To amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 14, 2013

Mr. SANDERS (for himself and Mr. BURR) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

DECEMBER 9, 2013

Reported by Mr. SANDERS, with an amendment and an amendment to the title

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to charge veterans tu-
tion and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Putting Our Veterans
Back to Work Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PROVIDED
BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDU-
CATION FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUNTEER
FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PRO-
GRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSIST-
ANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUITION
RATE FOR VETERANS.

(a) In General.—Section 3679 of title 38, United
States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
lowing new subsection:

"(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this
chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (5); the
Secretary shall disapprove a course of education provided
by a public institution of higher education to a covered
individual pursuing a course of education with educational
assistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living
in the State in which the public institution of higher edu-
cation is located if the institution charges tuition and fees
for that course for the covered individual at a rate that
is higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition
and fees for that course for residents of the State in which
the institution is located, regardless of the covered individ-
ual's State of residence.

"(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered indi-
vidual is any individual as follows:

"(A) A veteran who was discharged or released
from a period of not fewer than 180 days of service
in the active military, naval, or air service less than
two years before the date of enrollment in the course
concerned.

"(B) An individual who is entitled to assistance
under section 3311(b)(9) or 3319 of this title by vir-
tue of such individual's relationship to a veteran de-
scribed in subparagraph (A).

"(3) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course
of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution
of higher education requires a covered individual pursuing
a course of education at the institution to demonstrate an
intent to establish residency in the State in which the in-
stitution is located in order to be charged tuition and fees
for that course at a rate that is equal to or less than the
rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that
course for residents of the State.
The Secretary may waive such requirements of paragraph (1) as the Secretary considers appropriate.

Disapproval under paragraph (1) shall apply only with respect to educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of this title.’’

(b) Effective Date.—Subsection (e) of section 3679 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section) shall apply with respect to educational assistance provided for pursuit of programs of education during academic terms that begin after July 1, 2015.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) Short Title.—This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013”.

(b) Table of Contents.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS

Sec. 101. Extension of initial period for increased dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses with children.
Sec. 102. Eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation, educational assistance, and housing loans for surviving spouses who remarry after age 55.
Sec. 103. Extension of marriage delimiting date for surviving spouses of Persian Gulf War veterans to qualify for death pension.
Sec. 104. Expansion of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship.
Sec. 105. Expansion of Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program.
Sec. 106. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.
Sec. 107. Program on assisted living for children of Vietnam veterans and certain Korea service veterans born with spina bifida.
Sec. 108. Program on grief counseling in retreat settings for surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces.
Sec. 109. Program evaluation on survivors' and dependents' educational assistance authorities.

TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS

Sec. 201. Approval of courses of education provided by public institutions of higher learning for purposes of All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance conditional on in-State tuition rate for veterans.

Sec. 202. Extension and expansion of authority for certain qualifying work-study activities for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 203. Report on debt management and collection.

Sec. 204. Restoration of prior reporting fee multipliers.

TITLE III—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvements of Benefits Generally

Sec. 301. Expansion of provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans.

Sec. 302. Modification of commencement date of period of service at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for eligibility for hospital care and medical services in connection with exposure to contaminated water.

Sec. 303. Expansion of eligibility for sexual trauma counseling and treatment to veterans on inactive duty training.

Sec. 304. Extension of sunset date regarding transportation of individuals to and from facilities of Department of Veterans Affairs and requirement of report.

Sec. 305. Program on health promotion for overweight and obese veterans through support of fitness center memberships.

Sec. 306. Program on health promotion for veterans through establishment of Department of Veterans Affairs fitness facilities.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

Sec. 311. Extension of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professional Scholarship Program.

Sec. 312. Expansion of availability of prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

Sec. 313. Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Subtitle C—Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Sec. 321. Expansion of research and education on and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine to veterans.

Sec. 322. Program on integration of complementary and alternative medicine within Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.

Sec. 323. Studies of barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and administrators and clinicians in providing, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 324. Program on use of wellness programs as complementary approach to mental health care for veterans and family members of veterans.

TITLE IV—ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Sec. 401. Administration of Veterans Integrated Service Networks.
Sec. 402. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

Sec. 403. Commission on Capital Planning for Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities.

Sec. 404. Public access to Department of Veterans Affairs research and data sharing between Departments.

Sec. 405. Budget transparency for outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 406. Comptroller general report on advisory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE V—IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

Subtitle A—Claims Based on Military Sexual Trauma

Sec. 501. Medical examination and opinion for disability compensation claims based on military sexual trauma.

Sec. 502. Case representative officers for military sexual trauma support.

Sec. 503. Report on standard of proof for service-connection of mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma.

Sec. 504. Reports on claims for disabilities incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

Subtitle B—Agency of Original Jurisdiction

Sec. 511. Working group to improve employee work credit and work management systems of Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

Sec. 512. Task force on retention and training of Department of Veterans Affairs claims processors and adjudicators.

Sec. 513. Reports on requests by the Department of Veterans Affairs for records of other Federal agencies.

Sec. 514. Recognition of representatives of Indian tribes in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 515. Program on participation of local and tribal governments in improving quality of claims for disability compensation submitted to Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 516. Quarterly reports on progress of Department of Veterans Affairs in eliminating backlog of claims for compensation that have not been adjudicated.

Sec. 517. Reports on use of existing authorities to expedite benefits decisions.

Sec. 518. Reports on Department disability medical examinations and prevention of unnecessary medical examinations.

Subtitle C—Board of Veterans’ Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

Sec. 521. Treatment of certain misfiled documents as a notice of appeal to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Sec. 522. Modification of filing period for notice of disagreement to initiate appellate review of decisions of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 523. Determination of manner of appearance for hearings before Board of Veterans’ Appeals.
TITLE VI—OUTREACH MATTERS

Sec. 601. Program to increase coordination of outreach efforts between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Federal, State, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Sec. 602. Cooperative agreements between Secretary of Veterans Affairs and States on outreach activities.

Sec. 603. Advisory committee on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 604. Advisory boards on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs relating to health care.

Sec. 605. Modification of requirement for periodic reports to Congress on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE VII—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS

Subtitle A—Employment Matters

Sec. 701. Employment of veterans with the Federal Government.

Sec. 702. State recognition of military experience of veterans in issuing licenses and credentials to veterans.


Sec. 704. Information on disability-related employment and education protections in Transition Assistance Program.

Subtitle B—Small Business Matters

Sec. 711. Expansion of contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs to include conditionally owned small business concerns 100 percent owned by veterans.

Sec. 712. Modification of treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs for small businesses owned by veterans of small businesses after death of disabled veteran owners.

Sec. 713. Treatment of businesses after deaths of servicemember-owners for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences.

Sec. 714. Special rule for treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs of small business concerns licensed in community property States.

TITLE VIII—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 801. Consideration by Secretary of Veterans Affairs of resources disposed of for less than fair market value by individuals applying for pension.

Sec. 802. Office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events.

Sec. 803. Adaptive sports programs for disabled veterans and members of the Armed Forces through United States Olympic Committee.

Sec. 804. Making effective date provision consistent with provision for benefits eligibility of a veteran’s child based upon termination of remarriage by annulment.

Sec. 805. Extended period for scheduling of medical exams for veterans receiving temporary disability ratings for severe mental disorders.

Sec. 806. Authority to issue Veterans ID Cards.
Sec. 807. Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces.
Sec. 808. Extension of authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to issue and guarantee certain loans.
Sec. 809. Review of determination of certain service in Philippines during World War II.
Sec. 811. Report on assistance for veterans in obtaining training on purchasing and operating a franchise.
Sec. 812. Limitation on aggregate amount of bonuses payable to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs during fiscal year 2014.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.
Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF INITIAL PERIOD FOR INCREASED DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES WITH CHILDREN.
(a) In General.—Section 1311(f)(2) is amended by striking “two-year” and inserting “three-year”.
(b) Effective Date.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect as of September 30, 2014, and shall apply to any surviving spouse who was eligible for or in receipt of benefits under section 1311(f) of title 38, United States Code, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.
SEC. 102. ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY

COMPENSATION, EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE,
AND HOUSING LOANS FOR SURVIVING
SPOUSES WHO REMARRY AFTER AGE 55.

(a) In General.—Paragraph (2)(B) of section 103(d)
is amended to read as follows:

“(B) The remarriage after age 55 of the surviving
spouse of a veteran shall not bar the furnishing of benefits
specified in paragraph (5) to such person as the surviving
spouse of the veteran.”.

(b) Conforming Amendment.—Paragraph (5) of
such section is amended by striking “Paragraphs (2)(A)”
and inserting “Paragraphs (2)”.

(c) Effective Date.—The amendments made by this
section shall take effect on the date that is one year after
the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 103. EXTENSION OF MARRIAGE DELIMITING DATE FOR
SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PERSIAN GULF WAR
VETERANS TO QUALIFY FOR DEATH PENSION.

Section 1541(f)(1)(E) is amended by striking “Janu-
ary 1, 2001” and inserting “the date that is 10 years and
one day after the date on which the Persian Gulf War was
terminated, as prescribed by Presidential proclamation or
by law”.

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SEC. 104. EXPANSION OF MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP.

(a) Expansion of Entitlement.—Subsection (b)(9) of section 3311 is amended by inserting “or spouse” after “child”.

(b) Limitation and Election on Certain Benefits.—Subsection (f) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraphs:

“(2) Limitation.—The entitlement of an individual to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) because the individual was a spouse of a person described in such paragraph shall expire on the earlier of—

“(A) the date that is 15 years after the date on which the person died; and

“(B) the date on which the individual remarries.

“(3) Election on Receipt of Certain Benefits.—A surviving spouse entitled to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) who is also entitled to educational assistance under chapter 35 of this title may not receive assistance under both this section and such chapter, but
shall make an irrevocable election (in such form and manner as the Secretary may prescribe) under which section or chapter to receive educational assistance.”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3321(b)(4) is amended—

(1) by striking “an individual” and inserting “a child”; and

(2) by striking “such individual’s” each time it appears and inserting “such child’s”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 105. EXPANSION OF YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3317(a) is amended by striking “in paragraphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “in paragraphs (1), (2), and (9)”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to academic terms beginning after July 1, 2015.

SEC. 106. BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF CERTAIN THAILAND SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:
§ 1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida

“(a) Benefits Authorized.—The Secretary may provide to any child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand who is suffering from spina bifida the health care, vocational training and rehabilitation, and monetary allowance required to be paid to a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under subchapter I of this chapter as if such child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand were a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under such subchapter.

“(b) Spina Bifida Conditions Covered.—This section applies with respect to all forms and manifestations of spina bifida, except spina bifida occulta.

“(c) Veteran of Covered Service in Thailand.—For purposes of this section, a veteran of covered service in Thailand is any individual, without regard to the characterization of that individual’s service, who—

“(1) served in the active military, naval, or air service in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and

“(2) is determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, to have been ex-
posed to a herbicide agent during such service in
Thailand.

“(d) HERBICIDE AGENT.—For purposes of this section,
the term ‘herbicide agent’ means a chemical in a herbicide
used in support of United States and allied military oper-
ations in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in con-
sultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period
beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7,
1975.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF
“CHILD”.—Section 1831(1) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking “subchapter III of this
chapter” and inserting “section 1821 of this
title”; and

(B) in clause (i), by striking “section 1821
of this title” and inserting “that section”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
paragraph:

“(C) For purposes of section 1822 of this title,
an individual, regardless of age or marital status,
who—

“(i) is the natural child of a veteran of cov-
ered service in Thailand (as determined for pur-
poses of that section); and
“(ii) was conceived after the date on which
that veteran first entered service described in
subsection (c) of that section.”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SUBCHAPTER HEADING.—The heading for
subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by inserting
“AND THAILAND” after “KOREA”.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections
at the beginning of chapter 18 is amended—

(A) by striking the item relating to sub-
chapter III and inserting the following new item:

“SUBCHAPTER III—CHILDREN OF CERTAIN KOREA AND THAILAND SERVICE
VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA”;

and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to
section 1821 the following new item:

“1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina
bifida.”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this
section shall take effect on the date that is one year after
the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 107. PROGRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING FOR CHILDREN
OF VIETNAM VETERANS AND CERTAIN KOREA
SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA
BIFIDA.

(a) PROGRAM.—Commencing not later than 180 days
after the date on which this section takes effect, the Sec-
retary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing assisted living, group home care, or similar services in lieu of nursing home care to covered individuals.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this section, a covered individual is any individual who is entitled to health care under subchapter I or III of chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) DURATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(2) CONTINUATION.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary may continue the program for an additional two-year period as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) TERMINATION.—The program may not operate after the date that is five years after the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) SCOPE OF SERVICES AND PROGRAM.—Under the program, the Secretary shall provide covered individuals with integrated, comprehensive services, including the following:
(1) Assisted living, group home care, or such other similar services as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) Transportation services.

(3) Such other services as the Secretary considers appropriate for the care of covered individuals under the program.

(e) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall—

(1) inform all covered individuals of the services available under the program;

(2) enter into agreements with appropriate providers of assisted living, group home care, or other similar services for provision of services under the program; and

(3) determine the appropriate number of covered individuals to be enrolled in the program and criteria for such enrollment.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) PRELIMINARY REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the program and, if the program is continued under subsection (c)(2), not later than three years after the date of the commencement of the program,
the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(B) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the implementation and operation of the program.

(ii) The number of covered individuals receiving benefits under the program.

(iii) An analysis that compares the costs of furnishing assisted living, group home care, or similar service with the costs of furnishing nursing home care.

(iv) An analysis of the costs and benefits under the program.

(v) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(vi) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary may have.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Sec-
retary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representa-
tives a report on the program.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-
lowing:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(ii) Such recommendations for the con-
tinuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary may have.

(g) FUNDING.—Amounts to carry out the program shall be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the furnishing of nursing home care under chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code.

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 108. PROGRAM ON GRIEF COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF MEM-
BERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO DIE WHILE SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—
(1) In general.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out, through the Readjustment Counseling Service of the Veterans Health Administration, a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing grief counseling services described in subsection (b) in group retreat settings to surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces who would, as determined by the Readjustment Counseling Service, benefit from the services provided under the program.

