

110TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6930

To amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize extended benefits for certain autistic dependents of certain retirees.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2008

Mr. MORAN of Virginia (for himself, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Ms. WOOLSEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize extended benefits for certain autistic dependents of certain retirees.

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. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress finds the following:

5 (1) The National Institute of Neurological Dis-  
6 orders and Stroke states that autism is a common  
7 condition in a group of developmental disorders  
8 known as the autism spectrum disorders and is char-  
9 acterized by impaired social interaction, problems

1 with verbal and nonverbal communication, and un-  
2 usual, repetitive, or severely limited activities and in-  
3 terests.

4 (2) According to a February 2007 study by the  
5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in  
6 150 children that had reached the age of 8 had au-  
7 tism or an autism spectrum disorder such as  
8 Asperger's syndrome, Rett syndrome, childhood dis-  
9 integrative disorder, or a pervasive developmental  
10 disorder not otherwise specified.

11 (3) The Department of Defense introduced the  
12 Extended Care Health Option program to provide  
13 coverage to active duty members of the Armed  
14 Forces for applied behavioral analysis, a treatment  
15 for the symptoms of autism spectrum disorders. Ac-  
16 tive duty member beneficiaries are covered for ap-  
17 plied behavioral analysis treatment for up to \$2,500  
18 per month with a maximum of \$30,000 per year.

19 (4) According to a Harvard School of Public  
20 Health report, without effective intervention, ap-  
21 proximately 90 percent of individuals with an autism  
22 spectrum disorder require lifelong care, which costs  
23 an estimated \$3.2 million over a child's lifetime. Ap-  
24 plied behavioral analysis therapy has been shown to  
25 be effective in reducing the percentage of individuals

1 with an autism spectrum disorder that require life-  
2 long care to less than 50 percent and reducing the  
3 costs of lifelong care by two-thirds.

4 (5) Benefits of the Extended Care Health Op-  
5 tion program are not available to military retirees  
6 enrolled in TRICARE, but in a letter dated June  
7 23, 2008, the Department of Defense stated that  
8 there are 8,784 retirees with dependants diagnosed  
9 with an autism spectrum disorder.

10 **SEC. 2. EXTENDED CARE HEALTH OPTION PROGRAM FOR**  
11 **AUTISTIC DEPENDENTS OF CERTAIN RETIR-**  
12 **EES.**

13 (a) AUTHORIZATION FOR EXTENDED BENEFITS FOR  
14 AUTISTIC DEPENDENTS OF CERTAIN RETIREES.—Sec-  
15 tion 1086 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by  
16 adding at the end the following new subsection:

17 “(i)(1) The extended benefits program shall apply to  
18 any covered retiree with respect to any dependent of such  
19 a retiree if the dependent is—

20 “(A) described in subparagraph (D) or (I) of  
21 section 1072(2) of this title;

22 “(B) diagnosed with autism; and

23 “(C) not entitled to benefits under part A of  
24 title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

25 “(2) In this subsection:

1           “(A) The term ‘extended benefits program’  
2 means the program provided pursuant to subsections  
3 (d), (e), and (f) of section 1079 of this title.

4           “(B) The term ‘covered retiree’ means any per-  
5 son eligible for health benefits under this section by  
6 reason of coverage by section 1074(b) (as described  
7 in subsection (c)(1) of this section) who is—

8                   “(i) not entitled to benefits under part A  
9 of title XVIII of the Social Security Act; and

10                   “(ii) not enrolled under part B of such  
11 title.

12           “(C) The term ‘autism’ refers to the autism  
13 spectrum disorders, which are developmental disabil-  
14 ities that cause substantial impairments in the areas  
15 of social interaction, emotional regulation, commu-  
16 nication, and the integration of higher-order cog-  
17 nitive processes and are often characterized by the  
18 presence of unusual behaviors and interests. The  
19 term includes autistic disorder, pervasive develop-  
20 mental disorder (not otherwise specified), Asperger’s  
21 syndrome, and any of the pervasive disorders as de-  
22 fined by the most recent edition of the Diagnostic  
23 and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.”.

24           (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
25 subsection (a) shall apply to benefits under the extended

- 1 benefits program for items and services furnished on or
- 2 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

