

Union Calendar No. 156

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 813

[Report No. 113–212]

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for advance appropriations for certain discretionary accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2013

Mr. MILLER of Florida (for himself and Mr. MICHAUD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

SEPTEMBER 17, 2013

Additional sponsors: Mrs. ROBY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. HOLT, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JONES, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. WITTMAN, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. STIVERS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. LATHAM

SEPTEMBER 17, 2013

Reported with amendments, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

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

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for advance appropriations for certain discretionary accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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 “Putting Veterans
 5 Funding First Act of 2013”.

6 **SEC. 2. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN DISCRE-**
 7 **TIONARY ACCOUNTS OF THE DEPARTMENT**
 8 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 117 of title 38, United
 10 States Code, is amended—

11 (1) by striking “medical care accounts of the
 12 Department” each place it appears and inserting
 13 “discretionary accounts of the Department”;

14 (2) in subsection (c)—

15 (A) by striking “medical care accounts of
 16 the Veterans Health Administration, Depart-
 17 ment of Veterans Affairs account” and insert-
 18 ing “accounts of the Department of Veterans
 19 Affairs account”;

20 (B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “Vet-
 21 erans Health Administration,” after “(1)”;

22 (C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “Vet-
 23 erans Health Administration,” after “(2)”;

24 (D) in paragraph (3), by inserting “Vet-
 25 erans Health Administration,” after “(3)”;

1 (E) by adding at the end the following new
2 paragraphs:

3 “(4) Veterans Health Administration, Medical
4 Research and Support.

5 “(5) National Cemetery Administration.

6 “(6) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native
7 American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.

8 “(7) Departmental Administration, General Ad-
9 ministration, General Operating Expenses.

10 “(8) Departmental Administration, General Op-
11 erating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration.

12 “(9) Departmental Administration, Information
13 Technology Systems.

14 “(10) Departmental Administration, Office of
15 the Inspector General.

16 “(11) Departmental Administration, Construc-
17 tion, Major Projects.

18 “(12) Departmental Administration, Construc-
19 tion, Minor Projects.

20 “(13) Departmental Administration, Grants for
21 Construction of State Extended Care Facilities.

22 “(14) Departmental Administration, Grants for
23 Construction of Veterans Cemeteries.”; and

1 (F) in the subsection heading, by striking
 2 “MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting
 3 “DISCRETIONARY ACCOUNTS”; and
 4 (3) in the section heading, by striking “**cer-**
 5 **tain medical care accounts**” and inserting
 6 “**certain discretionary accounts**”.

7 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
 8 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to fiscal year 2016
 9 and each subsequent fiscal year.

10 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

11 *This Act may be cited as the “Putting Veterans Fund-*
 12 *ing First Act of 2013”.*

13 **SEC. 2. SCORING OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

14 *The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of*
 15 *complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,*
 16 *shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled*
 17 *“Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act,*
 18 *submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the*
 19 *Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that*
 20 *such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on pas-*
 21 *sage.*

1 **SEC. 3. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN DISCRE-**
2 **TIONARY ACCOUNTS OF THE DEPARTMENT**
3 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

4 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 117 of title 38, United
5 States Code, is amended—

6 (1) by striking “medical care accounts of the De-
7 partment” each place it appears and inserting “dis-
8 cretionary accounts of the Department”;

9 (2) in subsection (c)—

10 (A) by striking “medical care accounts of
11 the Veterans Health Administration, Department
12 of Veterans Affairs account” and inserting “ac-
13 counts of the Department of Veterans Affairs ac-
14 count”;

15 (B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “Vet-
16 erans Health Administration,” after “(1)”;

17 (C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “Vet-
18 erans Health Administration,” after “(2)”;

19 (D) in paragraph (3), by inserting “Vet-
20 erans Health Administration,” after “(3)”;

21 (E) by adding at the end the following new
22 paragraphs:

23 “(4) Veterans Health Administration, Medical
24 and Prosthetic Research.

25 “(5) National Cemetery Administration.

