

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3455

To require the establishment of customer service standards for Federal agencies.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 30, 2012

Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To require the establishment of customer service standards for Federal agencies.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Government Customer
5 Service Improvement Act of 2012”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency”—

1 (A) has the meaning given the term “Exec-
2 utive agency” under section 105 of title 5,
3 United States Code; and

4 (B) does not include an Executive agency
5 if the President determines that this Act should
6 not apply to the Executive agency for national
7 security reasons.

8 (2) CUSTOMER.—The term “customer”, with
9 respect to an agency—

10 (A) means any individual or entity to
11 which the agency provides services or informa-
12 tion; and

13 (B) includes a business, a State or local
14 government, another agency, and Congress.

15 **SEC. 3. DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND**
16 **STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE PRO-**
17 **VIDED BY AGENCIES.**

18 (a) REQUIREMENT.—

19 (1) PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND STAND-
20 ARDS.—The Director of the Office of Management
21 and Budget shall develop—

22 (A) performance measures to determine
23 whether agencies are providing high-quality,
24 timely customer service and improving service
25 delivery to customers of the agencies; and

1 (B) standards to be met by agencies in
2 order to provide high-quality customer service
3 and improve service delivery to customers of the
4 agencies, including—

5 (i) specific milestones and perform-
6 ance targets for continuous service im-
7 provements and efforts to modernize serv-
8 ice delivery; and

9 (ii) where appropriate, target response
10 times for telephone calls, electronic mail,
11 mail, benefit processing, and payments.

12 (2) REQUIREMENT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT
13 CERTAIN INFORMATION.—The standards under
14 paragraph (1) shall be developed after taking into
15 account the information collected by agencies under
16 subsection (b).

17 (b) CUSTOMER SERVICE INPUT.—The head of each
18 agency shall collect information from customers of the
19 agency regarding the quality of customer service provided
20 by the agency. Each agency shall include the information
21 collected under this subsection in the performance report
22 made available by the agency under section 1116 of title
23 31, United States Code.

24 (c) ANNUAL PERFORMANCE UPDATE.—The Director
25 of the Office of Management and Budget shall include

1 achievements by agencies in meeting the customer service
2 performance measures and standards developed under
3 subsection (a) in each update on agency performance re-
4 quired under section 1116 of title 31, United States Code.

5 **SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTATION OF CUSTOMER SERVICE STAND-**
6 **ARDS.**

7 (a) SERVICE IMPROVEMENT OFFICER.—The head of
8 each agency shall designate an employee to be the service
9 improvement officer of the agency, who shall be respon-
10 sible for implementing the customer service standards de-
11 veloped under section 3 and the agency requirements
12 under subsection (b).

13 (b) AGENCY REQUIREMENTS.—

14 (1) GUIDELINES AND CONTACT INFORMA-
15 TION.—The head of each agency, acting through the
16 service improvement officer of the agency, shall—

17 (A) issue guidelines to implement the cus-
18 tomer service standards developed under section
19 3 within the agency, including specific prin-
20 ciples of customer service applicable to the
21 agency, which shall include where appropriate—

22 (i) target call wait times during peak
23 and non-peak hours;

1 (ii) target response times for cor-
2 respondence, both by mail and electronic
3 mail;

4 (iii) procedures for ensuring all appli-
5 cable metrics are incorporated into service
6 agreements with nongovernmental individ-
7 uals and entities; and

8 (iv) target response times for proc-
9 essing benefits and making payments; and

10 (B) publish customer service contact infor-
11 mation, including a mailing address, telephone
12 number, and email address.

13 (2) AVAILABILITY.—The head of each agency,
14 acting through the service improvement officer of
15 the agency, shall make the guidelines and the cus-
16 tomer service contact information required under
17 this subsection available on the website of the agen-
18 cy.

19 **SEC. 5. SERVICE IMPROVEMENT UNIT PILOT.**

20 (a) ESTABLISHED.—The Deputy Director of Man-
21 agement shall establish a pilot program, to be known as
22 the Service Improvement Unit Pilot Program (in this sec-
23 tion referred to as the “pilot program”), to provide assist-
24 ance to agencies that do not meet the customer service

1 standards and performance measures established under
2 section 3.

3 (b) PERSONNEL.—The heads of agencies with exper-
4 tise in change management, process improvement, and in-
5 formation technology innovation shall detail employees to
6 the Office of Management and Budget to work on the pilot
7 program, based on the expertise and skills required to ad-
8 dress service improvement goals.

9 (c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Under the pilot program,
10 the Office of Management and Budget shall work with
11 agencies that are not meeting the customer service stand-
12 ards and performance measures established under section
13 3 to improve and modernize service delivery to develop so-
14 lutions, including—

15 (1) evaluating the efforts of the agency to im-
16 prove service delivery;

17 (2) developing a plan to improve within existing
18 resources and by drawing on expertise and assist-
19 ance from other agencies (including the Office of
20 Management and Budget) where necessary;

21 (3) monitoring implementation by the agency of
22 the plan developed under paragraph (2) until the
23 customer service standards and performance meas-
24 ures are met; and

1 (4) submitting to the Director of Office of Man-
2 agement and Budget monthly reports on the
3 progress being made to improve service at the agen-
4 cy until the customer service standards are met.

5 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
6 of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of
7 Management and Budget shall submit to Congress a re-
8 port on the accomplishments and outcomes of the pilot
9 program and any recommendations relating to achieving
10 the customer service standards and performance measures
11 established under section 3.

12 (e) TERMINATION.—The authority to carry out the
13 pilot program shall terminate 2 years after the date of
14 enactment of this Act.

15 **SEC. 6. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL.**

16 Compliance with the customer service standards de-
17 veloped under this Act shall be included in the perform-
18 ance appraisal systems described in section 5307(d) of
19 title 5, United States Code.

20 **SEC. 7. RETIREMENT REPORTING.**

21 (a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “agency”
22 has the meaning given that term in section 551 of title
23 5, United States Code.

24 (b) REPORTS.—Not later than 30 days after the date
25 of enactment of this Act, and every month thereafter, the

1 Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall sub-
2 mit to Congress, the Comptroller General of the United
3 States, and issue publicly (including on the website of the
4 Office of Personnel Management) a report that—

5 (1) for each agency, evaluates the timeliness,
6 completeness, and accuracy of information submitted
7 by the agency relating to employees of the agency
8 who are retiring; and

9 (2) indicates—

10 (A) the total number of applications for re-
11 tirement benefits that are pending action by the
12 Office of Personnel Management; and

13 (B) the number of months each such appli-
14 cation has been pending.

15 (c) MODERNIZATION TIMELINE.—The Director of
16 the Office of Personnel Management shall establish—

17 (1) a timetable for the completion of each com-
18 ponent of the retirement systems modernization
19 project of the Office of Personnel Management, in-
20 cluding all data elements required for accurate com-
21 pletion of adjudication; and

22 (2) the date by which all Federal payroll proc-
23 essing entities will electronically transmit all per-
24 sonnel data to the Office of Personnel Management.

1 (d) BUDGET REQUEST.—The Office of Personnel
2 Management shall include a detailed statement regarding
3 the progress of the Office of Personnel Management in
4 completing the retirement systems modernization project
5 of the Office of Personnel Management in each budget re-
6 quest of the Office of Personnel Management submitted
7 as part of the preparation of the budget of the President
8 submitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31,
9 United States Code.

10 **SEC. 8. NO INCREASE IN EXPENDITURES.**

11 It is the sense of Congress that no additional funds
12 should be appropriated to carry out this Act.

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