

Section 704 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003

[Public Law 108–183]

[As Amended Through P.L. 115–91, Enacted December 12, 2017]

【Currency: This publication is a compilation of the text of Public Law 108–183. It was last amended by the public law listed in the As Amended Through note above and below at the bottom of each page of the pdf version and reflects current law through the date of the enactment of the public law listed at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps/>】

【Note: While this publication does not represent an official version of any Federal statute, substantial efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents. The official version of Federal law is found in the United States Statutes at Large and in the United States Code. The legal effect to be given to the Statutes at Large and the United States Code is established by statute (1 U.S.C. 112, 204).】

AN ACT To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

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

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TITLE VII—OTHER MATTERS

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SEC. 704. [38 U.S.C. 5101 note] TEMPORARY AUTHORITY FOR PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL DISABILITIES EXAMINATIONS BY CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.

(a) **AUTHORITY.**—Using appropriated funds, other than funds available for compensation and pension, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may provide for the conduct of examinations with respect to the medical disabilities of applicants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary by persons other than Department of Veterans Affairs employees. The authority under this section is in addition to the authority provided in section 504(b) of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-275; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note).

(b) **PERFORMANCE BY CONTRACT.**—Examinations under the authority provided in subsection (a) shall be conducted pursuant to contracts entered into and administered by the Under Secretary for Benefits.

(c) **EXPIRATION.**—The authority in subsection (a) shall expire on December 31, 2018. No examination may be carried out under the authority provided in that subsection after that date.

(d) **LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any law regarding the licensure of physicians, a physician described in paragraph (2)

may conduct an examination pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (b) at any location in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, so long as the examination is within the scope of the authorized duties under such contract.

(2) PHYSICIAN DESCRIBED.—A physician described in this paragraph is a physician who—

(A) has a current unrestricted license to practice the health care profession of the physician;

(B) is not barred from practicing such health care profession in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States; and

(C) is performing authorized duties for the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (b).

(e) REPORT.—Not later than four years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the use of the authority provided in subsection (a). The Secretary shall include in the report an assessment of the effect of examinations under that authority on the cost, timeliness, and thoroughness of examinations with respect to the medical disabilities of applicants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

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