

109<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 5396

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to employ additional categories of mental health professionals.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 2006

Mr. MORAN of Kansas (for himself and Mr. MICHAUD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to employ additional categories of mental health professionals.

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 “Veterans Mental  
5       Health Care Access Improvement Act of 2006”.

6       **SEC. 2. AUTHORITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
7                       **FAIRS TO EMPLOY ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES**  
8                       **OF MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS.**

9       Section 7402(b) of title 38, United States Code, is  
10       amended—

1           (1) by redesignating paragraph (10) as para-  
2           graph (12); and

3           (2) by inserting after paragraph (9) the fol-  
4           lowing new paragraphs:

5           “(10) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST.—To be  
6           eligible to be appointed to a licensed mental health coun-  
7           selor position, a person must—

8           “(A) hold a master’s degree in marriage and  
9           family therapy, or a comparable degree in mental  
10          health, from a college or university approved by the  
11          Secretary; and

12          “(B) be licensed or certified to independently  
13          practice marriage and family therapy in a State, ex-  
14          cept that the Secretary may waive the requirement  
15          of licensure or certification for an individual mar-  
16          riage and family therapist for a reasonable period of  
17          time recommended by the Under Secretary for  
18          Health.

19          “(11) LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR.—  
20          To be eligible to be appointed to a position as a licensed  
21          mental health counselor, a person must—

22          “(A) hold a master’s degree in mental health  
23          counseling, or a related field, from a college or uni-  
24          versity approved by the Secretary; and

1           “(B) be licensed or certified to independently  
2           practice mental health counseling in a State, except  
3           that the Secretary may waive the requirement of li-  
4           censure or certification for an individual licensed  
5           mental health counselor for a reasonable period of  
6           time recommended by the Under Secretary for  
7           Health.”.

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