(2) Participation at election of surviving spouse.—The participation of a surviving spouse in the program under this section shall be at the election of the surviving spouse.

(b) Covered services.—The services provided to a surviving spouse under the program shall include the following:

(1) Information and counseling on coping with grief.

(2) Information about benefits and services available to surviving spouses under laws administered by the Secretary.
(3) Such other information and counseling as the Secretary considers appropriate to assist a surviving spouse under the program with adjusting to the death of a spouse.

(c) EVENTS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at not fewer than six events as follows:

(1) Three events at which surviving spouses with dependent children are encouraged to bring their children.

(2) Three events at which surviving spouses with dependent children are not encouraged to bring their children.

(d) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the first year of the program and not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the program.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall contain the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program, and shall include such recommendations for the continu-
ation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “active duty”, “Armed Forces”, and “surviving spouse” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 109. PROGRAM EVALUATION ON SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract with an appropriate private sector entity to conduct a program evaluation of the authorities for survivors’ and dependents’ educational assistance under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than six months after the entry into the contract required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the results of the program evaluation conducted pursuant to the contract, together with such comments on the results of the program evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate.
(c) Effective Date.—This section shall take effect one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS

SEC. 201. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUITION RATE FOR VETERANS.

(a) In General.—Section 3679 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (6), the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education provided by a public institution of higher learning to a covered individual pursuing a course of education with educational assistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living in the State in which the public institution of higher learning is located if the institution charges tuition and fees for that course for the covered individual at a rate that is higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State in which the institution is located, regardless of the covered individual’s State of residence."
“(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is any individual as follows:

“(A) A veteran who was discharged or released from a period of not fewer than 90 days of service in the active military, naval, or air service less than three years before the date of enrollment in the course concerned.

“(B) An individual who is entitled to assistance under section 3311(b)(9) or 3319 of this title by virtue of such individual’s relationship to a veteran described in subparagraph (A).

“(3) If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval under paragraph (1) by reason of paragraph (2)(A) or (2)(B) a covered individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same public institution of higher learning while remaining continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters or terms) at that institution of higher learning, any course so pursued by the covered individual at that institution of higher learning while so continuously enrolled shall also be subject to disapproval under paragraph (1).

“(4) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution of higher learning requires a covered individual pursuing a
course of education at the institution to demonstrate an intent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence requirement, to establish residency in the State in which the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements not relating to the establishment of residency, in order to be charged tuition and fees for that course at a rate that is equal to or less than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State.

“(5) The Secretary may waive such requirements of paragraph (1) as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(6) Disapproval under paragraph (1) shall apply only with respect to educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of this title.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (c) of section 3679 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section), shall apply with respect to educational assistance provided for pursuit of programs of education during academic terms that begin after July 1, 2015, through courses of education that commence on or after that date.
SEC. 202. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN QUALIFYING WORK-STUDY ACTIVITIES FOR PURPOSES OF THE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) EXTENSION OF EXPIRING CURRENT AUTHORITY.—

Section 3485(a)(4) is amended by striking “June 30, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “June 30, 2015”.

(b) EXPANSION TO OUTREACH SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(K) During the period beginning on June 30, 2013, and ending on June 30, 2015, the following activities carried out at the offices of Members of Congress for such Members:

“(i) The distribution of information to members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their dependents about the benefits and services under laws administered by the Secretary and other appropriate governmental and nongovernmental programs.

“(ii) The preparation and processing of papers and other documents, including documents to assist in the preparation and presentation of
claims for benefits under laws administered by
the Secretary.”.

(c) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 30 of
2014 and 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall
submit to Congress a report on the work-study allow-
ances paid under paragraph (1) of section 3485(a) of
title 38, United States Code, during the most recent
one-year period for qualifying work-study activities
described in paragraph (4) of such section, as amend-
ed by subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under
paragraph (1) shall include, for the year covered by
such report, the following:

(A) A description of the recipients of such
work-study allowances.

(B) A list of the locations where qualifying
work-study activities were carried out.

(C) A description of the outreach conducted
by the Secretary to increase awareness of the eli-
gibility of such work-study activities for such
work-study allowances.
SEC. 203. REPORT ON DEBT MANAGEMENT AND COLLECTION.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on processes used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to identify and resolve cases of incorrect payments associated with educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) ISSUES ADDRESSED.—The report required by subsection (a) shall, to the extent possible, address the following:

(1) The effectiveness of the processes referred to in subsection (a) in identifying and resolving incorrect payments associated with educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The accuracy of overpayment information provided to veterans by the Education Service and Debt Management Center of the Department.

(3) How well the Debt Management Center of the Department communicates and works with veterans to resolve disputed debt amounts.
(4) How the payment and debt collection processes of the Department compare to comparable programs in other Federal agencies.

(5) Any recommendations to improve the payment and debt collection processes of the Department that the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 204. RESTORATION OF PRIOR REPORTING FEE MULTIPLIERS.

Section 3684(c) is amended—

(1) by striking “$12” and inserting “$7”; and

(2) by striking “$15” and inserting “$11”.

TITLE III—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvements of Benefits Generally

SEC. 301. EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.

(a) Program for Provision of Chiropractic Care and Services to Veterans.—Section 204(c) of the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–135; 115 Stat. 2459; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended—
(1) by inserting ``(1)'' before ``The program'';
and
(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:
``(2) The program shall be carried out at not fewer than two medical centers or clinics in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than one year after the effective date specified in section 301(c) of the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, and at not fewer than 50 percent of all medical centers in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than two years after such effective date.''

(b) Expanded Chiropractor Services Available to Veterans.—

(1) Medical Services.—Paragraph (6) of section 1701 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:
``(H) Chiropractic services.''

(2) Rehabilitative Services.—Paragraph (8) of such section is amended by inserting ``chiropractic,'' after ``counseling,''.

(3) Preventive Health Services.—Paragraph (9) of such section is amended—
(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) through (K) as subparagraphs (G) through (L), respectively; and 

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph (F): 

“(F) periodic and preventive chiropractic examinations and services;”.

(c) Effective Date.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 302. MODIFICATION OF COMMENCEMENT DATE OF PERIOD OF SERVICE AT CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA, FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINATED WATER.

(a) Modification.—Section 1710(e)(1)(F) is amended by striking “January 1, 1957,” and inserting “August 1, 1953 (or such earlier date for the commencement of exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune as the Secretary, in consultation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, shall specify),”.

(b) Publication.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register a notice of any earlier date for the commencement of exposure to contaminated
water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for purposes of section 1710(e)(1)(F) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a).

SEC. 303. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA COUNSELING AND TREATMENT TO VETERANS ON INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING.

Section 1720D(a)(1) is amended by striking “or active duty for training” and inserting “, active duty for training, or inactive duty training”.

SEC. 304. EXTENSION OF SUNSET DATE REGARDING TRANSPORTATION OF INDIVIDUALS TO AND FROM FACILITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REQUIREMENT OF REPORT.

(a) Extension of Sunset Date.—Subsection (a)(2) of section 111A is amended by striking “the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this section” and inserting “September 30, 2015”.

(b) Funding Available.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) Funding.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for the Department, $4,000,000 to carry out this section.”.

(c) Report.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the
Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on—

(1) the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the transportation services required by section 111A(a) of title 38, United States Code;

(2) the utilization of those services by covered veterans; and

(3) the feasibility and advisability of the continuation of the provision of such services after September 30, 2015.

SEC. 305. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR OVERWEIGHT AND OBESE VETERANS THROUGH SUPPORT OF FITNESS CENTER MEMBERSHIPS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, through the National Center for Preventive Health, carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of promoting health in covered veterans, including achieving a healthy weight and reducing risks of chronic disease, through support for fitness center membership.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any veteran who—
(1) is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established and operated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code;

(2) is determined by a clinician of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be overweight or obese as of the date of the commencement of the program; and

(3) resides in a location that is more than 15 minutes driving distance from a fitness center at a facility of the Department that would otherwise be available to the veteran for at least eight hours per day during five or more days per week.

(c) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall select—

(A) not less than five medical centers of the Department at which the Secretary shall cover the full reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of such centers; and

(B) not less than five medical centers of the Department at which the Secretary shall cover half the reasonable cost of a fitness center mem-
bership for covered veterans within the catchment area of such centers.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas in different geographic locations.

(e) PARTICIPATION.—

(1) MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—The number of covered veterans who may participate in the program at each location selected under subsection (d) may not exceed 100.

(2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a covered veteran in the program shall be at the election of the covered veteran in consultation with a clinician of the Department.

(f) MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), in carrying out the program, the Secretary shall pay the following:

(A) The full reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the
catchment area of centers selected under subsection (d)(1)(A) who are participating in the program.

(B) Half the reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of centers selected under subsection (d)(1)(B) who are participating in the program.

(2) LIMITATION.—Payment for a fitness center membership of a covered veteran may not exceed $50 per month of membership.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on activities carried out to implement the program, including outreach activities to veterans and community organizations.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’
Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on
the program detailing—

(A) the findings and conclusions of the Sec-
retary as a result of the program; and

(B) recommendations for the continuation
or expansion of the program.

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect
on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment
of this Act.

SEC. 306. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR VET-
ERANS THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF DE-
PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FITNESS
FACILITIES.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later
than 180 days after the date on which this section takes
effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a
program to assess the feasibility and advisability of pro-
moting health in covered veterans, including achieving a
healthy weight, through establishment of Department of Vet-
erans Affairs fitness facilities.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this sec-
tion, a covered veteran is any veteran who is enrolled in
the system of annual patient enrollment established and op-
erated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38,
(c) Duration of Program.—The program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) Locations.—

(1) In general.—The Secretary shall carry out the program by establishing fitness facilities in Department facilities as follows:

   (A) In not fewer than five Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

   (B) In not fewer than five outpatient clinics of the Department selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

(2) Considerations.—In selecting locations for the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

   (A) Rural areas.

   (B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

   (C) Areas in different geographic locations.

(e) Limitation on Expenses.—In establishing and supporting a fitness facility in a facility of the Department under the program, the Secretary may expend amounts as follows:
(1) For establishment and support of a fitness facility in a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, not more than $60,000.

(2) For establishment and support of a fitness facility in an outpatient clinic of the Department, not more than $40,000.

(f) Repurposing of Physical Space and Purchases of Equipment.—

(1) In General.—Subject to subsection (e), the Secretary may, in carrying out the program, repurpose existing physical space of the Department and purchase such fitness equipment and supplies as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the program.

(2) Repurposing Exception.—Existing physical space used for the direct delivery of health care to patients may not be repurposed under paragraph (1).

(g) Prohibition on Assessment of User Fees.—The Secretary may not assess a fee upon a covered veteran for use of a fitness facility established under the program.

(h) Voluntary Participation.—The participation of a covered veteran in the program shall be at the election of the covered veteran.

(i) Reports.—
(1) Periodic reports.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on activities carried out to implement the program, including outreach activities to veterans and community organizations.

(2) Final report.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program detailing—

(A) the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program; and

(B) recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program.

(j) Effective date.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.
Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

SEC. 311. EXTENSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

Section 7619 is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2019”.

SEC. 312. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.

(a) Establishment or Expansion of Advanced Degree Programs To Expand Availability of Provision of Care.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with institutions of higher education to develop partnerships for the establishment or expansion of programs of advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to improve and enhance the availability of high quality prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

(b) Report.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out subsection (a). The Secretary shall develop the plan in consultation with veterans service organizations, institutions of higher education with accredited degree programs in
prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the prosthetics and orthotics field.

(c) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, $10,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain available for expenditure until September 30, 2017.

SEC. 313. CORPORAL MICHAEL J. CRESCENZ DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 3900 Woodland Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the “Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center”.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.
Subtitle C—Complementary and Alternative Medicine

SEC. 321. EXPANSION OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON AND DELIVERY OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE TO VETERANS.

(a) Development of Plan To Expand Research, Education, and Delivery.—Not later than six months after the effective date specified in subsection (f), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop a plan to expand materially and substantially the scope of research and education on, and delivery and integration of, complementary and alternative medicine services into the health care services provided to veterans.

(b) Elements.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall provide for the following:

(1) Research on the following:

(A) The comparative effectiveness of various complementary and alternative medicine therapies.

(B) Approaches to integrating complementary and alternative medicine services into other health care services provided by the Department.

(2) Education and training for health care professionals of the Department on the following:
(A) Complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary for purposes of the plan.

(B) Appropriate uses of such services.

(C) Integration of such services into the delivery of health care to veterans.

(3) Research, education, and clinical activities on complementary and alternative medicine at centers of innovation at Department medical centers.

(4) Identification or development of metrics and outcome measures to evaluate the provision and integration of complementary and alternative medicine services into the delivery of health care to veterans.

(5) Integration and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine services with other health care services provided by the Department.

(c) CONSULTATION.—

(1) In general.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:

(A) The Director of the National Center on Complementary and Alternative Medicine of the National Institutes of Health.

(B) The Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

(C) Institutions of higher education, private research institutes, and individual researchers.
with extensive experience in complementary and alternative medicine and the integration of complementary and alternative medicine practices into the delivery of health care.

(D) Nationally recognized providers of complementary and alternative medicine.

(E) Such other officials, entities, and individuals with expertise on complementary and alternative medicine as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) Scope of Consultation.—The Secretary shall undertake consultation under paragraph (1) in carrying out subsection (a) with respect to the following:

(A) To develop the plan.

(B) To identify specific complementary and alternative medicine practices that, on the basis of research findings or promising clinical interventions, are appropriate to include as services to veterans.

(C) To identify barriers to the effective provision and integration of complementary and alternative medicine services into the delivery of health care to veterans, and to identify mechanisms for overcoming such barriers.
(d) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(e) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in regulations the Secretary shall prescribe for purposes of this section, which shall, to the degree practicable, be consistent with the meaning given such term by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 322. PROGRAM ON INTEGRATION OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) carry out, through the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation of the Department of Veterans Affairs, a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of integrating the delivery of complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary with other health care serv-
ices provided by the Department for veterans with mental health conditions, chronic pain conditions, other chronic conditions, and such other conditions as the Secretary determines appropriate; and

(2) in developing the program, identify and resolve barriers to the provision of complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary and the integration of those services with other health care services provided by the Department.