1 “(6) *Veterans Benefits Administration, Native*
 2 *American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.*

3 “(7) *Departmental Administration, General Ad-*
 4 *ministration, General Operating Expenses.*

5 “(8) *Departmental Administration, General Op-*
 6 *erating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration.*

7 “(9) *Departmental Administration, Information*
 8 *Technology Systems.*

9 “(10) *Departmental Administration, Office of*
 10 *the Inspector General.*

11 “(11) *Departmental Administration, Construc-*
 12 *tion, Major Projects.*

13 “(12) *Departmental Administration, Construc-*
 14 *tion, Minor Projects.*

15 “(13) *Departmental Administration, Grants for*
 16 *Construction of State Extended Care Facilities.*

17 “(14) *Departmental Administration, Grants for*
 18 *Construction of Veterans Cemeteries.”; and*

19 *(F) in the subsection heading, by striking*
 20 *“MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting*
 21 *“DISCRETIONARY ACCOUNTS”; and*

22 *(3) in the section heading, by striking “**certain***
 23 ***medical care accounts**” and inserting “**cer-***
 24 ***tain discretionary accounts**”.*

1 (b) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.*—*The table of sections at*
 2 *the beginning of chapter 1 of title 38, United States Code,*
 3 *is amended by striking the item relating to section 117 and*
 4 *inserting the following new item:*

“117. Advance appropriations for certain discretionary accounts.”.

5 (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*The amendments made by sub-*
 6 *section (a) shall apply with respect to fiscal year 2016 and*
 7 *each subsequent fiscal year.*

8 **SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT**
 9 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CARE BUDG-**
 10 **ET SUBMISSION.**

11 *Section 4 of the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform*
 12 *and Transparency Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–81; 38*
 13 *U.S.C. 117 note) is amended to read as follows:*

14 **“SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT**
 15 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CARE BUDG-**
 16 **ET SUBMISSION.**

17 **“(a) REVIEW OF BUDGET SUBMISSION; REPORTS.—**
 18 *For each of fiscal years 2015, 2016, and 2017, the Comp-*
 19 *troller General of the United States shall—*

20 **“(1) review the budget requests for the medical**
 21 *care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs*
 22 *in the President’s budget request submitted pursuant*
 23 *to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code; and*

24 **“(2) submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Af-**
 25 *fairs, Appropriations, and the Budget of the Senate*

1 *and House of Representatives a report or reports on*
 2 *the results of each such review.*

3 “(b) *TIMING AND SCOPE OF REPORTS.*—*In deter-*
 4 *mining the timing and scope for the submittal of the report*
 5 *or reports required under subsection (a), the Comptroller*
 6 *General shall consult with the Committees on Veterans’ Af-*
 7 *fairs of the Senate and House of Representatives.*

8 “(c) *MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS.*—*In this section, the*
 9 *term ‘medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans*
 10 *Affairs’ means the following medical care accounts of the*
 11 *Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans*
 12 *Affairs account:*

13 “(1) *Medical Services.*

14 “(2) *Medical Support and Compliance.*

15 “(3) *Medical Facilities.*”

16 **SEC. 5. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET**
 17 **PLANNING REFORM.**

18 (a) *FUTURE-YEARS VETERANS PROGRAM.*—

19 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*Chapter 1 of title 38, United*
 20 *States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-*
 21 *lowing new section:*

22 **“§ 119. Future-Years Veterans Program**

23 “(a) *SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.*—*The Secretary shall*
 24 *submit to Congress each year, at or about the time that*
 25 *the President’s budget is submitted to Congress pursuant*

1 *to section 1105(a) of title 31, a Future-Years Veterans Pro-*
2 *gram reflecting the estimated expenditures and proposed*
3 *appropriations included in that budget. Any such Future-*
4 *Years Veterans Program shall cover the fiscal year with re-*
5 *spect to which the budget is submitted and at least the four*
6 *succeeding fiscal years.*

7 “(b) *CONSISTENCY.*—(1) *The Secretary shall ensure*
8 *that amounts described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph*
9 *(2) for any fiscal year are consistent with amounts de-*
10 *scribed in subparagraph (B) of such paragraph for that fis-*
11 *cal year.*

12 “(2) *Amounts referred to in paragraph (1) are the fol-*
13 *lowing:*

14 “(A) *The amounts specified in program and*
15 *budget information submitted to Congress by the Sec-*
16 *retary in support of expenditure estimates and pro-*
17 *posed appropriations in the budget submitted to Con-*
18 *gress by the President under section 1105(a) of title*
19 *31 for any fiscal year, as shown in the Future-Years*
20 *Veterans Program submitted pursuant to subsection*
21 *(a).*

22 “(B) *The total amounts of estimated expendi-*
23 *tures and proposed appropriations necessary to sup-*
24 *port the programs, projects, and activities of the De-*
25 *partment of Veterans Affairs included pursuant to*

1 paragraph (5) of section 1105(a) of title 31 in the
2 budget submitted to Congress under that section for
3 any fiscal year.

