

VETERANS EXPEDITED TSA SCREENING SAFE TRAVEL  
 ACT

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the  
 State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, from the Committee on Homeland  
 Security, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 3356]

The Committee on Homeland Security, to whom was referred the  
 bill (H.R. 3356) to provide PreCheck to certain severely injured or  
 disabled veterans, and for other purposes, having considered the  
 same, report favorably thereon without amendment and rec-  
 commend that the bill do pass.

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PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The purpose of H.R. 3356, the “Veterans Expedited TSA Screen-  
 ing Safe Travel Act” is require the Transportation Security Admin-  
 istration (TSA) to provide PreCheck airport security screening to  
 certain severely injured or disabled veterans.

## BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Today, the TSA's standard operating procedures for screening the public at an airport checkpoint can create undue hardship to certain veterans that were severely injured or disabled in service to the country; often, the prosthetics and devices these veterans rely on daily alarm when going through screening, requiring veterans to undergo secondary screening. For this population of traveler, undergoing the protocols for secondary screening can create physical and emotional stress. Given the Committee's interest in honoring and supporting the men and women who were severely injured in the course of serving in the Armed Forces, the Committee considered H.R. 3356, a bill to provide certain severely disabled or disabled veterans access to TSA's PreCheck lanes and procedures to get through airport security screening more seamlessly. TSA's PreCheck lanes provide expedited screening for known travelers that are part of low-risk populations. Importantly, H.R. 3356 would waive the cost for PreCheck program enrollment, currently \$85, for eligible severely injured or disabled veterans, allowing them to take advantage of less invasive and strenuous procedures for alarm resolution.

## HEARINGS

For the purpose of section 103(i) of H. Res 6. Of the 116th Congress the following related hearings were held:

On February 27, 2018, the Committee held a hearing entitled "TSA Outreach and Traveler Engagement" and on June 4, 2019, a hearing entitled "TSA Policies to Prevent Unlawful Profiling."

## COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

The Committee met on July 17, 2019, with a quorum being present, to consider H.R. 3356 and ordered the measure to be reported to the House with a favorable recommendation, without amendment, by unanimous consent.

## COMMITTEE VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires the Committee to list the recorded votes on the motion to report legislation and amendments thereto.

No recorded votes were requested during consideration of H.R. 3356.

## COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee advises that the findings and recommendations of the Committee, based on oversight activities under clause 2(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, are incorporated in the descriptive portions of this report.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATE NEW BUDGET  
AUTHORITY, ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY, AND TAX EXPENDITURES

With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and with respect to requirements of clause (3)(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has requested but not received a cost estimate for this bill from the Director of Congressional Budget Office.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

An estimate of Federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act was not made available to the Committee in time for the filing of this report. The Chairman of the Committee shall cause such estimate to be printed in the *Congressional Record* upon its receipt by the Committee.

DUPLICATIVE FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to clause 3(c) of rule XIII, the Committee finds that H.R. 3256 does not contain any provision that establishes or reauthorizes a program known to be duplicative of another Federal program.

PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Committee states that pursuant to clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, H.R. 3356 would require the TSA to waive the enrollment fee for PreCheck program enrollment for certain severely injured or disabled veterans.

ADVISORY ON EARMARKS

In compliance with rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, this bill, as reported, contains no congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of the rule XXI.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

*Section 1. Short title*

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Expedited TSA Screening Safe Travel Act” or the “VETS Safe Travel Act”.

*Sec 2. Availability of Precheck Program to certain severely injured or disabled veterans*

This section amends Chapter 449 of subtitle VII of Title 49 to create a new section that provides the availability of the PreCheck Program to certain severely injured and disabled veterans. The section describes the criteria for eligibility for PreCheck enrollment, at no cost to the veteran, under this Act as a veteran determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (1) to have had a loss, or loss of use, of a limb, or to have become paralyzed or partially paralyzed and as a result of that loss or paralyzation, to require the use of a wheelchair, prosthetic, or assistive device to aid with mobility; or

(2) is a veteran determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to have incurred permanent blindness.