(b) Duration of Program.—The program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the effective date specified in subsection (j).

(c) Locations.—

(1) In general.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at not fewer than 15 separate Department medical centers.

(2) Polytrauma Centers.—Not less than two of the medical centers designated under paragraph (1) shall be located at polytrauma rehabilitation centers of the Department.

(3) Selection of Locations.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall select locations that include the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.
(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas representing different geographic locations, such as census tracts established by the Bureau of the Census.

(d) **Provision of Services.**—Under the program, the Secretary shall provide covered services to covered veterans by integrating complementary and alternative medicine services with other services provided by the Department at the medical centers designated under subsection (c)(1).

(e) **Covered Veterans.**—For purposes of the program, a covered veteran is any veteran who—

   (1) has a mental health condition diagnosed by a clinician of the Department;

   (2) experiences chronic pain; or

   (3) has a chronic condition being treated by a clinician of the Department.

(f) **Covered Services.**—

   (1) **In General.**—For purposes of the program, covered services are services consisting of complementary and alternative medicine as selected by the Secretary.

   (2) **Administration of Services.**—Covered services shall be administered under the program as follows:
(A) Covered services shall be administered by clinicians employed by the Secretary for purposes of this section who, to the extent practicable, shall provide services consisting of complementary and alternative medicine, including those clinicians who solely provide such services.

(B) Covered services shall be included as part of the Patient Aligned Care Teams initiative of the Office of Patient Care Services, Primary Care Program Office, in coordination with the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation.

(C) Covered services shall be made available to both—

(i) covered veterans with mental health conditions, pain conditions, or chronic conditions described in subsection (e) who have received conventional treatments from the Department for such conditions; and

(ii) covered veterans with mental health conditions, pain conditions, or chronic conditions described in subsection (e) who have not received conventional treatments from the Department for such conditions.
(g) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a veteran in the program shall be at the election of the veteran and in consultation with a clinician of the Department.

(h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter for the duration of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the program, including a description of the outreach conducted by the Secretary to veterans and community organizations to inform such organizations about the program.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.
(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program, including with respect to—

(I) the utilization and efficacy of the complementary and alternative medicine services established under the program;

(II) an assessment of the benefit of the program to covered veterans in mental health diagnoses, pain management, and treatment of chronic illness; and

(III) the comparative effectiveness of various complementary and alternative medicine therapies.

(ii) Barriers identified under subsection (a)(2) that were not resolved.

(iii) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(i) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and
alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in section 321(e) of this Act.

(j) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 323. STUDIES OF BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY VETERANS IN RECEIVING, AND ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS IN PROVIDING, COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE SERVICES FURNISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) STUDIES REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct comprehensive studies of the barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and administrators and clinicians in providing, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) STUDIES CONDUCTED.—

(A) VETERANS.—In conducting the study of veterans, the Secretary shall—

(i) survey veterans who seek or receive hospital care or medical services furnished by the Department, as well as veterans who do not seek or receive such care or services;
(ii) administer the survey to a representative sample of veterans from each Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

(iii) ensure that the sample of veterans surveyed is of sufficient size for the study results to be statistically significant.

(B) Administrators and Clinicians.—In conducting the study of clinicians and administrators, the Secretary shall—

(i) survey administrators of the Department who are involved in the provision of health care services;

(ii) survey clinicians that have provided complementary and alternative medicine services through the program established under section 322 of this Act, after those clinicians have provided those services through such program for at least 90 days; and

(iii) administer the survey to administrators under clause (i)—

(I) before the introduction of complementary and alternative medicine services through such program; and
(II) not earlier than 90 days after
the introduction of complementary and
alternative medicine services through
such program.

(b) ELEMENTS OF STUDIES.—

(1) VETERANS.—In conducting the study of veter-
ans required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall
study the following:

(A) The perceived barriers associated with
obtaining complementary and alternative medi-
cine services from the Department.

(B) The satisfaction of veterans with com-
plementary and alternative medicine services in
primary care.

(C) The degree to which veterans are aware
of eligibility requirements for, and the scope of
services available under, complementary and al-
ternative medicine services furnished by the De-
partment.

(D) The effectiveness of outreach to veterans
on the availability of complementary and alter-
native medicine for veterans.

(E) Such other barriers as the Secretary
considers appropriate.
(2) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—In conducting the study of administrators and clinicians required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall study the following:

(A) The extent of the integration of complementary and alternative medicine services within the services provided by the Department.

(B) The perception by administrators and clinicians of the structural and attitudinal barriers to the delivery of high quality complementary and alternative medicine services by the Department.

(C) Strategies that have been used to reduce or eliminate such barriers and the results of such strategies.

(D) The satisfaction of administrators and clinicians regarding the integration of complementary and alternative medicine services within the services provided by the Department.

(E) The perception by administrators and clinicians of the value of specific complementary and alternative medicine services for inpatient and outpatient veteran populations.

(c) DISCHARGE BY CONTRACT.—The Secretary shall enter into a contract with a qualified independent entity
or organization to carry out the studies required by this section.

(d) **Mandatory Review of Data by the National Research Advisory Council.**—

(1) **In General.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the head of the National Research Advisory Council reviews the results of the studies conducted under this section.

(2) **Submittal of Findings.**—The head of the National Research Advisory Council shall submit findings with respect to the studies to the Under Secretary for Health and to other pertinent program offices within the Department with responsibilities relating to health care services for veterans.

(e) **Reports.**—

(1) **Report on Implementation.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the status of the implementation of this section.

(2) **Report on Study.**—

(A) **In General.**—Not later than 45 days after the date of the completion of the study, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study required by subsection (a).
(B) CONTENTS.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) Recommendations for such administrative and legislative proposals and actions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(ii) The findings of the head of the National Research Advisory Council and of the Under Secretary for Health.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, $2,000,000 to carry out this section.

(g) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in section 321(e) of this Act.

SEC. 324. PROGRAM ON USE OF WELLNESS PROGRAMS AS COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program through the award of grants to public or private nonprofit entities to assess
the feasibility and advisability of using wellness programs to complement the provision of mental health care to veterans and family members eligible for counseling under section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The program shall be carried out so as to assess the following:

(A) Means of improving coordination between Federal, State, local, and community providers of health care in the provision of mental health care to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(B) Means of enhancing outreach, and coordination of outreach, by and among providers of health care referred to in subparagraph (A) on the mental health care services available to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(C) Means of using wellness programs of providers of health care referred to in subparagraph (A) as complements to the provision by the Department of Veterans Affairs of mental health care to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).
(D) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in enhancing the quality of life and well-being of veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(E) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in increasing the adherence of veterans described in paragraph (1) to the primary mental health services provided such veterans by the Department.

(F) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) have an impact on the sense of wellbeing of veterans described in paragraph (1) who receive primary mental health services from the Department.

(G) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in encouraging veterans receiving health care from the Department to adopt a more healthy lifestyle.

(b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the program for a period of three years beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at facilities of the Department providing mental health care services to veterans and family members described in subsection (a)(1).
(d) GRANT PROPOSALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A public or private nonprofit entity seeking the award of a grant under this section shall submit an application therefor to the Secretary in such form and in such manner as the Secretary may require.

(2) APPLICATION CONTENTS.—Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A plan to coordinate activities under the program, to the extent possible, with the Federal, State, and local providers of services for veterans to enhance the following:

(i) Awareness by veterans of benefits and health care services provided by the Department.

(ii) Outreach efforts to increase the use by veterans of services provided by the Department.

(iii) Educational efforts to inform veterans of the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle.

(B) A statement of understanding from the entity submitting the application that, if selected, such entity will be required to report to
the Secretary periodically on standardized data
and other performance data necessary to evalu-
ate individual outcomes and to facilitate evalua-
tions among entities participating in the pro-
gram.

(C) Other requirements that the Secretary
may prescribe.

(e) Grant Uses.—

(1) In general.—A public or private nonprofit
entity awarded a grant under this section shall use
the award for purposes prescribed by the Secretary.

(2) Eligible veterans and family.—In car-
rying out the purposes prescribed by the Secretary in
paragraph (1), a public or private nonprofit entity
awarded a grant under this section shall use the
award to furnish services only to individuals specified
in section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United States
Code.

(f) Reports.—

(1) Periodic reports.—

(A) In general.—Not later than 180 days
after the date of the commencement of the pro-
gram, and every 180 days thereafter, the Sec-
retary shall submit to Congress a report on the
program.
(B) REPORT ELEMENTS.—Each report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program during the 180-day period preceding the report.

(ii) An assessment of the benefits of the program to veterans and their family members during the 180-day period preceding the report.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the end of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report detailing the recommendations of the Secretary as to the advisability of continuing or expanding the program.

(g) WELLNESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term “wellness” has the meaning given that term in regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

TITLE IV—ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

SEC. 401. ADMINISTRATION OF VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.

(a) VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 73 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks

“(a) ORGANIZATION.—(1) The Secretary shall organize the Veterans Health Administration in geographically defined Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(2) Each Veterans Integrated Service Network shall be organized in consideration of the following:

“(A) The size of the veteran population of the region of the network.

“(B) The complexity of the medical needs of the veterans in such region.

“(C) Patient referral patterns.

“(D) The availability of a full continuum of health care services.

“(E) The ability of the Department to furnish health care efficiently.

“(F) Partnerships with non-Department health care entities.

“(b) STAFFING MODEL.—(1) The Secretary shall establish a staffing model for each Veterans Integrated Service Network that—
“(A) is appropriate for the mission and responsibilities of the Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

“(B) accounts for the specific health care needs of differing populations in the Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(2) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network complies with the staffing model established by the Secretary under paragraph (1) for such Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(c) INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.—The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network maintains a regional integrated healthcare system by—

“(1) implementing alliances with such other governmental, public, and private health care organizations and practitioners as the Secretary considers appropriate to meet the needs of veterans in the Network;

“(2) providing oversight and management of, and taking responsibility for, a regional budget for the activities of the Veterans Health Administration in the geographic area of the Network that is—
“(A) aligned with the budget guidelines of the Department and the Veterans Health Administration;

“(B) balanced at the end of each fiscal year; and

“(C) sufficient to provide high-quality health care to veterans within the region and to meet any unique needs of the veterans of the region;

“(3) using national metrics to develop systems to provide effective, efficient, and safe delivery of health care; and

“(4) ensuring high-quality clinical programs and services are rendered in and through—

“(A) the medical centers and outpatient clinics of the Department that are located in the Network; and

“(B) other non-Department clinical or health care delivery settings located in the Network.

“(d) REDUCTION IN DUPLICATE FUNCTIONS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Veterans Integrated Service Networks identify and reduce, whenever practicable, the duplication of functions in clinical, administrative, and oper-
ational processes and practices of the Veterans Health Administration.

“(e) COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network—

“(1) works to achieve maximum effectiveness in patient care and safety, graduate medical education, and research; and

“(2) assesses the consolidation or realignment of institutional functions, including capital asset, safety, and operational support functions, in collaboration and cooperation with other Veterans Integrated Service Networks and the following offices or entities within the geographical area of the Network:

“(A) The offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the National Cemetery Administration.

“(B) The offices, installations, and facilities of the Department of Defense, including the offices, installations, and facilities of each branch of the Armed Forces and the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

“(C) The offices, installations, and facilities of the Coast Guard.
“(D) Offices of State and local agencies that have a mission to provide assistance to veterans.
“(E) Medical schools and other affiliates.
“(F) Offices of Congress, offices of State and local elected officials, and other government offices.
“(G) Federal, State, and local emergency preparedness organizations.
“(H) Community and nonprofit organizations.
“(I) Such other entities of the Federal Government as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(f) HEADQUARTERS.—(1) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network has only one headquarters office.
“(2) The location of a headquarters office for a Veterans Integrated Service Network shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located with a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center.
“(3)(A) The Secretary may employ or contract for the services of such full time equivalent employees and contractors at the headquarters of each Veterans Integrated Service Network as the Secretary considers appropriate in accordance with the staffing models established under subsection (b).
“(B) Not later than December 31 each year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on employment at the headquarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks during the most recently completed fiscal year.

“(C) Each report submitted under subparagraph (B) shall include the following for the year covered by the report:

“(i) The number of individuals employed at each headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(ii) The number of individuals employed by the Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network who are not employed at the same location as the headquarters of the Network.

“(iii) The title for each position of employment at a headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(iv) The title for each position of employment with the Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network that is not at the same location as the headquarters of the Network.

“(v) An assessment of the impact on the budget of the Department by the employment of individuals
at the headquarters of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(g) Triennial Structure Review, Reassessment, and Report.—(1) Beginning three years after the date of the enactment of this section and not less frequently than once every three years thereafter, the Secretary shall conduct a review and assessment of the structure and operations of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks in order to identify recommendations—

“(A) for streamlining and reducing costs associated with the operation of each headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

“(B) for reducing costs of health care within the Veterans Health Administration.

“(2) Not later than 180 days after conducting a review and assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee of Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on such review and assessment, which shall include such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”.

(2) Clerical Amendment.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by
inserting after the item relating to section 7309 the following new item:

“7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”

(b) Relocation of Headquarters.—

(1) In general.—In the case of a headquarters office of a Veterans Integrated Service Network that on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act was in a location that was not co-located with a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center and the Secretary is engaged in a lease for such location, the Secretary may—

(A) relocate such headquarters upon the expiration of such lease so that such headquarters is co-located as required by section 7310(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)(1)); or

(B) notwithstanding such section 7310(f)(2) (as so added), renew such lease or enter into a new lease to keep such headquarters in such location.

(2) Report.—If the Secretary renews a lease or engages in a new lease under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives, before renewing such lease or engaging in such lease, a report de-
scribing the reasons for such renewal or engagement.

Such report shall include the following:

(A) A list of Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers in the Veterans Integrated Service Network of the headquarters with underutilized buildings, the number of such buildings, and the total underutilized square footage for each such medical center.

(B) The cost of the current lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the current square footage being leased.

(C) The cost of the new lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the square footage to be leased.