4 “(c) CONTENTS.—*The Future-Years Veterans Program*
5 *under subsection (a) shall set forth the five-year plan of the*
6 *Department to address the commitment of the United States*
7 *to veterans and the resources necessary to meet that commit-*
8 *ment and shall be developed and updated, as appropriate,*
9 *annually by the Secretary. Each Future-Years Veterans*
10 *Program shall include an explanation of—*

11 “(1) *the information that was used to develop*
12 *program planning guidance for the Future-Years Vet-*
13 *erans Program; and*

14 “(2) *how the resource allocations included in the*
15 *Future-Years Veterans Program correlate to such five-*
16 *year strategy.”.*

17 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—*The table of sec-*
18 *tions at the beginning of such chapter is amended by*
19 *inserting after the item relating to section 118 the fol-*
20 *lowing new item:*

“119. *Future-Years Veterans Program.”.*

21 (3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—*Section 119 of title 38,*
22 *United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), shall*
23 *apply with respect to the preparation and submission*
24 *of the fiscal year 2018 budget request for the Depart-*
25 *ment of Veterans Affairs.*

1 (b) *QUADRENNIAL VETERANS REVIEW.*—

2 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—Such chapter is further
3 amended by adding after section 119, as added by
4 subsection (a)(1), the following new section:

5 **“§ 120. Quadrennial veterans review**

6 “(a) *REQUIREMENT.*—(1) Not later than fiscal year
7 2017, and every fourth year thereafter, the Secretary shall
8 conduct a review of the strategy for meeting the commit-
9 ment of the United States to veterans and the resources nec-
10 essary to meet that commitment (in this section referred
11 to as a ‘quadrennial veterans review’).

12 “(2) Each quadrennial veterans review shall include
13 a comprehensive examination of the policies and strategies
14 of the United States with respect to veterans, including rec-
15 ommendations regarding the long-term strategy and prior-
16 ities for programs, services, benefits, and outcomes regard-
17 ing veterans and guidance on the programs, assets, capa-
18 bilities, budget, policies, and authorities of the Department.

19 “(3) The Secretary shall conduct each quadrennial vet-
20 erans review in consultation with key officials of the De-
21 partment, the heads of other Federal agencies, and other rel-
22 evant governmental and nongovernmental entities, includ-
23 ing State, local, and tribal government officials, members
24 of Congress, veterans service organizations, private sector
25 representatives, academics, and other policy experts.

1 “(4) *The Secretary shall ensure that each quadrennial*
2 *veterans review is coordinated with the Future-Years Vet-*
3 *erans Program required under section 119 of this title.*

4 “(b) *CONTENTS OF REVIEW.—In each quadrennial vet-*
5 *erans review, the Secretary shall—*

6 “(1) *delineate a veterans strategy consistent with*
7 *the commitment of the United States to veterans and*
8 *refine a strategy for the types of, and provision of,*
9 *programs, services, benefits, and outcomes consistent*
10 *with current authorities and requirements;*

11 “(2) *outline and prioritize the full range of pro-*
12 *grams and capabilities regarding veterans provided*
13 *by the Federal Government;*

14 “(3) *identify the budget plan required to provide*
15 *sufficient resources to successfully execute the full*
16 *range of such programs and capabilities;*

17 “(4) *include an assessment of the organizational*
18 *alignment of the Department with respect to the strat-*
19 *egy referred to in paragraph (1) and the programs*
20 *and capabilities referred to in paragraph (2);*

21 “(5) *review and assess the effectiveness of the*
22 *mechanisms of the Department for executing the proc-*
23 *ess of turning the requirements identified in the quad-*
24 *rennial veterans review into a plan to meet such re-*

