

H.R. 2441, Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act of 2021

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on May 4, 2021

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2021	2021-2026	2021-2031
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	4	not estimated
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2032?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

H.R. 2441 would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to expand the Rural Access Network Growth Enhancement program to three additional medical facilities. Through that program, VA provides case management services to veterans residing in rural areas who have severe and persistent mental illnesses. The bill would require the department to establish the program at the new locations in 2022. The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$1.2 million each year from 2022 through 2024 for that purpose. CBO estimates that implementing the program expansion would cost \$3 million over the 2021-2026 period, assuming appropriation of the specified amount.

H.R. 2441 also would require the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study on whether VA has sufficient resources to meet the mental health care needs of rural veterans. Using information on similar reports, CBO estimates that satisfying the reporting requirement would cost \$1 million.

In total, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2441 would cost \$4 million over the 2021-2026 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 700 (veterans' benefits and services).

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under H.R. 2441

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars						2021-2026
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
RANGE Program Expansion							
Estimated Authorization	0	1	1	1	0	0	4
Estimated Outlays	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
Report							
Estimated Authorization	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Estimated Outlays	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total Changes							
Estimated Authorization	0	2	1	1	0	0	5
Estimated Outlays	0	2	1	1	0	0	4

Components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Etaf Khan. The estimate was reviewed by Leo Lex, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.