(c) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any change in the location or type of medical care or service provided by a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, a Department community based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care
or services under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section, and the amendments made by this section, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 402. REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS FOR VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 73, as amended by section 401(a)(1) of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish not more than four regional support centers within the Veterans Health Administration to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks. The head of each regional support center shall report to the Under Secretary of Health.

“(b) FUNCTIONS.—The functions of the regional support centers established under subsection (a) are as follows:

“(1) To assess the quality of work performed within finance operations and other compliance related activities of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.
“(2) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts outreach to veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, or any other contingency operation (as that term is defined in section 101 of title 10).

“(3) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts programs for the benefit of women veterans.

“(4) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts programs that address homelessness among veterans.

“(5) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network consumes energy.

“(6) To assess such other matters concerning the operations and activities of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(c) STAFF.—The Secretary may hire such employees and contractors as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out the functions of the regional support centers.

“(d) LOCATION OF REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS.—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the location of each regional support center established under subsection
(a) shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located with a medical center of the Department.

“(2) The Secretary may choose a location for a regional support center established under subsection (a) that is not co-located with a medical center of the Department if the Secretary submits to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives, before entering into a contract for a location that is not co-located with a medical center, a report describing the reasons for choosing a location for the regional support center that is not co-located with a medical center of the Department. Such report shall include the following:

“(A) A list of medical centers of the Department in the Veterans Integrated Service Network of the regional support center with underutilized buildings, the number of all Veterans Health Administration buildings in such Network, and the total underutilized square footage for each medical center of the Department in such Network.

“(B) The estimated cost of such lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the square footage to be leased.”.
(b) INITIAL STAFFING.—In providing for the initial staff of each regional support center established under section 7310A(a) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the degree practicable, transfer employees from headquarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks to regional support centers who were employed in positions at such headquarters that covered functions similar to those described in section 7310A(b) of such title, as so added.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73, as amended by section 401(a)(2) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7310 the following new item:

“7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”

(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any change in the location or type of medical care or service provided by a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, a Department community based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care or services under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
(e) **Effective Date.**—This section, and the amendments made by this section, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 403. COMMISSION ON CAPITAL PLANNING FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITIES.**

(a) **Establishment of Commission.**—

(1) **Establishment.**—There is established the Commission on Capital Planning for Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities (in this section referred to as the “Commission”).

(2) **Membership.**—

(A) **Voting Members.**—The Commission shall, subject to subparagraph (B), be composed of 10 voting members as follows:

(i) 1 shall be appointed by the President.

(ii) 1 shall be appointed by the Administrator of General Services.

(iii) 3 shall be appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, of whom—

(I) 1 shall be an employee of the Veterans Health Administration;

(II) 1 shall be an employee of the Office of Asset Enterprise Management;
of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

and

(III) I shall be an employee of the Office of Construction and Facilities Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(iv) I shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense from among employees of the Army Corps of Engineers.

(v) I shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

(vi) I shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(vii) I shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(viii) I shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(B) REQUIREMENT RELATING TO CERTAIN APPOINTMENTS OF VOTING MEMBERS.—Of the members appointed pursuant to clause (i), (ii), and (iv) through (viii) of subparagraph (A), all shall have expertise in capital leasing, construction, or health facility management planning.
(C) NON-VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall be assisted by 10 non-voting members, appointed by the vote of a majority of members of the Commission under subparagraph (A), of whom—

(i) 6 shall be representatives of veterans service organizations recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

(ii) 4 shall be individuals from outside the Department of Veterans Affairs with experience and expertise in matters relating to management, construction, and leasing of capital assets.

(D) DATE OF APPOINTMENT OF VOTING MEMBERS.—The appointments of the members of the Commission under subparagraph (A) shall be made not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 15 days after the date on which 7 members of the Commission
have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its first meeting.

(5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chair.

(6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(7) CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.—The Commission shall select a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members.

(b) DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall undertake a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of various options for capital planning for Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, including an evaluation and assessment of the mechanisms by which the Department currently selects means for the delivery of health care, whether by major construction, major medical facility leases, sharing agreements with the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service, and Federally Qualified Health Clinics under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b), contract care, multisite care, telemedicine, extended hours for care, or other means.
(2) **CONTEXT OF EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT.**—In undertaking the evaluation and assessment, the Commission shall consider—

(A) the importance of access to health care through the Department, including associated guidelines of the Department on access to, and drive time for, health care;

(B) limitations and requirements applicable to the construction and leasing of medical facilities for the Department, including applicable laws, regulations, and costs as determined by both the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget;

(C) the nature of capital planning for Department medical facilities in an era of fiscal uncertainty;

(D) projected future fluctuations in the population of veterans; and

(E) the extent to which the Department was able to meet the mandates of the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Commission.

(3) **PARTICULAR CONSIDERATIONS.**—In undertaking the evaluation and assessment, the Commission shall address, in particular, the following:
(A) The Major Medical Facility Lease Program of the Department, including an identification of potential improvements to the lease authorization processes under that Program.

(B) The management processes of the Department for its Major Medical Facility Construction Program, including processes relating to contract award and management, project management, and processing of change orders.

(C) The overall capital planning program of the Department for medical facilities, including an evaluation and assessment of—

(i) the manner in which the Department determines whether to use capital or non-capital means to expand access to health care;

(ii) the manner in which the Department determines the disposition of under-utilized and un-utilized buildings on campuses of Department medical centers, and any barriers to disposition;

(iii) the effectiveness of the facility master planning initiative of the Department; and
(iv) the extent to which sustainable attributes are planned for to decrease operating costs for Department medical facilities.

(D) The current backlog of construction projects for Department medical facilities, including an identification of the most effective means to quickly secure the most critical repairs required, including repairs relating to facility condition deficiencies, structural safety, and compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

(4) REPORTS.—Subject to paragraph (5), the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and to the Committee Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives, reports as follows:

(A) Not later than six months after its initial meeting under subsection (a)(4), a report on the Major Medical Facility Lease Program and the Congressional lease authorization process.

(B) Not later than one year after its initial meeting, a report—
(i) on the management processes of the Department for the construction of Department medical facilities; and

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in the report under subparagraph (A).

(C) Not later than 18 months after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the overall capital planning program of the Department for medical facilities; and

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in earlier reports under this paragraph.

(D) Not later than two years after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the current backlog of construction projects for Department medical facilities;

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in earlier reports under this paragraph; and

(iii) including such other matters relating to the duties of the Commission that the Commission considers appropriate.
(E) Not later than 27 months after its initial meeting, a report on the implementation by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs pursuant to subsection (g) of the recommendations included pursuant to paragraph (5) in the reports under this paragraph.

(5) **Recommendations.**—Each report under paragraph (4) shall include, for the aspect of the capital asset planning process of the Department covered by such report, such recommendations as the Commission considers appropriate for the improvement and enhancement of such aspect of the capital asset planning process.

(c) **Powers of Commission.**—

(1) **Hearings.**—The Commission may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out this section.

(2) **Information from Federal Agencies.**—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out this section. Upon request of the Chair of the Commission, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Commission.
(d) Commission Personnel Matters.—

(1) Compensation of Members.—Each member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Commission. All members of the Commission who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) Travel Expenses.—The members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

(3) Staff.—

(A) In General.—The Chair of the Commission may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an
executive director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its duties. The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Commission.

(B) COMPENSATION.—The Chair of the Commission may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(4) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(5) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Chair of the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily
equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed
for level V of the Executive Schedule under section
5316 of such title.

(e) TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.—The Commission
shall terminate 60 days after the date on which the Com-
mission submits its report under subsection (b)(4)(E).

(f) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall
make available to the Commission such amounts as the Sec-
retary and the Chair of the Commission jointly consider
appropriate for the Commission to perform its duties under
this section.

(g) ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
fairs shall implement each recommendation included
in a report under subsection (b)(4) that the Secretary
considers feasible and advisable and can be imple-
mented without further legislative action.

(2) REPORTS.—Not later than 120 days after re-
ceipt of a report under subparagraphs (A) through
(D) of subsection (b)(4), the Secretary shall submit to
the Committee Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the
Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Rep-
resentatives a report setting forth the following:
(A) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of each recommendation contained in such report.

(B) For each recommendation assessed as feasible and advisable—

(i) if such recommendation does not require further legislative action for implementation, a description of the actions taken, and to be taken, by the Secretary to implement such recommendation; and

(ii) if such recommendation requires further legislative action for implementation, recommendations for such legislative action.

SEC. 404. PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND DATASHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS.

(a) Establishment of Internet Website.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available on an Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs available to the public the following:

(1) Data files that contain information on research of the Department.

(2) A data dictionary on each data file.
(3) Instructions for how to obtain access to each data file for use in research.

(b) **Public Access to Manuscripts on Department Funded Research.**—

(1) In General.—Beginning not later than 540 days after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall require, as a condition on the use of any data gathered or formulated from research funded by the Department, that any final, peer-reviewed manuscript prepared for publication that uses such data be submitted to the Secretary for deposit in the digital archive under paragraph (2) and publication under paragraph (3).

(2) Digital Archive.—Not later than 540 days after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall—

(A) establish a digital archive consisting of manuscripts described in paragraph (1); or

(B) partner with another executive agency to compile such manuscripts in a digital archive.

(3) Public Availability.—

(A) Availability of Archive.—The Secretary shall ensure that the digital archive under paragraph (2) and the contents of such archive
are available to the public via a publicly accessible Internet website at no cost to the public.

(B) AVAILABILITY OF MANUSCRIPTS.—The Secretary shall ensure that each manuscript submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1) is available to the public under subparagraph (A) not later than one year after the official date on which the manuscript is otherwise published.

(4) CONSISTENT WITH COPYRIGHT LAW.—The Secretary shall carry out this subsection in a manner consistent with applicable copyright law.

(5) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date the Secretary begins making manuscripts available to the public under this subsection and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the implementation of this subsection during the most recent one-year period.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include for the period of the report:
(i) The number of manuscripts submitted under paragraph (1).

(ii) The titles of such manuscripts.

(iii) The authors of such manuscripts.

(iv) For each such manuscript, the name and issue number or volume number, as the case may be, of the journal or other publication in which such manuscript was published.

(c) **Recommendations for Data Sharing Between Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense options and recommendations for the establishment of a program for long-term cooperation and data sharing between and within the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate research on outcomes of military service, readjustment after combat deployment, and other topics of importance to the following:

(1) Veterans.

(2) Members of the Armed Forces.
(3) Family members of veterans.

(4) Family members of members of the Armed Forces.

(5) Members of communities that have a significant population of veterans or members of the Armed Forces.

(d) Executive Agency Defined.—In this section, the term “executive agency” has the meaning given that term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

(e) Effective Date.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 405. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY FOR OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) In General.—Chapter 63 is amended by inserting after section 6308 the following new section:

“§ 6309. Budget transparency

“(a) Budget Requirements.—In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the Department budget for a fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested for such fiscal year for activities of the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs as follows:
“(1) For outreach activities of the Department in aggregate.

“(2) For outreach activities of each element of the Department specified in subsection (b)(1).

“(b) PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—(1) Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, the Secretary shall establish and maintain procedures for the Office of Public and Inter-governmental Affairs to ensure the effective coordination and collaboration of outreach activities of the Department between and among the following:

“(A) Office of the Secretary.

“(B) Veterans Health Administration.

“(C) Veterans Benefits Administration.

“(D) National Cemetery Administration.

“(2) The Secretary shall—

“(A) beginning after the date on which the Secretary establishes procedures under paragraph (1), not less frequently than once every two years conduct a review of the procedures established and maintained under paragraph (1) to ensure that such procedures meet the requirements of such paragraph;

“(B) make such modifications to such procedures as the Secretary considers appropriate based upon re-
views conducted under subparagraph (A) in order to better meet such requirements; and

“(C) not later than 45 days after completing a review under subparagraph (A), submit to Congress a report on the findings of such review.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 6308 the following new item:

“6309. Budget transparency.”.

SEC. 406. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) In General.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the advisory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) Contents.—The report required by subsection (a)—

(1) shall include—

(A) recommendations or proposals for continuing, modifying, or terminating certain advisory committees, including noting areas of overlap and duplication among the advisory committees; and
(B) such other information as the Comptroller General considers appropriate; and

(2) may include—

(A) a description of each advisory committee, including with respect to each committee—

(i) the purpose of the committee;

(ii) the commencement date of the committee; and

(iii) the anticipated termination date of the committee;

(B) a summary of the anticipated expenses and the actual expenses incurred for each advisory committee during the most recent three fiscal years ending before the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(C) with respect to meetings held by each advisory committee—

(i) the frequency with which each committee has met during the shorter of—

(I) the most recent three fiscal years ending before the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(II) the life of the committee;
(ii) the date of the most recent meeting held by the committee before such date of enactment; and

(iii) the date of the most recent report or other written product developed by the committee before such date of enactment.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE V—IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

Subtitle A—Claims Based on Military Sexual Trauma

SEC. 501. MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND OPINION FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION CLAIMS BASED ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5103A(d) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3)(A) In the case of a claim for disability compensation based on a mental health condition related to military sexual trauma, the Secretary shall treat an examination or opinion as being necessary to make a decision on a claim for purposes of paragraph (1) if the evidence of record before the Secretary, taking into consideration all information
and lay or medical evidence (including statements of the
claimant)—

“(i)(I) contains competent evidence that the
claimant has a current disability, or persistent or re-
current symptoms of disability; and

“(II) indicates that the disability or symptoms
may be associated with the claimant’s active military,
naval, or air service; but

“(ii) does not contain a diagnosis or opinion by
a mental health professional that may assist in cor-
roborating the occurrence of a military sexual trauma
stressor related to a diagnosable mental health condi-
tion.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘military sexual
trauma’ shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary
for purposes of this paragraph, and shall include ‘sexual
harassment’ (as so specified).”.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date
of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Af-
fairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of
the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the
House of Representatives a report on the number of exami-
nations and opinions conducted by the Secretary pursuant
to paragraph (3) of section 5103A(d) of title 38, United
States Code (as added by subsection (a)), including the fol-
lowing:

(1) The number of examinations conducted using
a standardized disability assessment.

