

BBSUR Statement Endorsing Rep. Deborah Ross' Amendment to Expand Virtual-Based Opioid Treatment for Veterans

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Breaking Barriers to Substance Use Recovery, (“BBSUR”), a non-profit coalition dedicated to bringing innovative opioid treatment options to communities with unmet medical need, fully endorses Reps. Deborah Ross, Don Davis, and Carol Miller’s amendment to the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act, amendment #1238, that expands access to virtual-based opioid treatment for veterans.



Breaking Barriers to Substance Use Recovery

BBSUR was formed to promote Virtual-Based Opioid Treatment (VBOT), an innovative treatment delivery model that helps remove barriers preventing individuals with opioid use disorder from seeking or remaining in care. We believe recovery should be determined by a person's willingness to seek help—not by obstacles such as geography, transportation, work, childcare, or privacy concerns. Powered by secure telemedicine, automation, and patient engagement tools, VBOT expands access to high-quality, evidence-based care while improving continuity and treatment retention.

Unfortunately, many of these same barriers continue to affect America's veterans. Every day, veterans who want treatment face obstacles unrelated to their commitment to recovery, including long travel distances, work obligations, and limited transportation. The Ross, Davis, Miller amendment addresses these challenges by expanding access to Virtual-Based Opioid Treatment through the Department of Veterans Affairs Community Care Program, helping ensure veterans have greater access to—and awareness of—innovative, at-home treatment options for addiction.

Recovery is hard enough. Getting to treatment should not make it harder.

That is why we support Representative Deborah Ross's amendment to establish a pilot program that expands access to Virtual-Based Opioid Treatment through the Department of Veterans Affairs Community Care Program.

What we appreciate most about this amendment is that it starts with a simple question.

How do we remove barriers that keep veterans from receiving care?

It does not replace the VA. It does not lower standards of care. It simply recognizes that if a veteran cannot realistically access treatment, such as a veteran living in a rural community hundreds of miles to the next VA clinic, then access only exists on paper.

The amendment takes a thoughtful approach. It builds on the existing Community Care Program, creates better referral pathways, increases awareness among VA providers of telehealth options, studies the barriers veterans continue to face, and measures success based on outcomes that matter. It keeps veterans engaged in treatment. Improves recovery. Reduces unnecessary emergency department visits. Helps veterans stay on a path toward recovery instead of waiting until they reach a crisis.

No one believes virtual care is the answer for every veteran. It shouldn't be. But it should be available when it can safely remove barriers that would otherwise prevent someone from getting the care they need.

As a coalition, we believe we should constantly be asking one question.

If we can safely remove a barrier that keeps someone from recovery, why wouldn't we?

The men and women who served our country should never have to lose a battle at home because getting treatment was harder than asking for it.

"We thank Representatives Deborah Ross, Don Davis, and Carol Miller for recognizing the challenges of opioid addiction in America's veterans community, and for offering a practical and lifesaving solution to ensure our veterans get the care they deserve. We encourage Congress to adopt this lifesaving amendment and continue working across party lines to find commonsense ways to make treatment more accessible for the veterans who have already sacrificed so much for our country," stated Pete Gratale, founder of BBSUR.

Our veterans answered the call when our nation needed them. We should do everything we reasonably can to answer theirs.

About Breaking Barriers to Substance Use Recovery

Breaking Barriers to Substance Use Recovery (BBSUR) is a coalition of healthcare providers, technology companies, and medical organizations working to remove barriers to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders. Founded in 2024 by The Recovery Platform, Triad Behavioral Resources, and the North Carolina Medical Society Foundation, the coalition advances education, awareness, and practical solutions that make recovery more accessible. Learn more at nomorebarriers.org.

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