

**H.R. 8800—NATIONAL DEFENSE  
AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027**

**CHAIRMAN’S MARK**

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## **DIVISION A—DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATIONS**

### **TITLE V—MILITARY PERSONNEL POLICY**

#### **ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

Acceptance Of State-Recognized Custody Documentation for Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System Enrollment

The committee is aware of concerns expressed by servicemembers related to utilization of the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and the administrative hurdles that delay servicemembers and their families from obtaining ID cards, TRICARE coverage, and access to other important benefits.

The committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than March 31, 2027, on the Department of Defense's ability to accept custody or placement documents that are legally valid under all 54 state and territorial laws regardless of whether it was signed by a judge, magistrate, or court clerk. This briefing should include the following information:

(2) an assessment of the workforce, infrastructure, and digital systems that support perioperative services, including identification of capability gaps affecting care delivery in deployed, austere, or far-forward operational environments;

(3) an analysis of infrastructure and technology platforms supporting perioperative services, including electronic health records, operating room management systems, sterile processing systems, data analytics and performance monitoring tools, interoperability with private-sector partners and referral networks, and any other technology platforms the Secretary of Defense determines appropriate;

(4) a description of clinical quality assurance programs, patient safety practices, credentialing and privileging oversight, and performance monitoring activities applicable to perioperative care, including those conducted pursuant to section 1094 of title 10, United States Code, and other relevant statutory authorities; and

(5) an evaluation of clinical quality and patient safety outcomes, including trends in adverse events, compliance with established safety protocols, benchmarking against appropriate civilian health systems, and the adequacy of data collection, reporting, and transparency mechanisms.

#### Plan for Testing for Helicobacter Pylori for Certain Members of the Armed Forces

The committee is aware Active Duty servicemembers are at increased risk of contracting Helicobacter pylori (*H. pylori*), especially if they are deployed outside the continental United States in areas in which it is highly prevalent, or if they are subject to crowded living conditions. The vast majority of stomach cancers are caused by *H. pylori*. The bacteria also cause ulcers, gastritis and MALT lymphoma. Many people do not have any symptoms until an advanced disease state. Research has shown that approximately one fourth of the U.S. veteran population may be at risk for some consequence of chronic *H. pylori* infection. However, studies show that when *H. pylori* are detected through testing and then eradicated with antibiotics, the risk of developing stomach cancer and other diseases drops significantly. The committee is also aware that current recommendations are that all patients with *H. pylori* infection should be treated, and re-tested to confirm successful eradication, and that adults living with those infected need to be tested.

Therefore, the committee directs the Director of the Defense Health Agency to provide a report to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than January 31, 2027, on the following:

(1) current Armed Services adherence to clinical guidelines to detect and treat *H. pylori* in Active Duty servicemembers, including the testing, treatment and retesting protocols and modalities used;

(2) a plan, cost estimate and feasibility study for implementing *H. pylori* testing and treatment for Active Duty servicemembers during accession physicals for the Armed Forces, and for members of the Armed Forces deployed to countries

with high rates of *H. pylori* or subjected to crowded living conditions, such as ship berthing; and

(3) an estimate of costs for implementing a program for conducting testing using breath and stool-based methods.

### Results of Prohibition of Painful Animal Research

Section 732 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026 (Public Law 119-60) prohibited the Department of Defense from conducting or supporting painful research on dogs and cats. The committee also recognizes the Department of Defense's other efforts to eliminate harmful dog and cat research, including the implementation of a ban by the Secretary of the Navy. Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than March 30, 2027, that includes, at a minimum, the following:

(1) a list of all grants and contracts supporting painful dog and cat research that were ended or modified because of the funding prohibition in Public Law 119-60;

(2) a list of all grants and contracts supporting dog and cat research that were ended or modified because of other Department-wide efforts since January 27, 2025;

(3) an estimate of taxpayer dollars saved by these programmatic changes;

(4) an estimate of how much dog and cat use was avoided by these programmatic changes;

(5) a list of any waivers granted per section 732 of Public Law 119-60, including the detailed justification for each; and

(6) an assessment of all Department-wide policies governing the use of dogs and cats in research.

### Suicide Analytic Variable Evaluation System

The committee notes the Department of the Air Force's ongoing efforts to address suicide, including the development of the Suicide Analytic Variable Evaluation System (SAVES), an artificial intelligence-enabled capability intended to identify and mitigate suicide risk among servicemembers through advanced data analysis. To better understand the SAVES program's current performance, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to submit a report to the Senate Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Armed Services not later than January 1, 2027, that includes:

(1) the current status of SAVES, including key milestones achieved in its development and integration;

(2) the metrics and methodologies used by the Department of the Air Force to assess the effectiveness of SAVES, including measures of accuracy, reliability, and impact on suicide prevention outcomes;