(2) The number of examinations conducted using
a non-standardized clinical interview.

SEC. 502. CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICERS FOR MILITARY
SEXUAL TRAUMA SUPPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
shall assign to each individual seeking compensation under
the laws administered by the Secretary based on military
sexual trauma a case representative officer who shall pro-
vide advice and general information to such individual on
the claims process for such compensation. Each case rep-
resentative officer so assigned shall be assigned from among
current personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) LIAISON.—A case representative officer assigned to
an individual under subsection (a) shall be responsible for
serving as a liaison between the individual, an authorized
agent or attorney of the individual under section 5904 of
title 38, United States Code, or an otherwise accredited rep-
resentative of the individual, and the Department of Vet-
ers Affairs on matters relating to the claim of the indi-
vidual for compensation under the laws administered by
the Secretary.
(c) Case Representative Officer Requirements.—

(1) Competence and Knowledge.—Each case representative officer assigned under subsection (a) shall be competent and knowledgeable about the following:

(A) The claims adjudication process and applicable laws, regulations, and other authority applicable to the adjudication of disability claims based on military sexual trauma.

(B) Such other services to victims of sexual trauma as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) Limitation on Number of Individuals To Which Assigned.—A case representative officer may not be assigned to more individuals described in subsection (a) than, as determined by the Secretary, is appropriate for the provision of individual case management assistance by such officer.

(d) Information on Benefits and Programs Relating to Military Sexual Trauma.—

(1) In General.—The Secretary shall make available to the public information on the availability of case representative officers under subsection (a) to assist in the application for benefits based on military sexual trauma. The Secretary shall revise and
update the information so made available in order to 
ensure that the information is as current as possible.

(2) INDIVIDUALS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY 
service.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with 
the Secretary of Defense, ensure that individuals who 
are being separated from the active military, naval, 
or air service are provided appropriate information 
about programs, requirements, and procedures for ap-
plying for benefits based on military sexual trauma 
and the availability of case representative officers 
under subsection (a).

(e) INFORMATION ON TRAINING FOR AGENTS AND REP-
resentatives of Individuals Assigned Case Rep-
resentative Officer.—The Secretary shall make avail-
able to the authorized agent or attorney of an individual 
assigned a case representative under subsection (a), or to 
the otherwise accredited representative of the individual, 
any relevant materials used to train such case representa-
tive officer for the duties of such position.

(f) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS CON-
sideration of mechanisms to enhance coordination 
between VBA and VHA on benefits for military 
sexual trauma.—The Advisory Committee on Women 
Veterans established under section 542 of title 38, United 
States Code, shall undertake actions to identify mechanisms
to enhance coordination between the Veterans Benefits Administra-
tion and the Veterans Health Administration in the provision of benefits based on military sexual trauma, including the identification of barriers to the appropriate provision of benefits for military sexual trauma by such Administrations and of means of eliminating or reducing such barriers.

(g) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the following:

(1) A certification whether or not the case representative officers assigned under subsection (a) during the preceding year met the requirements specified in subsection (c).

(2) A description of the current training the Secretary provides to employees of the Veterans Benefits Administration on claims for benefits based on military sexual trauma, including the frequency, length, and content of such training.

(3) A description of current policies and procedures on the training the Secretary provides to case representative officers, including the current position descriptions for case representative officers.
(4) A description of current efforts to coordinate activities and assistance provided to individuals who seek care or benefits for military sexual trauma between the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration, including the efforts of the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans under subsection (f).

(h) SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No case representative officer may be assigned under subsection (a) after December 31, 2018.

(2) CONTINUATION OF DUTIES AFTER SUNSET DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall not be construed to prohibit any case representative officer assigned to an individual before the date specified in that paragraph from performing duties pursuant to this section after that date with respect to a claim for which that case representative officer was assigned to such individual before that date.

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.
(2) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

SEC. 503. REPORT ON STANDARD OF PROOF FOR SERVICE-CONNECTION OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS RELATED TO MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the current standard of proof for service-connection under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, for covered mental health conditions based on military sexual trauma.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Secretary shall include in the report under subsection (a) any recommendations the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the adjudication of claims for compensation based on military sexual trauma, including—

(1) recommendations for an appropriate standard of proof for such claims if the Secretary considers such recommendations advisable; and
(2) recommendations for legislative action, if necessary, to carry out such improvement.

(c) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) Active military, naval, or air service.—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) Covered mental health condition.—The term “covered mental health condition” means post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, or other mental health diagnosis that the Secretary determines to be related to military sexual trauma.

(3) Military sexual trauma.—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

SEC. 504. REPORTS ON CLAIMS FOR DISABILITIES INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED BY MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) Reports.—Not later than December 1, 2014, and each year thereafter through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the covered claims submitted to the Secretary during the previous fiscal year.
(b) ELEMENTS.—Each report under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The number of covered claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year covered by the report.

(2) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1), the number and percentage of such claims—
   (A) submitted by each gender;
   (B) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and
   (C) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender.

(3) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were approved, the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability.

(4) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were denied—
   (A) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, for such denials; and
(B) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(5) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were resubmitted to the Secretary after denial in a previous adjudication—

(A) the number of such claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year covered by the report;

(B) the number and percentage of such claims—

   (i) submitted by each gender;

   (ii) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

   (iii) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender;

(C) the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability; and

(D) of such claims that were again denied—

   (i) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section
5104(b)(1) of such title for such denials; and

(ii) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(6) The number of covered claims that, as of the end of the fiscal year covered by the report, are pending and, separately, the number of such claims on appeal.

(7) For the fiscal year covered by the report, the average number of days that covered claims take to complete beginning on the date on which the claim is submitted.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) COVERED CLAIMS.—The term “covered claims” means claims for disability compensation submitted to the Secretary based on post traumatic stress disorder alleged to have been incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

(3) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning
specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

Subtitle B—Agency of Original Jurisdiction

SEC. 511. WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE WORK CREDIT AND WORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION IN AN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT.

(a) Establishment.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a working group to assess and develop recommendations for the improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

(b) Composition.—The working group shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary or the Secretary’s designee.

(2) Individuals selected by the Secretary from among employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who handle claims for compensation and pension benefits and are recommended to the Secretary by a labor organization for purposes of this section,
including at least one of each of the following individuals:

(A) A veterans service representative.

(B) A rating veterans service representative.

(C) A decision review officer.

(3) Not fewer than three individuals selected by the Secretary to represent different organizations recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(4) Individuals selected by the Secretary—

(A) that are not employees of the Department; and

(B) that are experts in work credit and work management systems.

(c) DUTIES.—The duties of the working group are to assess and develop recommendations for the following:

(1) The improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

(2) A scientific, data based methodology to be used in revising the employee work credit system of the Department to improve the quality and quantity of work produced by employees of the Department.
(3) The improvement of the resource allocation model of the Veterans Benefits Administration, with a focus on the processing of claims in an electronic environment.

(4) A schedule by which the revisions referred to in paragraph (2) will be implemented by the Department.

(d) Review and Incorporation of Findings From Prior Study.—In carrying out its duties under subsection (c), the working group shall review the findings and conclusions of previous studies of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(e) Role of the Secretary.—The Secretary shall consider the recommendations of the working group and implement such recommendations as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(f) Reports.—

(1) Interim Report.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the establishment of the working group, the working group shall submit to Congress a report on the progress of the working group.

(2) Final Report.—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the working group, the Secretary shall submit to Congress the
methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Secretary has decided to implement pursuant to subsection (e).

(g) IMPLEMENTATION OF METHODOLOGY AND SCHEDULE.—After submitting the report under subsection (f), the Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to apply the methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Secretary has decided to implement pursuant to subsection (e).

SEC. 512. TASK FORCE ON RETENTION AND TRAINING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLAIMS PROCESSORS AND ADJUDICATORS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a task force to assess retention and training of claims processors and adjudicators that are employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The task force shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs or designee.

(2) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management or designee.

(3) The Commissioner of Social Security or designee.
(4) An individual selected by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs who represents an organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(5) Such other individuals selected by the Secretary who represent such other organizations and institutions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) Duration.—The task force established under subsection (a) shall terminate not later than two years after the date on which the task force is established under such subsection.

(d) Duties.—The duties of the task force are as follows:

(1) To identify key skills required by claims processors and adjudicators to perform the duties of claims processors and adjudicators in the various claims processing and adjudication positions throughout the Federal Government.

(2) To identify reasons for employee attrition from claims processing positions.

(3) To coordinate with educational institutions to develop training and programs of education for members of the Armed Forces to prepare such mem-
bers for employment in claims processing and adjudication positions in the Federal Government.

(4) To identify and coordinate offices of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs located throughout the United States to provide information about, and promotion of, available claims processing positions to members of the Armed Forces transitioning to civilian life and to veterans with disabilities.

(5) To establish performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the task force.

(6) Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, to develop a Government-wide strategic and operational plan for promoting employment of veterans in claims processing positions in the Federal Government.

(7) To establish performance measures to assess the plan developed under paragraph (6), to assess the implementation of such plan, and to revise such plan as the task force considers appropriate.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) SUBMITTAL OF PLAN.—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to
Congress a report on the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

(2) **Assessment of Implementation.**—Not later than 120 days after the termination of the task force, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that assesses the implementation of the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

**SEC. 513. REPORTS ON REQUESTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR RECORDS OF OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.**

(a) **Reports Required.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter through the date that is 910 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the attempts of the Department of Veterans Affairs to obtain records necessary to adjudicate claims for benefits from another department or agency of the Federal Government during the 180-day period ending on the date of such report.

(b) **Elements.**—

(1) **In General.**—Each report shall set forth the following:
(A) For the period covered by such report, the following:

(i) The total number of requests made by the Department.

(ii) The types of records requested.

(iii) The number of requests made before the receipt of each record.

(iv) The amount of time between the initial request for each record and the receipt of each record.

(v) The number of occurrences of the receipt of a record after the adjudication of the claim for which the record was sought.

(vi) A description of the efforts of the Secretary to expedite the delivery of records to the Department from other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(B) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate in light of such report.

(2) Presentation.—The information in a report under clause (i) through (v) of paragraph (1)(A) shall be set forth separately for each department and agency of the Federal Government covered by such report.
SEC. 514. RECOGNITION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIAN TRIBES IN THE PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CLAIMS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 5902(a)(1) is amended by inserting “, including Indian tribes (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b))” after “as the Secretary may approve”.

SEC. 515. PROGRAM ON PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN IMPROVING QUALITY OF CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) Program Required.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of entering into memoranda of understanding with local governments and tribal organizations—

(1) to improve the quality of claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, and pension under chapter 15 of such title; and

(2) to provide assistance to veterans who may be eligible for such compensation or pension in submitting such claims.
(b) **MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.**—In carrying out the program required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall enter into, or maintain existing, memoranda of understanding with at least—

(1) two tribal organizations; and

(2) 10 State or local governments.

(c) **DURATION.**—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) **REPORT.**—

(1) **INITIAL REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following:

(A) A description of the implementation and operation of the program, including a description of outreach conducted by the Secretary to tribal organizations and State and local governments.

(B) An evaluation of the program, including the total number of memoranda of understanding entered into or maintained by the Secretary.
(2) **Final Report.**—Not later than 180 days after the termination of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following:

(A) A description of the implementation and operation of the program, including a description of outreach conducted by the Secretary to tribal organizations and State and local governments.

(B) An evaluation of the program, including the total number of memoranda of understanding entered into or maintained by the Secretary.

(C) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(D) Such recommendations for continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(e) **Tribal Organization Defined.**—In this section, the term “tribal organization” has the meaning given that term in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code.
SEC. 516. QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN ELIMINATING BACKLOG OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ADJUDICATED.

(a) In General.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than quarterly thereafter through calendar year 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the backlog of claims filed with the Department of Veterans Affairs for compensation that have not been adjudicated by the Department.

(b) Contents.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) For each month through calendar year 2015, a projection of the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims on backlog at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) The number of appeals pending at the end of the month.
(F) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog, including the expected impact of those initiatives on accuracy and timeliness of adjudication of claims.

(2) For each quarter through calendar year 2015, a projection of the average accuracy of disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(3) For each month during the most recently completed quarter, the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims on backlog at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) The number of appeals pending at the end of the month.

(F) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog, including the impact of those initiatives on accuracy and timeliness of adjudication of claims.
(G) An assessment of the accuracy of disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(4) For the most recently completed quarter—

(A) the number of cases physically received at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals and docketed;

(B) the number of cases pending at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals at the end of the quarter;

(C) the number of cases physically at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals at the end of the quarter;

(D) the number of notices of disagreement and appeals filed to the agency of original jurisdiction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code; and

(E) the number of decisions made by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals and the percentage of such decisions that were allowed, remanded, denied, or otherwise disposed of.

(c) AVAILABILITY TO PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall make each report submitted under subsection (a) available to the public.
(d) **On Backlog and Pending Defined.**—In this section, the terms “on backlog” and “pending”, with respect to a claim for compensation received by the Secretary, shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

**SEC. 517. Reports on Use of Existing Authorities to Expedite Benefits Decisions.**

(a) **Report on Current Use of Temporary, Intermediate, and Provisional Rating Decisions.**—

   (1) **Report Required.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the use of temporary, intermediate, and provisional rating decisions to expedite the benefits decisions of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

   (2) **Report Elements.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

      (A) With respect to temporary and intermediate rating decisions, the following:

      (i) The number of temporary and intermediate rating decisions issued by the

(ii) A description of any reasons or obstacles that prevent use of existing authorities to issue temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(iii) A description of the Quick Pay Disability initiative, including the rationale for not expanding the initiative beyond pilot program status.

(B) With respect to provisional rating decisions, the following:

(i) The number of provisional rating decisions issued by the Department during the oldest claims first initiative.

(ii) Of the provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative—

(I) the number of such decisions that involved a claim granted;

(II) the number of such decisions that involved a claim denied; and

(III) the number of such decisions that involved a claim granted in part or a claim denied in part.
(iii) A statement of the most common reasons claims were not granted earlier under the oldest claims first initiative when there was sufficient evidence to render an award of benefits in the provisional rating decision.

