

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To enhance the military childcare programs and activities of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. COTTON) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To enhance the military childcare programs and activities of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Availability of Child
5 Care for Every Servicemember and Spouse Act” or “AC-
6 CESS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. HOURS OF OPERATION OF CHILDCARE DEVELOP-**
2 **MENT CENTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DE-**
3 **FENSE.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The hours of operation of each
5 childcare development center (CDC) of the Department of
6 Defense shall, to the extent practicable, be set and main-
7 tained in manner that takes into account the demands and
8 circumstances of members of the Armed Forces, including
9 members of the reserve components, who use such center
10 in facilitation of the performance of their military duties.

11 (b) MATTERS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.—The
12 demands and circumstances to be taken into account
13 under subsection (a) for purposes of setting and maintain-
14 ing the hours of operation of a childcare development cen-
15 ter shall include the following:

16 (1) Mission requirements of units whose mem-
17 bers use such center.

18 (2) The unpredictability of work schedules, and
19 fluctuations in day-to-day work hours, of such mem-
20 bers.

21 (3) The potential for frequent and prolonged
22 absences of such members for training, operations,
23 and deployments.

24 (4) The location of such center on the military
25 installation concerned, including the location in con-

1 nection with duty locations of members and applica-
2 ble military family housing.

3 (5) The geographic separation of such members
4 from their extended family.

5 (6) The extent to which spouses of such mem-
6 bers are employed or pursuing educational opportu-
7 nities, whether on a full-time basis or a part-time
8 basis.

9 (7) Such other matters as the Secretary of the
10 military department concerned considers appropriate
11 for purposes of this section.

12 **SEC. 3. CHILDCARE COORDINATORS FOR MILITARY IN-**
13 **STALLATIONS.**

14 (a) CHILDCARE COORDINATORS.—Each Secretary of
15 a military department shall provide for a childcare coordi-
16 nator at each military installation under the jurisdiction
17 of such Secretary at which are stationed significant num-
18 bers of members of the Armed Forces with accompanying
19 dependent children, as determined by such Secretary.

20 (b) NATURE OF POSITION.—The childcare coordi-
21 nator for a military installation may be an individual ap-
22 pointed to that position on full-time or part-time basis or
23 an individual appointed to another position whose duties
24 in such other position are consistent with the discharge
25 by the person of the duties of childcare coordinator.

1 (c) DUTIES.—Each childcare coordinator for an in-
2 stallation shall carry out the duties as follows:

3 (1) Act as an advocate for military families at
4 the installation on childcare matters both on-instal-
5 lation and off-installation.

6 (2) Work with the commander of the installa-
7 tion in order to seek to ensure that the childcare de-
8 velopment centers at the installation, together with
9 any other available childcare options on or in the vi-
10 cinity of the installation—

11 (A) provide a quality of care (including a
12 caregiver-to-child ratio) commensurate with
13 best practices of private providers of childcare
14 services; and

15 (B) are responsive to the childcare needs
16 of members stationed at the installation and
17 their families.

18 (3) Work with private providers of childcare
19 services in the vicinity of the installation in order
20 to—

21 (A) track vacancies in the childcare facili-
22 ties of such providers;

23 (B) seek to obtain favorable prices for the
24 use of such services by members stationed at
25 the installation; and

1 (C) otherwise ease the use of such services
2 by such members.

3 (4) Such other duties as the Secretary of the
4 military department concerned shall specify.

5 **SEC. 4. PILOT PROGRAM ON COLLABORATION BETWEEN**
6 **INSTALLATION COMMANDERS AND PRIVATE**
7 **PROVIDERS OF CHILDCARE SERVICES IN THE**
8 **VICINITY OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS FOR**
9 **ACCESS TO CHILDCARE SERVICES.**

10 (a) PILOT PROGRAMS REQUIRED.—Each Secretary
11 of a military department shall carry out a pilot program
12 to assess the feasibility and advisability of permitting
13 commanders of military installations under the jurisdic-
14 tion of such Secretary at which are stationed significant
15 numbers of members of the Armed Forces with accom-
16 panying dependent children, as determined by such Sec-
17 retary, to collaborate with private providers of childcare
18 services in the vicinity of such installations to reserve for
19 such members access to all or a portion of the childcare
20 services of such providers.

21 (b) COMMENCEMENT.—The pilot programs required
22 by this section shall be commenced not later than 180 days
23 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

24 (c) MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.—Each pilot program
25 under this section shall be carried out by the Secretary

1 of the military department concerned at not less than four
2 military installations described in subsection (a) that are
3 selected by such Secretary for purposes of such pilot pro-
4 gram.

5 (d) DISCHARGE OF COLLABORATION.—The com-
6 mander of a military installation participating in a pilot
7 program under this section may conduct collaboration de-
8 scribed in subsection (a) under the pilot program through
9 one or more individuals designated by the commander for
10 that purpose, including, in particular, the childcare coordi-
11 nator for the military installation under section 3.

12 (e) REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the
13 commencement of a pilot program under this section, the
14 Secretary of the military department concerned shall sub-
15 mit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate
16 and the House of Representatives a report on the pilot
17 program. Each report on a pilot program shall include the
18 following:

19 (1) A description of the pilot program, includ-
20 ing the installations at which the pilot program was
21 carried out and the collaboration described in sub-
22 section (a) that occurred at each such installation.

23 (2) An assessment of the efficacy of the collabo-
24 ration in improving the satisfaction of military fami-
25 lies with access to childcare services.

1 (3) An assessment of the pilot program by the
2 commanders and other leadership of the installations
3 participating in the pilot program.

4 (4) An assessment of the feasibility and advis-
5 ability of expanding the pilot program throughout
6 the military department concerned, including rec-
7 ommendations on modifications to the authorities of
8 the pilot program in order to make such authorities
9 suitable to a range of installations of the military de-
10 partment or to tailor such authorities to particular
11 installations of the military department.

12 (5) Any other matters such Secretary considers
13 appropriate in light of the pilot program.