1 *quirements, including an expenditure plan for the De-*
2 *partment; and*

3 *“(6) identify emerging trends, problems, oppor-*
4 *tunities, and issues that could affect veterans or the*
5 *Department during the ten-year period following the*
6 *period covered by the review.*

7 *“(c) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—(1) The Secretary*
8 *shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the*
9 *Senate and the House of Representatives a report regarding*
10 *each quadrennial veterans review. The Secretary shall sub-*
11 *mit the report in the year following the year in which the*
12 *review is conducted, but not later than the date on which*
13 *the President submits the budget for the next fiscal year*
14 *to Congress under section 1105 of title 31, United States*
15 *Code.*

16 *“(2) Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall*
17 *include—*

18 *“(A) the results of the quadrennial veterans re-*
19 *view;*

20 *“(B) a description of the challenges to, and op-*
21 *portunities for, the assumed or defined veterans-re-*
22 *lated interests of the Nation that were examined for*
23 *the purposes of that review;*

1 “(C) *the strategy for meeting the Nation’s com-*
2 *mitment to veterans, including a prioritized list of*
3 *the missions of the Department;*

4 “(D) *a description of the interagency coopera-*
5 *tion, preparedness of Federal assets, infrastructure,*
6 *budget plan, and other elements of the programs and*
7 *policies of the Nation associated with the strategy re-*
8 *ferred to in subsection (b)(1) that are required to exe-*
9 *cute successfully the full range of programs and capa-*
10 *bilities identified in such strategy and the programs*
11 *and capabilities outlined under subsection (b)(2);*

12 “(E) *an assessment of the organizational align-*
13 *ment of the Department with the strategy referred to*
14 *in subsection (b)(1) and the programs and capabili-*
15 *ties outlined under subsection (b)(2), including the*
16 *Department’s organizational structure, management*
17 *systems, budget and accounting systems, human re-*
18 *sources systems, procurement systems, and physical*
19 *and technical infrastructure;*

20 “(F) *a discussion of the status of cooperation*
21 *among Federal agencies in the effort to promote na-*
22 *tional support for veterans;*

23 “(G) *a discussion of the status of cooperation be-*
24 *tween the Federal Government and State, local, and*
25 *tribal governments in supporting veterans and pro-*

1 *viding programs, services, benefits, and outcomes to*
 2 *assist veterans;*

3 *“(H) an explanation of any underlying assump-*
 4 *tions used in conducting the review; and*

5 *“(I) any other matter the Secretary considers*
 6 *appropriate.”.*

7 *(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-*
 8 *tions at the beginning of such chapter is amended by*
 9 *inserting after the item relating to section 119, as*
 10 *added by subsection (a)(2), the following new item:*

“120. Quadrennial veterans review.”.

11 *(c) POLICY GUIDANCE.—*

12 *(1) IN GENERAL.—Such chapter is further*
 13 *amended by adding after section 120, as added by*
 14 *subsection (b)(1), the following new section:*

15 **“§ 121. Policy guidance**

16 *“The Secretary shall provide annually to the appro-*
 17 *priate officials of the Department written policy guidance*
 18 *for the preparation and review of the planning and pro-*
 19 *gram recommendations and budget proposals of the ele-*
 20 *ments of the Department of such officials. Such guidance*
 21 *shall include guidance on the objectives of the Department*
 22 *in accordance with Future-Years Veterans Program under*
 23 *section 119 of this title and the quadrennial veterans review*
 24 *under section 120 and the resource levels projected to be*

1 *available for the period of time for which such recommenda-*
 2 *tions and proposals are to be effective.”.*

3 (2) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-*
 4 *tions at the beginning of such chapter is amended by*
 5 *inserting after the item relating to section 120, as*
 6 *added by subsection (b)(2), the following new item:*

“121. Policy guidance.”.