(iv) The average number of days to issue a provisional rating decision under the oldest claims first initiative.

(v) Of the total number of decisions that were completed under the oldest claims first initiative—

(I) the number that were Category 1 claims and received a final rating decision; and

(II) the number that were Category 2 claims and received a provisional rating decision.

(vi) The number of rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative that involved a brokered claim, set forth by number of such claims by Regional Office of the Department, including—

(I) the number of brokered claims received by each Regional Office; and
(II) the number of brokered claims
issued by each Regional Office.

(vii) The number of provisional rating
decisions issued during the oldest claims
first initiative with respect to which the vet-
eran requested that the provisional decision
become final in order to appeal.

(viii) The number of provisional rating
decisions issued during the oldest claims
first initiative with respect to which the vet-
eran requested an appeal after the expira-
tion of the 1-year period beginning on the
date of notification of the provisional rating
decision.

(ix) An assessment of the accuracy of
provisional rating decisions issued during
the oldest claims first initiative, set forth by
Category 1 claims and Category 2 claims.

(C) Such other matters as the Secretary
considers appropriate for purposes of the report.

(3) SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION.—If the Sec-
retary continues to obtain information on rating de-
cisions under clauses (vii) and (viii) of paragraph
(2)(B) after the date of the submittal of the report re-
quired by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit
to the committees of Congress referred to in paragraph (1) a report on such information that supplements the information on such clauses in the report under paragraph (1) when the Secretary completes accumulation of such information.

(b) Plan for Increase in Use of Temporary or Intermediate Rating Decisions.—

(1) Report on Plan Required.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan to increase the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions to expedite benefit decisions of the Department when the record contains sufficient evidence to grant any claim at issue, including service connection.

(2) Plan Elements.—The plan required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Mechanisms to overcome obstacles to the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions, including mechanisms (such as upgrades) to assure the ability of the Veterans Benefits Management System to facilitate the issuance of temporary or intermediate rating decisions.
(B) Mechanisms to ensure that appropriate claimant populations, such as claimants who file complex or multi-issue disability compensation claims, benefit from the availability of temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(C) Mechanisms to provide for the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions, including mechanisms to resolve whether a request by a claimant or claimant representative should trigger use of a temporary or intermediate rating decision depending on the circumstances of the claimant.

(D) Mechanisms to prevent the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions in lieu of a final rating decision when a final rating decision could be made with little or no additional claim development.

(E) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to increase the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions to expedite benefit decisions of the Department.
SEC. 518. REPORTS ON DEPARTMENT DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND PREVENTION OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

(a) Report on Disability Medical Examinations Furnished by Department of Veterans Affairs.—

(1) In general.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the furnishing of general medical and specialty medical examinations by the Department of Veterans Affairs for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) Contents.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(B) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which a comprehensive joint examination was conducted, but
for which no disability relating to a joint, bone, or muscle had been asserted as an issue in the claim.

(C) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(D) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which one or more joint examinations were conducted.

(E) A summary with citations to any medical and scientific studies that provide a basis for determining that three repetitions is adequate to determine the effect of repetitive use on functional impairments.

(F) The names of all examination reports, including general medical examinations and Disability Benefits Questionnaires, used for evaluation of compensation and pension disability claims which require measurement of repeated ranges of motion testing and the number of examinations requiring such measurements which were conducted in fiscal year 2012.
(G) The average amount of time taken by an individual conducting a medical examination to perform the three repetitions of movement of each joint.

(H) A discussion of whether there are more efficient and effective scientifically reliable methods of testing for functional loss on repetitive use of an extremity other than the three time repetition currently used by the Department.

(I) Recommendations as to the continuation of the practice of measuring functional impairment by using three repetitions of movement of each joint during the examination as a criteria for evaluating the effect of repetitive motion on functional impairment with supporting rationale.

(b) REPORT AND PLAN TO PREVENT THE ORDERING OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary in reducing the necessity for in-person disability examinations and other efforts to comply
with the provisions of section 5125 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Criteria used by the Secretary to determine if a claim is eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative.

(B) The number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative during the period beginning on the date of the initiation of the initiative and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act, disaggregated—

(i) by fiscal year; and

(ii) by claims determined eligible based in whole or in part on medical evidence provided by a private health care provider.

(C) The total number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative that required an employee of the Department to supplement the evidence with information obtained during a telephone interview with a claimant or health care provider.

(D) Information on any other initiatives or efforts, including disability benefits question-
naires, of the Department to further encourage
the use of medical evidence provided by a private
health care provider and reliance upon reports of
a medical examination administered by a pri-
private physician if the report is sufficiently com-
plete to be adequate for the purposes of adjudi-
cating a claim.

(E) A plan—

(i) to measure, track, and prevent the
ordering of unnecessary medical examina-
tions when the provision by a claimant of
a medical examination administered by a
private physician in support of a claim for
benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of title 38,
United States Code, is adequate for the pur-
pose of making a decision on that claim;
and

(ii) that includes the actions the Sec-
retary will take to eliminate any request by
the Department for a medical examination
in the case of a claim for benefits under
chapter 11 or 15 of such title in support of
which a claimant submits medical evidence
or a medical opinion provided by a private
health care provider that is competent, credi-
ible, probative, and otherwise adequate for purposes of making a decision on that claim.

Subtitle C—Board of Veterans’ Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

SEC. 521. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MISFILED DOCUMENTS AS A NOTICE OF APPEAL TO THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS.

Section 7266 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e)(1) If a person adversely affected by a final decision of the Board, who has not filed a notice of appeal with the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims under subsection (a), misfiles a document with the Board or the agency of original jurisdiction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of this title that expresses disagreement with such decision and a clear intent to seek review of such decision by the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, not later than 120 days after the date of such decision, such document shall be treated as timely filed under subsection (a).

“(2) The treatment of misfiled documents under paragraph (1) does not limit equitable relief that may be otherwise available to a person described in that paragraph.”.
SEC. 522. MODIFICATION OF FILING PERIOD FOR NOTICE OF DISAGREEMENT TO INITIATE APPELLATE REVIEW OF DECISIONS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) Filing of Notice of Disagreement by Claimants.—

(1) In general.—Paragraph (1) of section 7105(b) is amended—

(A) by striking “one year” and inserting “180 days” in the first sentence; and

(B) by striking “one-year” and inserting “180-day” in the third sentence.

(2) Electronic filing.—Such paragraph is further amended by inserting “or transmitted by electronic means” after “postmarked”.

(3) Good cause exception for untimely filing of notices of disagreement.—Such section 7105(b) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) A notice of disagreement not filed within the time prescribed by paragraph (1) shall be treated by the Secretary as timely filed if—

“(A) the Secretary determines that the claimant, legal guardian, or other accredited representative, attorney, or authorized agent filing the notice had good cause for the lack of filing within such time; and
“(B) the notice of disagreement is filed not later than 186 days after the expiration of the period prescribed by paragraph (1).”.

(b) APPLICATION BY DEPARTMENT FOR REVIEW ON APPEAL.—Section 7106 is amended in the first sentence by striking “one-year period described in section 7105” and inserting “period described in section 7105(b)(1)”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs filed with the Secretary after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 523. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VETERANS’ APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7107 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “in subsection (f)” and inserting “in subsection (g)”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(3) by striking subsections (d) and (e) and inserting the following new subsections:

“(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a hearing before the Board shall be conducted through picture and voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in such
a manner that the appellant is not present in the same location as the members of the Board during the hearing.

“(2)(A) A hearing before the Board shall be conducted in person upon the request of an appellant.

“(B) In the absence of a request under subparagraph (A), a hearing before the Board may also be conducted in person as the Board considers appropriate.

“(e)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(1), the Secretary shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the Board or other components of the Department to enable an appellant located at an appropriate facility within the area served by a regional office to participate as so described.

“(2) Any hearing conducted as described in subsection (d)(1) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.

“(f)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(2), the appellant may request that the hearing be held at the principal location of the Board or at a facility of the Department located within the area served by a regional office of the Department.

“(2) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department shall (except as provided in paragraph (3)) be scheduled to be held in accordance
with the place of the case on the docket under subsection (a) relative to other cases on the docket for which hearings are scheduled to be held within that area.

“(3) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department may, for cause shown, be advanced on motion for an earlier hearing. Any such motion shall set forth succinctly the grounds upon which the motion is based. Such a motion may be granted only—

“(A) if the case involves interpretation of law of general application affecting other claims;

“(B) if the appellant is seriously ill or is under severe financial hardship; or

“(C) for other sufficient cause shown.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to cases received by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals pursuant to notices of disagreement submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.
TITLE VI—OUTREACH MATTERS

SEC. 601. PROGRAM TO INCREASE COORDINATION OF OUT-REACH EFFORTS BETWEEN THE DEPART-MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of using State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations—

(1) to increase awareness of veterans regarding benefits and services for veterans; and

(2) to improve coordination of outreach activities regarding such benefits and services between the Secretary and Federal, State, and local government and nonprofit providers of health care and benefit services for veterans.

(b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the program for a two-year period.

(c) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the program through the competitive award of grants to State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations—
(A) to increase the awareness of veterans regarding benefits and services for veterans; and

(B) to improve coordination of outreach activities regarding such benefits and services between the Secretary and Federal, State, and local government and nonprofit providers of health care and benefit services for veterans.

(2) APPLICATION.—

(A) In general.—A State or local government agency or nonprofit organization seeking a grant under the program shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor in such form and in such manner as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(B) Elements.—Each application submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the consultations, if any, with the Department of Veterans Affairs in the development of any proposal under the application.

(ii) A description of the project for which the applicant is seeking a grant under the program, including a plan to coordinate under the program, to the greatest
extent possible, the outreach activities of Federal, State, and local government agencies that provide health care, benefits, and services for veterans and nonprofit organizations that provide such care, benefits, and services to enhance the awareness and availability of such care, benefits, and services.

(iii) An agreement to report to the Secretary standardized data and other performance measures necessary for the Secretary to evaluate the program and to facilitate evaluation of projects for which grants are awarded under the program.

(iv) Such other information as the Secretary may require.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants under the program to carry out projects, the Secretary shall consider—

(i) where the projects will be carried out and which populations are targeted; and

(ii) the likelihood that each potential grantee will successfully carry out the grant proposal.
(B) Considerations regarding location and target population.—In taking the matters specified in subparagraph (A)(ii) into consideration, the Secretary shall consider in particular the advisability of awarding grants for projects—

(i) carried out in areas with populations that have a high proportion of veteran representation;

(ii) carried out in a variety of geographic areas, including urban, rural, and highly rural areas; and

(iii) that target a variety of veteran populations, including racial and ethnic minorities, low-income populations, and older populations.

(4) Use of funds.—The Secretary shall establish appropriate uses of grant amounts received under the program.

(5) Oversight of use of funds.—The Secretary shall establish appropriate mechanisms for oversight of the use of grant amounts received under the program, including the evidence grantees must submit to demonstrate use of grant amounts and pro-
cedures for the recovery of grant amounts that were improperly used.

(6) LIMITATION.—In a fiscal year, not more than 20 percent of all grant amounts awarded in that fiscal year may be awarded to a single State entity.

(d) STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may not make a grant to a State under subsection (c) unless that State agrees that, with respect to the costs to be incurred by the State in carrying out the program or projects for which the grant was awarded, the State will make available (directly or through donations from public or private entities) non-Federal contributions in an amount equal to 50 percent of Federal funds provided under the grant.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section the following:

(1) $2,500,000 for fiscal year 2015.

(2) $2,500,000 for fiscal year 2016.

(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the completion of the first calendar year beginning after the date of the commencement of the program, and not less frequently than once every year thereafter for the duration of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report evaluating the program
and the projects supported by grants awarded under the program.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(B) An assessment of the benefit to veterans of the program.

(C) The performance measures used by the Secretary for purposes of the program and data showing the performance of grantees under the program under such measures.

(D) The recommendations of the Secretary as to the feasibility and advisability of continuing or expanding or modifying the program.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 602. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND STATES ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.

(a) In General.—Chapter 63 is amended by inserting after section 6306 the following new section:
"§ 6306A. Cooperative agreements with States

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements and arrangements with various State agencies and State departments to carry out this chapter and to otherwise carry out, coordinate, improve, or enhance outreach activities of the Department and the States.

“(b) REPORT.—The Secretary shall include in each report submitted under section 6308 of this title a description of the agreements and arrangements entered into by the Secretary under subsection (a).”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 6306 the following new item:

“6306A. Cooperative agreements with States.”.

SEC. 603. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish an advisory committee on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The advisory committee shall be composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from among the following:

(1) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals who are eminent in their respective fields of public relations.
(2) Representatives of organizations with offices that focus on communications and distribute messages through major media news outlets and social media.

(3) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals with experience communicating financial results and business strategy for purposes of shaping a confident brand image.

(4) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals with experience with consumer and lifestyle imaging and creating publicity for a particular product or service.

(5) To the maximum extent practicable, veterans who have experience in press and public relations.

(c) DUTIES.—The advisory committee shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs—

(1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is strategically and effectively—

(A) engaging the public and Department stakeholders to increase awareness nationally regarding all benefits and services furnished by the Department;

(B) explaining new or changing policies of the Department;
(C) improving the image and reputation of the Department; and

(D) coordinating and collaborating with national community-based organizations, non-profits, and State and local government agencies;

(2) to assist the Secretary in conducting such other press or public relations activities relating to outreach activities of the Department as the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs consider appropriate; and

(3) to ensure coordination and collaboration on efforts within the Department for the development, implementation, and review of local outreach with respect to benefits that include the following:

(A) Compensation and pension benefits.

(B) Insurance benefits.

(C) Burial and memorial benefits.

(D) Education benefits.

(E) Vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits.

(F) Readjustment counseling benefits.

(G) Loan guarantee benefits.

(H) Such other benefits as the Secretary considers appropriate.
(d) **LOCATION OF MEETINGS.**—Each meeting of the advisory committee shall take place at a location that is property of the Department and shall, to the maximum extent practicable, use teleconference technology.

