



Duckworth, Blackburn Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Research Access to Prosthetics After the Amputation of a Limb

July 29 2020 9:29 AM

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) introduced the *Assistive Technology and Devices for Americans Study Act*, or the “*Triple A*” *Study Act*, to require the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study access to prosthetics after the amputation of a limb. The legislation would evaluate appropriate coverage of assistive technologies provided to patients who experience amputation, especially prosthetic devices and custom orthoses, including timely access to care (including educating patients regarding options), assessment and guidelines for assistive device determination, affordability, rehabilitation services to support acclimation and matching specific devices with the needs of the individual beneficiary.

“Americans with limb loss and limb difference face unique challenges in accessing the optimal assistive technologies that would greatly enhance quality of life and strengthen independence,” said Senator Duckworth. “This bipartisan bill I’m introducing with Senator Blackburn would make sure Congress receives a rigorous review of current practices as well as a set of recommendations on how we can improve patient access to the most effective assistive technologies, particularly prosthetic devices.”

“Quality prosthetics can mitigate challenges created by the amputation of a limb and limb differences,” said Senator Blackburn. “We need a holistic understanding of how many Americans have access to a prosthetic or orthotic device, which improves mobility, quality of life and the ability to return to the workforce. This legislation will provide the missing data so we can understand the barriers patients face when trying to obtain prosthetics.”

“On behalf of the 2.1 million Americans living with limb loss and limb difference and the 185,000 undergoing amputation surgery each year, I want to thank Senators Blackburn and Duckworth for their bipartisan leadership in introducing the Access to Assistive Technology and Devices for Americans Study Act,” said Mary Richards, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Amputee Coalition of America. “This legislation will create the building blocks for smart policy solutions to help people with limb loss receive the assessments, care, and technologies they need to improve mobility and function, reduce health care costs, and ensure people who undergo amputation surgery live a full life.”

The [Amputee Coalition of America](#) reports that only 30 to 35 percent of individuals who experience limb loss receive a prosthetic device in the Veterans Health Administration. Among those living with limb loss, the main causes are vascular disease (54%) – including diabetes and peripheral arterial disease – trauma (45%) and cancer (less than 2%). Black Americans are up to four times more likely to have an amputation than white Americans.