

# The Grow Our Own Directive (GOOD) Pilot Program

## (S.2134) - A BIPARTISAN BILL TO ADDRESS WORKFORCE SHORTAGES AT THE VA AND IMPROVE VETERANS' TIMELY ACCESS TO CARE

### SEC 1. SHORT TITLE.

This act may be cited as the "Grow Our Own Directive: Physician Assistant Employment and Education Act of 2015".

### SEC 2.

#### ESTABLISHES A FIVE-YEAR GROW OUR OWN DIRECTIVE (GOOD) PILOT PROGRAM.

This legislation takes veterans with medical or military health experience and provides them with educational assistance to become certified physician assistants (PA) for employment at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

- Prioritizes veterans who participated in the Intermediate Care Technician Program as well as individuals who plan to work in VA health facilities that are designated as medically underserved in states with a high population of veterans.
- Ensures there are mentors available for individuals participating in the GOOD pilot program.
- Requires the VA to partner with institutions of higher education to guarantee enrollment for individuals participating in GOOD.
- Provide funding, staff, and support to the Office of Physician Assistant Services of the Veterans Health Administration.

### SEC 3.

#### PRIORITIZES PAs IN THE VA's EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

This legislation improves the VA's use of educational assistance programs to educate and hire physician assistants (PA).

- Ensures VA Education Debt Reduction Program is available for participants of the GOOD pilot program.
- Encourages VA employees to apply to accredited PA educational programs.

### SEC 4.

#### ENHANCES THE VA's ABILITY TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN PAs.

This legislation establishes pay grades and requires competitive pay for PAs employed at the VA.

### THIS LEGISLATION IS ENDORSED BY THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:



AFGE:  
The Union for  
Government  
Employees



American Academy of  
Physician Assistants (AAPA)



Vietnam  
Veterans of  
America



Blinded Veterans Association



Veterans Affairs Physicians  
Assistant Association (VAPAA)

U.S. SENATOR FOR MONTANA  
**JON TESTER**