(e) **CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall consult with and seek the advice of the advisory committee not less frequently than quarterly on matters relating to the duties of the advisory committee under subsection (c).

(f) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not less frequently than once every 90 days for the first year and semiannually thereafter, the advisory committee shall submit to Congress and to the Secretary a report on outreach activities of the Department.

(2) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include such recommendations for legislative and administrative action as the advisory committee considers appropriate to improve the press and public relations of the Department relating to outreach.

(g) **TERMINATION.**—The advisory committee shall terminate on October 1, 2015, and the requirements and authorities under this section shall terminate on such date.
(h) **OUTREACH DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “outreach” has the meaning given the term in section 6301 of title 38, United States Code.

**SEC. 604. ADVISORY BOARDS ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.**

(a) **Establishment.**—

(1) **In general.**—For each entity described in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, acting through the director of that entity, establish not later than 180 days after the effective date specified in subsection (h) an advisory board at that entity on matters relating to outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs at that entity.

(2) **Entity described.**—An entity described in this paragraph is—

(A) a healthcare system of the Department; or

(B) a Veterans Integrated System Network, if such Veterans Integrated System Network does not contain a healthcare system.

(b) **Membership.**—

(1) **In general.**—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall be, to the max-
imum extent practicable, composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from among the following:

(A) Individuals who are eminent in their respective fields of public relations.

(B) Representatives of organizations with offices that focus on communications and distribute messages through major media news outlets and social media.

(C) Individuals with experience communicating financial results and business strategy for purposes of shaping a confident brand image.

(D) Individuals with experience with consumer and lifestyle imaging and creating publicity for a particular product or service.

(E) Employees of the Department who are involved in press and public relations strategy for an entity described in subsection (a)(2).

(F) To the maximum extent practicable, veterans who have experience in press and public relations.

(2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of an individual selected under paragraph (1) shall be at the election of the individual.

(c) DUTIES.—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) at an entity described in subsection (a)(2)
shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and Inter-
governmental Affairs—

(1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans
Affairs is strategically and effectively—

(A) engaging the public and Department
stakeholders to increase awareness nationally re-
garding benefits and services furnished by the
Department;

(B) explaining new or changing policies of
the Department;

(C) improving the image and reputation of
the Department;

(D) coordinating and collaborating with
national community-based organizations, non-
profits, and State and local government agencies;
and

(E) coordinating and collaborating on ef-
forts within the Department for the development,
implementation, and review of local outreach
with respect to benefits that include—

(i) compensation and pension benefits;

(ii) insurance benefits;

(iii) burial and memorial benefits;

(iv) education benefits;
(v) vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits;

(vi) readjustment counseling benefits;

(vii) loan guarantee benefits; and

(viii) such other benefits as the Secretary considers appropriate; and

(2) to assist the director of that entity in conducting such other press or public relations activities relating to outreach activities of the Department as that advisory board considers appropriate.

(d) MEETING LOCATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If teleconference technology is not used, meetings of each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall be held at a location that is property of the Department.

(2) TELECONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY.—Each advisory board shall use, to the maximum extent practicable, teleconference technology.

(e) CONSULTATION.—Each director of an entity described in subsection (a)(2) shall consult with and seek the advice of the advisory board established at such entity not less frequently than once every two months on matters relating to the duties of the advisory board under subsection (c).

(f) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than each year, each advisory board established under subsection
(a)(1) shall submit to the Secretary a report with such in-
formation as may be beneficial to the Secretary in pre-
paring the reports required by section 6308 of title 38,
United States Code.

(g) TERMINATION.—Each advisory board established
under subsection (a)(1) and the authorities and require-
ments of this section shall terminate three years after the
effective date specified in subsection (h).

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect
on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment
of this Act.

SEC. 605. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC
REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON OUTREACH ACT-
IVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-
FAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6308 is amended—
(1) in subsection (a), by striking “even-num-
bered”; and
(2) in subsection (b)—
(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “bien-
nial”; and
(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “for leg-
islative and administrative action” after “Rec-
ommendations”; and
(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) Recommendations that such administrative actions as may be taken—

“(A) to maximize resources for outreach activities of the Department; and

“(B) to focus outreach efforts on activities that are proven to be more effective.”.

(b) Clerical Amendments.—

(1) Section heading.—The heading for section 6308 is amended by striking “Biennial” and inserting “Annual”.

(2) Table of sections.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by striking the item relating to section 6308 and inserting the following new item:

“6308. Annual report to Congress.”.

TITLE VII—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS
Subtitle A—Employment Matters
SEC. 701. EMPLOYMENT OF VETERANS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(a) In general.—Section 4214 is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:
“(4)(A) The requirement under this paragraph is in addition to the appointment of qualified covered veterans under the authority under paragraph (1) by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

“(B) The head of each agency, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall develop a plan for exercising the authority specified in subparagraph (C) during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013.

“(C) The authority specified in this subparagraph is the authority as follows:

“(i) The authority under paragraph (1).

“(ii) The authority available to the agency concerned under the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–339) and the amendments made by that Act.

“(D) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall ensure that under the plans developed under subparagraph (B) agencies shall appoint to existing vacancies not fewer than 15,000 qualified covered veterans during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013. For purposes of complying with this subparagraph, an appointment pursuant to the authority referred to in subpara-
graph (C)(ii) shall not count toward the number required by this subparagraph unless the appointment is to a vacancy in a full-time, permanent position.”;

(2) in subsection (d), in the third sentence, by inserting “(including, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, the development and implementation by each agency of the plan required under subsection (b)(4), which shall include information regarding the grade or pay level of appointments by the agency under the plan and whether the appointments are, or are converted to, career or career-conditional appointments)” after “subsection (b) of this section”; and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter before subparagraph (A), by striking “to the Congress” and inserting “to the appropriate committees of Congress”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “(including, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, the development and implemen-
ation by the agency of the plan required under subsection (b)(4), which shall include information regarding the grade or pay level of appointments by the agency under the plan and whether the appointments are, or are converted to, permanent appointments)” before the period; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate committees of Congress’ means—

“(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

“(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.”.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress (as defined under section 4214(e)(3) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)) regarding the development of a plan to carry out the amendments made by subsection (a).
SEC. 702. STATE RECOGNITION OF MILITARY EXPERIENCE
OF VETERANS IN ISSUING LICENSES AND
CREDENTIALS TO VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4102A(c) is amended by
striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following new
paragraph (9):

“(9)(A) As a condition of a grant or contract under
which funds are made available to a State under subsection
(b)(5) in order to carry out section 4103A or 4104 of this
title, the State shall—

“(i) establish a program under which the State
administers an examination to each veteran seeking a
license or credential issued by the State and issues
such license or credential to such veteran without re-
quiring such veteran to undergo any training or ap-
prenticeship if the veteran—

“(I) receives a satisfactory score on comple-
tion of such examination, as determined by the
State;

“(II) has been awarded a military occupa-
tional specialty that is substantially equivalent
to or exceeds the requirements of the State for the
issuance of such license or credential;

“(III) has engaged in the active practice of
the occupation for which the veteran is seeking
such license or credential for at least two of the
five years preceding the date of application; and
“(IV) pays any customary or usual fees re-
quired by the State for such license or credential;
and
“(ii) submit each year to the Secretary a report
on the exams administered under clause (i) during
the most recently completed 12-month period that in-
cludes, for the period covered by the report the num-
ber of veterans who completed an exam administered
by the State under clause (i) and a description of the
results of such exams, disaggregated by occupational
field.
“(B) The Secretary may waive the requirement under
subparagraph (A) that a State establish a program de-
scribed in that subparagraph as a condition of a grant or
contract if the State certifies to the Secretary that the
State—
“(i) takes into account previous military train-
ing for the purposes of issuing licenses or credentials;
“(ii) permits veterans to completely satisfy
through examination any training or testing require-
ments for a license or credential with respect to which
a veteran has previously completed military training;
and
“(iii) for any credential or license for which a veteran is unable to completely satisfy such requirements through examination, the State substantially reduces training time required to satisfy such requirement based on the military training received by the veteran.

“(C) Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress and the Secretary of Defense a report summarizing the information received by the Secretary under subparagraph (A)(ii).”.

(b) Effective Date.—

(1) Exams.—Subparagraph (A) of section 4102A(c)(9) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to grants and contracts described in such subparagraph awarded after such date.

(2) Reports.—Subparagraph (B) of such section 4102A(c)(9), as so added, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and the Secretary of Labor shall submit the first report under such subparagraph not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.
SEC. 703. REPORT ON UNIFIED GOVERNMENT INTERNET PORTAL FOR VETERANS ON JOBS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF INTERNET WEBSITES AND APPLICATIONS THAT CAN ASSIST VETERANS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and other appropriate public and private entities, take appropriate actions to identify Internet websites and applications that can assist veterans in seeking employment.

(2) PRIORITY IN IDENTIFICATION OF CERTAIN WEBSITES AND APPLICATIONS.—In identifying websites and applications pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall place a particular priority on identifying websites and applications that do the following:

(A) Match veterans seeking employment with available jobs based on the skills the veterans acquired as members of the Armed Forces.

(B) Permit employers to post information about available jobs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the
Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the actions of the Secretary under subsection (a). The report shall include an assessment of the feasibility and advisability of creating a single, unified Internet-based employment portal for the Federal Government for use by veterans regarding employment through the Federal Government, including the cost of creating the portal, the collaboration with other Federal agencies required to create the portal, and the anticipated use of the portal.

(c) Effective Date.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 704. INFORMATION ON DISABILITY-RELATED EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION PROTECTIONS IN TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) In General.—Section 1144(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) Provide information about disability-related employment and education protections.”.

(b) Effective Date.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.
Subtitle B—Small Business Matters

SEC. 711. EXPANSION OF CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCLUDE CONDITIONALLY OWNED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS 100 PERCENT OWNED BY VETERANS.

Section 8127(l) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting “unconditionally” before “owned by” each place it appears; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) The term ‘unconditionally owned’ includes, with respect to ownership of a small business concern, conditional ownership of such small business concern if such business concern is 100 percent owned by one or more veterans.”.

SEC. 712. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY VETERANS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF DISABLED VETERAN OWNERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127(h) is amended—
(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “rated as” and all that follows through “disability.” and inserting a period; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

“(C) The date that—

“(i) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as 100 percent disabling or who dies as a result of a service-connected disability, is 10 years after the date of the veteran’s death; or

“(ii) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as less than 100 percent disabling who does not die as a result of a service-connected disability, is three years after the date of the veteran’s death.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to applications received pursuant to section 8127(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, that are verified on or after such date.
SEC. 713. TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATHS OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNERS FOR PURPOSES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES.

(a) In General.—Section 8127 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (i) through (l) as subsections (j) through (m), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

“(i) Treatment of Businesses After Death of Servicemember-Owner.—(1) If a member of the Armed Forces owns at least 51 percent of a small business concern and such member is killed in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, the surviving spouse or dependent child of such member who acquires such ownership rights in such small business concern shall, for the period described in paragraph (2), be treated as if the surviving spouse or dependent child were a veteran with a service-connected disability for purposes of determining the status of the small business concern as a small business concern owned and controlled by veterans for purposes of contracting goals and preferences under this section.

“(2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) is the period beginning on the date on which the member of the Armed Forces dies and ending on the date as follows:
“(A) In the case of a surviving spouse, the earliest of the following dates:

“(i) The date on which the surviving spouse remarries.

“(ii) The date on which the surviving spouse relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

“(iii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member’s death.

“(B) In the case of a dependent child, the earliest of the following dates:

“(i) The date on which the surviving dependent child relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

“(ii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member’s death.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (i) of section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to the deaths of members of the Armed Forces occurring on or after such date.
SEC. 714. SPECIAL RULE FOR TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS LICENSED IN COMMUNITY PROPERTY STATES.

Section 8127, as amended by section 713 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(n) SPECIAL RULE FOR COMMUNITY PROPERTY STATES.—Whenever the Secretary assesses, for purposes of this section, the degree of ownership by an individual of a small business concern licensed in a community property State, the Secretary shall also assess what that degree of ownership would be if such small business concern had been licensed in a State other than a community property State. If the Secretary determines that such individual would have had a greater degree of ownership of the small business concern had such small business concern been licensed in a State other than a community property State, the Secretary shall treat, for purposes of this section, such small business concern as if it had been licensed in a State other than a community property State.”.
TITLE VIII—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 801. CONSIDERATION BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF RESOURCES DISPOSED OF FOR LESS THAN FAIR MARKET VALUE BY INDIVIDUALS APPLYING FOR PENSION.

(a) VETERANS.—Section 1522 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or the spouse of such veteran disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such veteran under section 1513 or 1521 of this title, as the case may be, for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the veteran or, if the veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of the veteran and of the veteran’s spouse,
that the Secretary considers that under all the cir-

cumstances, if the veteran or spouse had not disposed of

such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or

some portion of the resource) be consumed for the veteran’s

maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary

may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary

shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer

of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instru-

ment or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for

less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the

amount in the corpus of the estate of the veteran or, if the

veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of the veteran

and of the veteran’s spouse, that the Secretary considers,

under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be con-

sumed for the veteran’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is

a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause

(ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on

which the veteran applies for pension under section 1513

or 1521 of this title or, if later, the date on which the vet-

eran (or the spouse of the veteran) disposes of covered re-

sources for less than fair market value.
“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of covered resources so disposed of by the veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the veteran’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a veteran under section 1513 or 1521 of this title, including the maximum amount of increased pension payable under such sections on account of family members, but not including any amount of pension payable under such sections because a veteran is in need of regular aid and attendance or is permanently housebound, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—
(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child, the spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue payment of such increased pension for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instru-
ment or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the veteran applies for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child on or after the look-back date described in subpara-
graph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of increased monthly pension that is payable to a veteran under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child,

rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of resources by an individual—

“(i) if—

“(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the Secretary (in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary) that all resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been
returned to the individual who disposed of the
resources; or

“(II) the Secretary determines, under proce-
dures established by the Secretary in accordance
with subparagraph (B), that the denial or dis-
continuance of payment would work an undue
hardship; or

“(ii) to the extent that any portion of the re-
sources disposed of for less than fair market value
have been returned to the individual who disposed of
the resources.

