

Healthcare for Our Troops Act

Senator Tammy Baldwin

This bill addresses the Chief of the National Guard Bureau's [most pressing concern](#): healthcare for our troops, no matter the duty status. Sixteen percent of Reserve and National Guard members – roughly 130,000 men and women who have volunteered to serve our country – do not have private health insurance. This number is expected to grow alongside the civilian unemployment rate. The last two years have been some of the busiest years for the National Guard and Reserve since [World War II](#). This legislation is needed to ensure that all servicemembers are medically insured and militarily ready when they step up to serve.

The Healthcare for Our Troops Act would:

Ensure every service member has healthcare

- Provide premium-free/zero cost sharing medical coverage for Selected Reserve members eligible for TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS)
- Address financial barriers to seeking mental health care

Improve readiness

- Prepare service members for no-notice deployments
- Provide comprehensive treatment for illnesses and injuries which affect medical readiness, regardless of duty status
- Require a study on eliminating annual physicals during drill and replacing them with forms to be completed by civilian providers to assess medical readiness--giving commanders back valuable training days and saving over \$162 million annually in contracted medical assessments

Provide incentives for service and hiring service members

- Provide an employer incentive to hiring Guard and Reserve members by lessening demand for employer-sponsored healthcare plans
- Eliminate the statutory language that excludes Federal Employees Health Benefits Program eligibles from TRICARE Reserve Select eligibility

Guaranteeing healthcare for our troops requires less than a 3% increase in funding for Reserve Component personnel accounts but it would pay dividends in deployability, suicide prevention, recruiting, and retention. This bill is a companion to bipartisan legislation on the House side. The bill is bipartisan, led by Rep. Kim (D-NJ) and Rep. Trent Kelly (R-MS) with a group of 27 bipartisan cosponsors.

Orgs Endorsing the House bill: National Guard Association of the U.S. (NGAUS), Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S. (EANGUS), Association of the United States Army (AUSA), Chief Warrant Officers Association of the U.S. Coast Guard, Fleet Reserve Association, Naval Enlisted Reserve Association, Reserve Organization of America (formerly Reserve Officers Association), Air Force Sergeants Association, the Wounded Warrior Project, VoteVets, and the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), AMVETS, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), Marine Corps League (MCL), National Military Family Association (NMFA), AMSUS - The Society of Federal Health Professionals, Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service (COA), U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association and Enlisted Association (CPOA and CGEA), Fleet Reserve Association (FRA), Gold Star Wives of America (GSW), Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV), Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA), Military Chaplains Association (MCA), Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), The Enlisted Association (TREA), United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA), VetsFirst,