

New Federal Legislation Would Support Children in Military Caregiving Homes and Their Families

Research by Mathematica informed the Helping Heroes Act, a bill introduced in the Senate this week

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 19, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced the Helping Heroes Act of 2022, new legislation designed to better support the 2.3 million children who live with and help care for wounded, injured, or ill service members or veterans in America.



Dole Caregiver Fellow Nikki Stephens and Family.
PHOTO BY: CHARLIE NEUMAN

The Helping Heroes Act of 2022 directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to create the Family Support Program to provide and coordinate supportive services to eligible veterans and children. This includes placing an adequately staffed and resourced family coordinator at each VA medical center to build meaningful relationships with veterans and their families.

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Cleo Jacobs Johnson

“This legislation will be a game-changer for military families, providing long-needed support to Americans who have already sacrificed so much,” said [Cleo Jacobs Johnson](#), senior researcher and manager at Mathematica. “A high schooler we spoke with pointedly expressed a desire for the VA to give her dad and family what they need—the family coordinator that will be located at each VAMC will have a positive impact on military caregiving children and their families because they will connect families with the

services they need.”

The legislation was informed by Mathematica’s research and evidence-based recommendations, which included a call to action to:

- Create and Scale programs that support children in military caregiving families
- Invest in supports for the entire family unit
- Raise Awareness of the needs of caregivers and children in military caregiving homes, and;
- Increase Access to comprehensive services focused on supporting military caregiving families.

“This legislation will help us collect data to better understand military and veteran caregiving children,” said [Steven Malick](#), researcher at Mathematica. “It may allow us to document what supports children receive and monitor our progress as a nation in providing better support.”

The Mathematica [report](#), which drew its findings from focus groups and interviews with children and caregivers as well as experts in the field, was released by First Lady Dr. Jill Biden at a White House event in November. The Elizabeth Dole Foundation, the Wounded Warrior Project, and Lily Endowment partnered on this effort, expanding on the Foundation’s earlier research on informal caregivers to America’s wounded, injured, or ill service members and veterans.

Deric Joyner

Mathematica

+1 202-484-4837

djoyner@mathematica-mpr.com

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