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# CQDefense

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*Good morning, and welcome to CQ Defense. It's Monday, March 31.*

## TOPLINES

- 1. Spotlight on veterans care:** Lawmakers are seeking an independent review of the mental health and addiction therapy care available to veterans from the federal government.
- 2. Arctic adventure:** Vice President JD Vance visited a military base in Greenland on Friday as the Trump administration says it wants to obtain the island for the U.S.
- 3. Week ahead:** Here's what we're watching on the Hill this week.

## FULL BRIEFING

### 1. Bill seeks to lay groundwork for improved veterans care

Lawmakers are seeking an independent review of the federal government's mental health and addiction therapy care available to veterans.

Under a bipartisan [bill](#) led by Rep. [Pat Fallon](#), R-Texas, the Department of Veterans Affairs would be tasked with commissioning an outside study to compare the quality of care offered by agency health care providers and non-VA sites.

"It is critical that we identify proven healthcare treatment methods to address the ongoing mental health crisis afflicting our veteran community," Fallon said in a statement.

Co-leading the legislation is Rep. [Sanford D. Bishop Jr.](#), D-Ga., who worked with Fallon in the last Congress to co-introduce a similar measure that ultimately stalled in committee after attracting 10 cosponsors from both parties.

The prior legislation would have sought a study that probed the differences between mental health and behavioral -- rather than addiction therapy -- care offered by VA providers and those of non-department sites.

But there are other differences between the two measures.

The updated bill text would add further stipulations to the findings investigators must present to the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs panels. For example, the final report would need to assess the implementation of veteran-centric care, including patient satisfaction; the extent to which veterans with co-occurring conditions get holistic care; whether providers continually monitor health outcomes through and after treatment; and more.

"America's veterans deserve the best care as well as a choice in the matter," Fallon added. "This bill would require the VA to conduct an independent study to determine whether it is, in fact, providing the necessary level of care when compared to private sector alternatives."

**Briana** Reilly