

**AMENDMENT TO H.R. 4200, AS REPORTED
OFFERED BY MR. BAIRD OF WASHINGTON**

At the end of title VII (page 306, after line 13), insert the following new section:

1 **SEC. 723. STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.**

2 (a) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Defense
3 shall conduct a study of mental health services available
4 to members of the Armed Forces.

5 (b) **PERSONS COVERED.**—The study shall evaluate
6 the availability and effectiveness of existing mental health
7 treatment and screening resources—

8 (1) for members of the Armed Forces during a
9 deployment to a combat theater;

10 (2) for members of the Armed Forces returning
11 from a deployment to a combat theater, both—

12 (A) in the short-term, post-deployment pe-
13 riod; and

14 (B) in the long-term, following the post-de-
15 ployment period;

16 (3) for the families of members of the Armed
17 Forces who have been deployed to a combat theater
18 during the time of the deployment;

19 (4) for the families of members of the Armed
20 Forces who have been deployed to a combat theater



1 after the member has returned from the deployment;
2 and

3 (5) for members of the Armed Forces and their
4 families described in this subsection who are mem-
5 bers of Reserve components.

6 (c) ASSESSMENT OF OBSTACLES.—The study shall
7 provide an assessment of existing obstacles that prevent
8 members of the Armed Forces and military families in
9 need of mental health services from obtaining these serv-
10 ices, including—

11 (1) the extent to which existing confidentiality
12 regulations, or lack thereof, inhibit members of the
13 Armed Forces from seeking mental health treat-
14 ment;

15 (2) the implications that a decision to seek
16 mental health services can have on a military career;

17 (3) the extent to which a social stigma exists
18 within the Armed Forces that prevents members of
19 the Armed Forces and military families from seeking
20 mental health treatment within the Department of
21 Defense and the individual Armed Forces;

22 (4) the extent to which logistical obstacles, par-
23 ticularly with respect to members of the Armed
24 Forces and families residing in rural areas, deter



1 members in need of mental health services from ob-
2 taining them; and

3 (5) the extent to which members of the Armed
4 Forces and their families are prevented or hampered
5 from obtaining mental health treatment due to the
6 cost of such services.

7 (d) IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS UNIQUE TO RE-
8 SERVES.—The study shall identify potential problems in
9 obtaining mental health treatment that are unique to
10 members of Reserve components.

11 (e) REPORT.—The Secretary of Defense shall submit
12 to Congress a report on the study conducted under this
13 section not later than 90 days after the date of the enact-
14 ment of this Act. The report shall contain the results of
15 the study and make specific recommendations—

16 (1) for improving the effectiveness and accessi-
17 bility of mental health services provided by Depart-
18 ment of Defense to the persons listed in subsection
19 (b), including recommendations to ensure appro-
20 priate referrals and a seamless transition to the care
21 of the Department of Veterans Affairs following sep-
22 aration from the Armed Forces;

23 (2) for removing or mitigating any obstacles
24 identified under subsection (c); and



1 (3) for steps that can be taken by the Depart-
2 ment of Defense or Congress to bring parity to men-
3 tal health services available to members of Reserve
4 components and members of the Armed Forces on
5 active duty.

