

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1646

To provide for the care of veterans affected by Hurricane Katrina.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2005

Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. REID, and Mrs. MURRAY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To provide for the care of veterans affected by Hurricane Katrina.

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. HEALTH CARE AND SERVICES FOR VETERANS**

4 **AFFECTED BY HURRICANE KATRINA.**

5 (a) REQUIREMENT FOR HOSPITAL CARE AND MED-
6 ICAL SERVICES FOR PRIORITY 8 VETERANS AFFECTED BY
7 HURRICANE KATRINA.—

8 (1) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans
9 Affairs shall furnish hospital care and medical serv-
10 ices which the Secretary determines to be needed to

1 each priority 8 veteran affected by Hurricane
2 Katrina as if such veteran were a veteran described
3 by section 1710(a)(2) of title 38, United States
4 Code.

5 (2) ENHANCED ENROLLMENT PRIORITY.—For
6 purposes of furnishing hospital care and medical
7 services under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall
8 deem each priority 8 veteran affected by Hurricane
9 Katrina, upon the date of presentation of such vet-
10 eran to the Department of Veterans Affairs for such
11 care and services, to have enrolled in the system of
12 annual patient enrollment of the Department under
13 section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, on
14 the first day of the current year of such system in
15 which such date falls.

16 (b) PROHIBITION ON COLLECTION OF COPAYMENTS
17 FOR VETERANS AFFECTED BY HURRICANE KATRINA.—
18 In furnishing hospital care and medical services to any
19 veteran affected by Hurricane Katrina, the Secretary shall
20 not collect from or with respect to such veteran any pay-
21 ment for such care and services otherwise required under
22 any provision of law, including any copayment for medica-
23 tions otherwise required under section 1722A of title 38,
24 United States Code.

25 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) The term “veteran affected by Hurricane
2 Katrina” means any veteran who, as of August 29,
3 2005, resided in the catchment region of the Depart-
4 ment of Veterans Affairs medical center in New Or-
5 leans, Louisiana, Biloxi, Mississippi, or Gulfport,
6 Mississippi.

7 (2) The term “priority 8 veteran affected by
8 Hurricane Katrina” means any veteran affected by
9 Hurricane Katrina who, as of August 29, 2005,
10 would have been treated as a veteran covered by
11 paragraph (8) of section 1705(a) of title 38, United
12 States Code, for purposes of enrollment in the sys-
13 tem of annual patient enrollment of the Department
14 of Veterans Affairs under such section.

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