi-  
6 ble individual during the 72-hour period following a  
7 referral under subsection (m), such eligible indi-  
8 vidual shall be treated as eligible for emergent sui-  
9 cide care under section 1720J of title 38, United  
10 States Code.”.

11          (i) REAUTHORIZATION.—Subsection (p) of such sec-  
12 tion is amended by striking “2025” and inserting “2030”.

13          (j) TECHNICAL CORRECTION TO DEFINITIONS.—  
14 Subsection (q)(5) of such section is amended, in the first  
15 sentence—

16           (1) by striking “Medical services” and inserting  
17 “The term ‘emergency treatment’ means medical  
18 services”; and

19           (2) by striking “was rendered” and inserting  
20 “rendered”.

21          (k) DEFINITION OF RISK OF SUICIDE.—Subsection  
22 (q)(8)(A) of such section is amended by striking “any of  
23 the following (to a degree determined by the Secretary  
24 pursuant to regulations)” and inserting “any of the fol-

1 lowing health, environmental, or historical risk factors (to  
2 any degree)”.  
3

3 (l) SUICIDE PREVENTION SERVICES.—

4 (1) REQUIRED USE OF CERTAIN SCREENING  
5 PROTOCOL.—Subsection (q)(11)(A)(ii) of such sec-  
6 tion is amended by adding at the end the following  
7 new sentence: “In the case of a recipient of a grant  
8 awarded under this section on or after the date of  
9 the enactment of the Helping Optimize Prevention  
10 and Engagement for Heroes Act of 2025, such  
11 screening shall be the Columbia Protocol (also  
12 known as the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating  
13 Scale (C-SSRS)).”.

14 (2) TRANSPORTATION.—Subsection (q)(11)(A)  
15 of such section is amended—

16 (A) by redesignating clause (xi) as clause  
17 (xii); and

18 (B) by inserting after clause (x) the fol-  
19 lowing new clause:

20 “(xi) Transportation and rideshare  
21 services for eligible individuals to use for  
22 appointments.”.

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