Additionally, the subsection requires that (1) within 180 days after the date of enactment the Administrator of TSA and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs jointly develop and implement a process for providing TSA with access to information needed to validate the eligibility of the veteran enrolling in the PreCheck Program and (2) submit to Congress a report on the status of implementing the process developed by the TSA Administrator and Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (new matter is printed in italic and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

**TITLE 49, UNITED STATES CODE**

\* \* \* \* \*

**SUBTITLE VII—AVIATION PROGRAMS**

\* \* \* \* \*

**PART A—AIR COMMERCE AND SAFETY**

\* \* \* \* \*

**SUBPART III—SAFETY**

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**CHAPTER 449—SECURITY**

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**SUBCHAPTER I—REQUIREMENTS**

\* \* \* \* \*

**§ 44927. Expedited screening for severely injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces and severely injured or disabled veterans**

(a) PASSENGER SCREENING.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and organizations identified by the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs that advocate on behalf of severely injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces and severely injured or disabled veterans, shall develop and implement a process to support and facilitate the ease of travel and to the extent possible provide expedited passenger screening services for severely injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces and severely injured or disabled veterans through

passenger screening. The process shall be designed to offer the individual private screening to the maximum extent practicable.

(b) OPERATIONS CENTER.—As part of the process under subsection (a), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall maintain an operations center to provide support and facilitate the movement of severely injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces and severely injured or disabled veterans through passenger screening prior to boarding a passenger aircraft operated by an air carrier or foreign air carrier in air transportation or intrastate air transportation.

(c) PROTOCOLS.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall—

(1) establish and publish protocols, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the organizations identified under subsection (a), under which a severely injured or disabled member of the Armed Forces or severely injured or disabled veteran, or the family member or other representative of such member or veteran, may contact the operations center maintained under subsection (b) and request the expedited passenger screening services described in subsection (a) for that member or veteran; and

(2) upon receipt of a request under paragraph (1), require the operations center to notify the appropriate Federal Security Director of the request for expedited passenger screening services, as described in subsection (a), for that member or veteran.

(d) TRAINING.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall integrate training on the protocols established under subsection (c) into the training provided to all employees who will regularly provide the passenger screening services described in subsection (a).

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall affect the authority of the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration to require additional screening of a severely injured or disabled member of the Armed Forces, a severely injured or disabled veteran, or their accompanying family members or nonmedical attendants, if intelligence, law enforcement, or other information indicates that additional screening is necessary.

(f) REPORTS.—Each year, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of this section. Each report shall include each of the following:

(1) Information on the training provided under subsection (d).

(2) Information on the consultations between the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration and the organizations identified under subsection (a).

(3) The number of people who accessed the operations center during the period covered by the report.

(4) Such other information as the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration determines is appropriate.

(g) AVAILABILITY OF PRECHECK PROGRAM TO CERTAIN SEVERELY INJURED OR DISABLED VETERANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A veteran described in paragraph (2) is eligible for security screening under the PreCheck Program under

*section 44919 at no cost to the veteran if the veteran is able to meet the background check and other security requirements for participation in the program.*

*(2) VETERANS DESCRIBED.—A veteran described in this paragraph is—*

*(A) a veteran determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs—*

*(i) to have had a loss, or loss of use, of a limb, or to have become paralyzed or partially paralyzed; and*

*(ii) as a result of that loss or paralyzation, to require the use of a wheelchair, prosthetic, or other assistive device to aid with mobility; or*

*(B) a veteran determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to have incurred permanent blindness.*

\* \* \* \* \*

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## U.S. House of Representatives

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ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515

<http://veterans.house.gov>

September 11, 2019

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson  
 Chairman  
 Committee on Homeland Security  
 U.S. House of Representatives  
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson:

I am writing with respect to H.R. 3356, the "VETS Safe Travel Act." Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Veterans' Affairs regarding the matters in H.R. 3356 that fall within the Committee's jurisdiction.

As a result of your consultation with us on this measure and in order to expeditiously move the bill to the floor, I agree not to seek a sequential referral on H.R. 3356. The Committee on Veterans' Affairs takes this action with our mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and requests your support for any such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding regarding H.R. 3356 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Committee Report and the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the measure.

Sincerely,



Mark Takano  
 Chairman  
 Committee on Veterans' Affairs

BENNIE G. THOMPSON, MISSISSIPPI  
CHAIRMAN



MIKE ROGERS, ALABAMA  
RANKING MEMBER

One Hundred Sixteenth Congress  
Committee on Homeland Security  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

September 11, 2019

The Honorable Mark Takano  
Chairman  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
B-234 Longworth House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Takano:

Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 3356, the "VETS Safe Travel Act." The Committee on Homeland Security recognizes that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs has a jurisdictional interest in H.R. 3356, and I appreciate your effort to allow this bill to be considered on the House floor.

I concur with you that forgoing action on the bill does not in any way prejudice the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future, and I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House – Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include our letters on H.R. 3356 in the *Congressional Record* during floor consideration of this bill. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bennie G. Thompson".

Bennie G. Thompson  
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker  
The Honorable Michael Rogers, Ranking Member  
The Honorable Tom Wickham, Parliamentarian