“(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial
or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph
(A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would
deprive the individual during the period of denial or dis-
continuance—

“(i) of medical care such that the individual’s
life or health would be endangered;

“(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other neces-
sities of life; or

“(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall
specify in the procedures required by subparagraph
(A)(i)(II).

“(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that
would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the
application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) is denied or dis-
continued only in part by reason of the return of resources
as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of the de-
nial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to subpara-
graph (E) of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2), as applicable, shall
be recalculated to take into account such return of resources.

“(2) At the time a veteran applies for pension under
section 1513 or 1521 of this title or increased pension under
subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title
on account of a child, and at such other times as the Sec-
retary considers appropriate, the Secretary shall—

“(A) inform such veteran of the provisions of
subsections (a)(2) and (b)(2) providing for a period
of ineligibility for payment of pension under such sec-
tions for individuals who make certain dispositions of
resources for less than fair market value, including
the exception for hardship from such period of ineligi-
bility;

“(B) obtain from such veteran information
which may be used in determining whether or not a
period of ineligibility for such payments would be re-
quired by reason of such subsections; and

“(C) provide such veteran a timely process for
determining whether or not the exception for hardship
shall apply to such veteran.”.
(b) **SURVIVING SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.**—Section 1543 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1541 of this title disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such surviving spouse under section 1541 of this title for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary
shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the surviving spouse applies for pension under section 1541 of this title or, if later, the date on which the surviving spouse disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of
by the surviving spouse on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the surviving spouse's maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a surviving spouse under section 1541 of this title, including the maximum amount of increased pension payable under such section on account of a child, but not including any amount of pension payable under such section because a surviving spouse is in need of regular aid and attendance or is permanently housebound, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue payment of such increased pension for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D)
and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse or the child had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the surviving spouse applies for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which
the surviving spouse (or the child) disposes of covered re-
resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the
first day of the first month in or after which covered re-
sources were disposed of for less than fair market value and
which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility
under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this
clause shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value
of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of
by the surviving spouse (or the child) on or after the
look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that
the Secretary determines would reasonably have been
consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of increased monthly
pension that is payable to a surviving spouse under
subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title
on account of a child,

rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest
whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-
retary”; and
(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a child otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1542 of this title or any person with whom such child is residing who is legally responsible for such child’s support disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such child under section 1542 of this title for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child or the corpus of the estate of any person with whom such child is residing who is legally responsible for such child’s support that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the child or person had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer
of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate described in clause (i) that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the child applies for pension under section 1542 of this title or, if later, the date on which the child (or person described in subparagraph (B)) disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this clause is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this clause shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the child (or person described in subparagraph
(B)) on or after the look-back date described in sub-
paragraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would
reasonably have been consumed for the child’s mainte-
nance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension
that is payable to a child under section 1542 of this
title,

rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest
whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

and

(3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
section:

“(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue
payment of pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title
or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d),
or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child
by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or
(b)(2) of this section to the disposal of resources by an indi-
vidual—

“(i) if—

“(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the
Secretary (in accordance with regulations pro-
mulgated by the Secretary) that all resources dis-
posed of for less than fair market value have been
returned to the individual who disposed of the resources; or

“(II) the Secretary determines, under procedures established by the Secretary in accordance with subparagraph (B), that the denial or discontinuance of payment would work an undue hardship; or

“(ii) to the extent that any portion of the resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources.

“(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would deprive the individual during the period of denial or discontinuance—

“(i) of medical care such that the individual’s life or health would be endangered;

“(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other necessities of life; or

“(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall specify in the procedures required by subparagraph (A)(i)(II).

“(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the
application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) is denied
or discontinued only in part by reason of the return of re-
sources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of
the denial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to sub-
paragraph (E) of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2), as ap-
licable, shall be recalculated to take into account such re-
turn of resources.

“(2) At the time a surviving spouse or child applies
for pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title or in-
creased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section
1541 of this title on account of a child, and at such other
times as the Secretary considers appropriate, the Secretary
shall—

“(A) inform such surviving spouse or child of the
provisions of subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), and (b)(2), as
applicable, providing for a period of ineligibility for
payment of pension or increased pension under such
sections for individuals who make certain dispositions
of resources for less than fair market value, including
the exception for hardship from such period of ineligi-
bility;

“(B) obtain from such surviving spouse or child
information which may be used in determining
whether or not a period of ineligibility for such pay-
ments would be required by reason of such sub-
sections; and

“(C) provide such surviving spouse or child a
timely process for determining whether or not the ex-
ception for hardship shall apply to such surviving
spouse or child.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and
(c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as added
by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and
(c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b),
shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date
of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect
to payments of pension and increased pension applied for
after such date and to payments of pension and increased
pension for which eligibility is redetermined after such date,
except that no reduction in pension shall be made under
such subsections because of any disposal of covered resources
made before such date.

(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 months
after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less
frequently than once each year thereafter through
2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit
to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on
the administration of subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and
(c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b), during the most recent 12-month period.

(2) Elements.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following, for the period covered by the report:

(A) The number of individuals who applied for pension under chapter 15 of such title.

(B) The number of individuals who received pension under such chapter.

(C) The number of individuals with respect to whom the Secretary denied or discontinued payment of pension under the subsections referred to in paragraph (1).

(D) A description of any trends identified by the Secretary regarding pension payments that have occurred as a result of the amendments made by this section.

(E) Such other information as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) Appropriate Committees of Congress Defined.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—
(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Select Committee on Aging of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 802. OFFICE OF NATIONAL VETERANS SPORTS PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS.

(a) Reauthorization and Use of Certain Funds.—Subsection (d)(4) of section 322 is amended—

(1) by inserting “(A)” after “(4)”;

(2) by striking “2013” and inserting “2018”;

and

(3) by adding at the end the following new sub-paragraph:

“(B) Any amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to carry out this subsection that the Secretary determines are unnecessary to carry out this subsection may be used by the Secretary to carry out this section.”.

(b) Cooperation with Organization.—Subsection (b)(4) of such section is amended by striking “shall, to the extent feasible,” and inserting “may”.

(c) Substitution of USOC in Responsibility for United States Paralympics, Inc.—Such section is further amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(4)—

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(A) by striking “United States Paralympics, Inc.,” each place it appears and inserting “United States Olympic Committee”; and

(B) by striking “sporting” and inserting “paralympic”; and

(2) in subsection (d)(1), by striking “United States Paralympics, Inc.,” each place it appears and inserting “United States Olympic Committee”.

SEC. 803. ADAPTIVE SPORTS PROGRAMS FOR DISABLED VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES THROUGH UNITED STATES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE.

(a) Authorization of Program.—Subsection (a) of section 521A is amended to read as follows:

“(a) Adaptive Sports Program.—(1) The Secretary may plan, develop, manage, and implement an integrated adaptive sports program for disabled veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces.

“(2) The Secretary may award grants to the United States Olympic Committee to carry out paragraph (1).”.

(b) Additional Application Requirements.—Subsection (c)(2) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;
(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new sub-paragraph:

“(C) a statement that includes a detailed description of—

“(i) the anticipated personnel, travel, and administrative costs that will be paid for by the United States Olympic Committee with funds provided under this section;

“(ii) the financial controls implemented by the United States Olympic Committee, including methods to track expenditures of funds provided under this section;

“(iii) the performance metrics to be used by the United States Olympic Committee to evaluate the effectiveness of the activities to be carried out with the funds provided under this section; and

“(iv) the anticipated personnel, travel, and administrative costs that will be paid for by sub-grantees with funds provided under this section.”.

(c) FUNDING.—Subsection (g) of such section is amended by striking “2013” and inserting “2015”.
(d) Exception to Prohibition on Commingling of Funds.—Subsection (h) of such section is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, except that funds appropriated to carry out this section may be used by the Department to carry out subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 322 of this title”.

(e) Substitution of USOC in Responsibility for United States Paralympics, Inc.—Such section is further amended—

(1) by striking “United States Paralympics, Inc.”, each place it appears (other than in subsection (d)) and inserting “United States Olympic Committee”; and

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “United States Paralympics, Inc., with the assistance” and inserting “United States Olympic Committee, with the assistance”; and

(ii) by striking “United States Paralympics, Inc., has entered” and inserting “United States Olympic Committee has entered”;
(B) in paragraph (4), by striking “United States Paralympics, Inc.” and inserting “United States Olympic Committee”; and

(C) in paragraph (5), by striking “United States Paralympics, Inc.,” and inserting “United States Olympic Committee”.

(f) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Such section is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (l) as subsection (m); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (k) the following new subsection (l):

“(l) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—(1) Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the use of grants, if any, awarded to the United States Olympic Committee, under this section during the two-year period preceding the report.

“(2) The report required under paragraph (1) shall contain the following:

“(A) An assessment of how the Department, the United States Olympic Committee, and subgrantees of the United States Olympic Committee, have provided adaptive sports opportunities to veterans and mem-
bers of the Armed Forces through grants awarded under this section.

“(B) An assessment of how the Department oversees the use of funds provided under this section by the United States Olympic Committee and subgrantees of the United States Olympic Committee.

“(C) A description of the benefit provided to veterans and members of the Armed Forces through programs and activities developed through grants awarded under this section.”.

(g) Extension of Sunset.—Subsection (m) of such section, as redesignated by subsection (f) of this section, is amended by striking “2013” and inserting “2015”.

(h) Conforming and Clerical Amendments.—

(1) Section heading amendment.—The heading of such section is amended to read as follows:

“§ 521A. Adaptive sports programs for disabled veterans and members of the Armed Forces through the United States Olympic Committee”.

(2) Table of sections.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 5 is amended by striking the item relating to section 521A and inserting the following new item:

“521A. Adaptive sports programs for disabled veterans and members of the Armed Forces through the United States Olympic Committee”. 
SEC. 804. MAKING EFFECTIVE DATE PROVISION CONSISTENT WITH PROVISION FOR BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY OF A VETERAN’S CHILD BASED UPON TERMINATION OF REMARRIAGE BY ANNULMENT.

Section 5110(l) is amended by striking “, or of an award or increase of benefits based on recognition of a child upon termination of the child’s marriage by death or divorce,”.

SEC. 805. EXTENDED PERIOD FOR SCHEDULING OF MEDICAL EXAMS FOR VETERANS RECEIVING TEMPORARY DISABILITY RATINGS FOR SEVERE MENTAL DISORDERS.

Section 1156(a)(3) is amended by striking “six months” and inserting “18 months”.

SEC. 806. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE VETERANS ID CARDS.

(a) Authority.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may issue a card to a veteran that identifies the veteran as a veteran and includes a photo of the veteran and the name of the veteran.

(2) NO REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT OR RECEIPT OF BENEFITS.—The Secretary may issue a card under paragraph (1) to a veteran, whether or not such veteran is—
(A) enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code; or

(B) in receipt of educational assistance, compensation, or pension under laws administered by the Secretary.

(3) **Designation.**—A card issued under paragraph (1) may be known as a “Veterans ID Card”.

(b) **Recognition of Veterans ID Cards for Reduced Pricing of Pharmaceuticals, Consumer Products, and Services.**—The Secretary may work with national retail chains that offer reduced prices on pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services to veterans to ensure that such retail chains recognize cards issued under subsection (a)(1) for purposes of offering reduced prices on pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services.

(c) **Veteran Defined.**—In this section, the term “veteran” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) **Effective Date.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.
SEC. 807. HONORING AS VETERANS CERTAIN PERSONS WHO PERFORMED SERVICE IN THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of title 10, United States Code, to retired pay for nonregular service or, but for age, would be entitled under such chapter to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of this honor.

SEC. 808. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ISSUE AND GUARANTEE CERTAIN LOANS.

Section 3729(b)(2) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) in clause (iii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

(B) in clause (iv), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

(3) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and
(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

(4) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”.

SEC. 809. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall review the process used to determine whether a covered individual served in support of the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II in accordance with section 1002(d) of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) for purposes of determining whether such covered individual is eligible for payments described in such section.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—In this section, a covered individual is any individual who timely submitted a claim for benefits under subsection (c) of section 1002 of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment
Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) based on service as described in subsection (d) of that section.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report detailing any findings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).

(d) PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS PURSUANT TO REVIEW.—If pursuant to the review conducted under subsection (a) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines to establish a new process for the making of payments as described in that subsection, the process shall include mechanisms to ensure that individuals are not treated as covered individuals for purposes of such payments if such individuals engaged in any disqualifying conduct during service described in that subsection, including collaboration with the enemy or criminal conduct.

SEC. 810. REPORT ON LAOTIAN MILITARY SUPPORT OF ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES DURING VIETNAM WAR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of
Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such agencies and individuals as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the extent to which Laotian military forces provided combat support to the Armed Forces of the United States between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975;

(2) whether the current classification by the Civilian/Military Service Review Board of the Department of Defense of service by individuals of Hmong ethnicity is appropriate; and

(3) any recommendations for legislative action.

(b) Appropriate Committees of Congress.—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) Effective Date.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.
SEC. 811. REPORT ON ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS IN OBTAINING TRAINING ON PURCHASING AND OPERATING A FRANCHISE.

(a) Report Required.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, and other appropriate entities, submit to Congress a report on the assistance available to veterans to obtain training necessary to purchase and operate a franchise.

(b) Elements.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the assistance available for veterans through the Department of Labor, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, or any other agency of the Federal Government in order to obtain training necessary to purchase or operate a franchise.

(2) Information on the number of veterans who have sought and obtained the training described in paragraph (1) during the five calendar years preceding the report.

(3) A description of any barriers encountered by veterans in obtaining the training described in paragraph (1).
(c) **Effective Date.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 812. Limitation on Aggregate Amount of Bonuses Payable to Personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs During Fiscal Year 2014.**

The aggregate amount of bonuses and awards payable to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, or any other provision of such title, during fiscal year 2014 may not exceed $368,000,000.

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.”.
A BILL

[Report No. 113-123]

S. 944

113TH CONGRESS

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the GI Bill of Rights Education Assistance Program and Post-9/11 GI Bill Education Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.