

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1214

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for an enhanced quality assurance program within the Veterans Benefits Administration.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 23, 1999

Mr. EVANS (for himself, Mr. FILNER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DOYLE, Ms. CARSON, Mr. REYES, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. SHOWS, Ms. BERKLEY, Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD, Ms. DANNER, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. LaFALCE, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. UNDERWOOD, Mr. OLVER, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. KLINK, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. FROST, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. FARR of California, Mr. NORWOOD, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. SPRATT, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. BALDACCI, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. MURTHA, Ms. KILPATRICK, and Mr. LUTHER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for an enhanced quality assurance program within the Veterans Benefits Administration.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans’ Claims Adju-
5 dication Improvement Act of 1999”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENHANCED QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM WITH-**
2 **IN THE VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRA-**
3 **TION.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—(1) Chapter 77 of title 38, United
5 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
6 lowing new subchapter:

7 “SUBCHAPTER III—QUALITY ASSURANCE
8 **“§ 7731. Establishment**

9 “(a) The Secretary shall carry out a quality assur-
10 ance program in the Veterans Benefits Administration.
11 The program may be carried out through a single quality
12 assurance division in the Administration or through sepa-
13 rate quality assurance entities for each of the principal
14 organizational elements (known as ‘services’) of the Ad-
15 ministration.

16 “(b) The Secretary shall ensure that any quality as-
17 surance entity established and operated under subsection
18 (a) is established and operated so as to meet generally ap-
19 plicable governmental standards for independence and in-
20 ternal controls for the performance of quality reviews of
21 Government performance and results.

22 **“§ 7732. Functions**

23 “The Under Secretary for Benefits, acting through
24 the quality assurance entities established under section
25 7731(a), shall on an ongoing basis perform and oversee
26 quality reviews of the functions of each of the principal

1 organizational elements of the Veterans Benefits Adminis-
2 tration.

3 **“§ 7733. Personnel**

4 “The Secretary shall ensure that the number of full-
5 time employees of the Veterans Benefits Administration
6 assigned to quality assurance functions under this sub-
7 chapter is adequate to perform the quality assurance func-
8 tions for which they have responsibility.

9 **“§ 7734. Annual report to Congress**

10 “The Secretary shall include in the annual report to
11 the Congress required by section 529 of this title a report
12 on the quality assurance activities carried out under this
13 subchapter. Each such report shall include—

14 “(1) an appraisal of the quality of services pro-
15 vided by the Veterans Benefits Administration,
16 including—

17 “(A) the number of decisions reviewed;

18 “(B) a summary of the findings on the de-
19 cisions reviewed;

20 “(C) the number of full-time equivalent
21 employees assigned to quality assurance in each
22 division or entity;

23 “(D) specific documentation of compliance
24 with the standards for independence and inter-

1 nal control required by section 7731(b) of this
2 title; and

3 “(E) actions taken to improve the quality
4 of services provided and the results obtained;

5 “(2) information with respect to the accuracy of
6 decisions, including trends in that information; and

7 “(3) such other information as the Secretary
8 considers appropriate.”.

9 (2) The table of sections at the beginning of such
10 chapter is amended by adding at the end the following
11 new items:

“SUBCHAPTER III—QUALITY ASSURANCE

“7731. Establishment.

“7732. Functions.

“7733. Personnel.

“7734. Annual report to Congress.”.

12 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subchapter III of chapter 77
13 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection
14 (a), shall take effect on the later of October 1, 1999, or
15 at the end of the 60-day period beginning on the date of
16 the enactment of this Act.

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