SEC.___. EXTENSION OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS: ENHANCED APPOINTMENT AND COMPENSATION AUTHORITY FOR PERSONNEL FOR CARE AND TREATMENT OF WOUNDED AND INJURED MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1599c(b) of title 10, United States Code, are amended by striking "December 31, 2020" and inserting "December 31, 2025".

[Please note: The "Changes to Existing Law" section below sets out in red-line format how the legislative text would amend existing law.]

Section-by-Section Analysis

This proposal would extend the termination date of the authorities in section 1599c of title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), for an additional five years with a new termination date of December 31, 2025.

Section 1599c allows the Secretary of Defense to exercise any authority for the appointment and pay of health care personnel under chapter 74 of title 38, U.S.C., for purposes of the recruitment, employment, and retention of civilian health care professionals for the Department of Defense if the Secretary determines that the exercise of such authority is necessary to provide or enhance the capacity of the Department to provide care and treatment for members of the Armed Forces who are wounded or injured on active duty in the Armed Forces and to support the ongoing patient care and medical readiness, education, and training requirements of the Department.

The authority further authorizes the Secretary to designate any category of healthcare occupations within the Department as shortage category positions or critical need occupations and utilize the authorities in section 3304 of title 5, U.S.C., to recruit and appoint qualified persons directly to positions so designated. This expedited hiring authority is critical to allowing the Department to hire highly qualified candidates into healthcare career fields.

Budget Implications: This proposal has no significant budgetary impact. Resources impacted are incidental in nature and amount and are included within the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 President's Budget request.

Changes to Existing Law: This proposal would make the following changes to section 1599c of title 10, United States Code:

§ 1599c. Health care professionals: enhanced appointment and compensation authority for personnel for care and treatment of wounded and injured members of the armed forces

(a) In General.—

(1) The Secretary of Defense may, at the discretion of the Secretary, exercise any authority for the appointment and pay of health care personnel under chapter 74 of title 38 for purposes of the recruitment, employment, and retention of civilian health care professionals for the Department of Defense if the Secretary determines that the exercise of such authority is necessary in order to provide or enhance the capacity of the Department to provide care and treatment for members of the armed forces who are wounded or injured on active duty in the armed forces and to support the ongoing patient care and medical readiness, education, and training requirements of the Department of Defense.

(2)(A) For purposes of section 3304 of title 5, the Secretary of Defense may—

(i) designate any category of medical or health professional positions within the Department of Defense as a shortage category occupation or critical need occupation; and

(ii) utilize the authority in such section to recruit and appoint qualified persons directly in the competitive service to positions so designated.

(B) In using the authority provided by this paragraph, the Secretary shall apply the principles of preference for the hiring of veterans and other persons established in subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5.

(C) Any designation by the Secretary for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i) shall be based on an analysis of current and future Department of Defense workforce requirements.

(b) Termination of Authority.—

(1) The authority of the Secretary of Defense under subsection (a)(1) to exercise authorities available under chapter 74 of title 38 for purposes of the recruitment, employment, and retention of civilian health care professionals for the Department of Defense expires ~~December 31, 2020~~ December 31, 2025.

(2) The Secretary may not appoint a person to a position of employment under subsection (a)(2) after ~~December 31, 2020~~ December 31, 2025.