

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2088

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to establish claims adjudication centers of excellence.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 22, 2013

Mr. MICHAUD (for himself, Mr. MCINTYRE, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. KILMER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to establish claims adjudication centers of excellence.

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. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PILOT**
4 **PROGRAM ON CLAIMS ADJUDICATION CEN-**
5 **TERS OF EXCELLENCE.**

6 (a) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall carry out
7 a three-year pilot program under which the Secretary shall
8 establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs 12 claims

1 adjudication centers of excellence in accordance with this
2 section.

3 (b) SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall
4 select the three highest performing regional offices in each
5 of the four areas of the Veterans Benefits Administration
6 as the locations of the centers of excellence. To determine
7 which of the regional offices are the three highest per-
8 forming, the Secretary shall evaluate the quality and accu-
9 racy ratings of each of the regional offices and the average
10 number of days a claim submitted to each of the regional
11 offices is pending.

12 (c) FOCUS OF CENTERS.—

13 (1) SELECTION OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS.—

14 Each center of excellence established under this sec-
15 tion shall focus on adjudicating claims relating to
16 one medical condition selected by the Secretary. The
17 Secretary shall select medical conditions for such
18 purpose that are among the most complex and time
19 consuming, for purposes of adjudication, and that
20 occur commonly enough to support the work of the
21 centers.

22 (2) ADJUDICATION OF OTHER CLAIMS.—If no
23 claims relating to the medical condition which is the
24 focus of a center are pending adjudication, employ-

1 ees of the center shall adjudicate claims relating to
2 other medical conditions.

3 (d) EMPLOYEES.—

4 (1) EMPLOYEE TRAINING.—Each employee of a
5 center of excellence established under this section
6 shall—

7 (A) receive specific training related to the
8 medical condition on which the center where the
9 employee is employed is focused;

10 (B) be required to pass an examination de-
11 signed to certify the employee's ability to adju-
12 dicate claims relating to such medical condition
13 to a high performing standard; and

14 (C) work primarily, to the extent prac-
15 ticable, adjudicating claims for which the em-
16 ployee has received specialized training.

17 (2) EMPLOYMENT AT MORE THAN ONE CEN-
18 TER.—

19 (A) CONCURRENT EMPLOYMENT.—No em-
20 ployee may be employed concurrently at more
21 than one center established under this section.

22 (B) SUBSEQUENT EMPLOYMENT.—If the
23 Secretary determines appropriate, an employee
24 may move from one center to another as long
25 as the employee receives specialized training ap-

1 appropriate for the center to which the employee
2 moves.

3 (3) ADDITIONAL FULL TIME EMPLOYEES AU-
4 THORIZED.—The Secretary may assign additional
5 full-time employees to a regional office designated as
6 a center of excellence under this section as the Sec-
7 retary determines necessary. For any full-time em-
8 ployee of a regional office who is assigned to a cen-
9 ter of excellence under this section, the director of
10 the regional office shall hire an additional full-time
11 employee at the regional office.

12 (e) DEADLINE FOR SELECTION OF MEDICAL CONDI-
13 TIONS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall select the
14 medical conditions on which the claims adjudication cen-
15 ters of excellence established under this section shall focus
16 by not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment
17 of this Act.

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