7 (d) *CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT*
 8 *OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—*

9 (1) *IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 38, United*
 10 *States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-*
 11 *lowing new section:*

12 **“§ 323. Chief Strategy Officer**

13 *“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall designate the*
 14 *Assistant Secretary whose functions include planning, stud-*
 15 *ies, and evaluations as the Chief Strategy Officer of the De-*
 16 *partment. The Chief Strategy Officer shall advise the Sec-*
 17 *retary on long-range strategy and implications.*

18 *“(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Chief Strategy Officer*
 19 *is the principal advisor to the Secretary and other senior*
 20 *officials of the Department, and shall provide independent*
 21 *analysis and advice to the Secretary and such officials. The*
 22 *Chief Strategy Officer shall carry out the following respon-*
 23 *sibilities:*

24 *“(1) Conducting cost estimation and cost anal-*
 25 *ysis for the programs of the Department.*

1 “(2) *Establishing policies for, and overseeing the*
2 *integration of, the planning, programming, budgeting*
3 *and execution process for the Department.*

4 “(3) *Providing analysis and advice on matters*
5 *relating to the planning and programming phase of*
6 *the planning, programming, budgeting and execution*
7 *process, and the preparation of materials and guid-*
8 *ance for such process, as directed by the Secretary,*
9 *working in coordination with the Assistant Secretary*
10 *for Management.*

11 “(4) *Developing and executing the Future-Years*
12 *Veterans Program of the Department, as specified*
13 *under section 119 of this title.*

14 “(5) *Developing resource discussions relating to*
15 *requirements under consideration in the quadrennial*
16 *veterans review under section 120 of this title.*

17 “(6) *Formulating study guidance for analysis of*
18 *alternatives for programs and initiatives, including*
19 *any necessary acquisitions, development, or procure-*
20 *ment commensurate with such alternatives, and per-*
21 *formance of such analysis as directed by the Sec-*
22 *retary.*

23 “(7) *Reviewing, analyzing, and evaluating pro-*
24 *grams for executing approved strategies and policies,*

1 *ensuring that information on programs and expected*
 2 *outcomes is presented accurately and completely.*

3 “(8) *Ensuring that the costs of programs and al-*
 4 *ternatives are presented accurately and completely by*
 5 *assisting in establishing standards, policies, and pro-*
 6 *cedures for the conduct of cost estimation and cost*
 7 *analysis throughout the Department, including guid-*
 8 *ance relating to the proper selection of confidence lev-*
 9 *els in cost estimates generally and for specific pro-*
 10 *grams of the Department.*

11 “(9) *Conducting studies at the request of the Sec-*
 12 *retary regarding costs, policy assumptions, and stra-*
 13 *tegic implications of current policies and possible al-*
 14 *ternatives.*

15 “(10) *Communicating directly to the Secretary*
 16 *and the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs about*
 17 *matters for which the Chief Strategy Officer is re-*
 18 *sponsible without obtaining the approval or concur-*
 19 *rence of any other official within the Department.”.*

20 “(2) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-*
 21 *tions at the beginning of such chapter is amended by*
 22 *inserting after the item relating to section 322 the fol-*
 23 *lowing new item:*

 “323. *Chief Strategy Officer.*”.

1 **SEC. 6. STUDY ON THE FUNCTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL**
 2 **STRUCTURE OF THE OFFICE OF THE SEC-**
 3 **RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND OF THE**
 4 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) *SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STUDY.*—The
 6 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a study of the
 7 functions and organizational structure of the Office of the
 8 Secretary and of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

9 (b) *CONTENTS OF STUDY.*—In conducting the study
 10 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consider whether
 11 the allocation of functions and the organizational structure
 12 of the Department, as of the date of the enactment of this
 13 Act, constitute the most effective, efficient, and economical
 14 allocation and structure to assist the Secretary in carrying
 15 out the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary. The Sec-
 16 retary shall also consider—

17 (1) *whether the organization of the Office and*
 18 *the Department is—*

19 (A) *optimally structured to assist the Sec-*
 20 *retary in the effective exercise of control over the*
 21 *Department, including—*

22 (i) *policy development and strategic*
 23 *planning;*

24 (ii) *programming, planning, and*
 25 *budget development and policy, program,*
 26 *and budget execution; and*

1 (iii) contingency planning; and

2 (B) the most effective and efficient organiza-
3 tion for the initiation, development, and articu-
4 lation of veterans' policy and the provision of
5 benefits and services;

6 (2) means of improving and strengthening the
7 oversight and accountability within the Office and
8 Department;

9 (3) factors inhibiting efficient and effective exe-
10 cution of the functions of the Office and the Depart-
11 ment, including factors relating to—

12 (A) any duplication of functions (both with-
13 in and between the Office and Department);

14 (B) the availability to the Secretary of suf-
15 ficient and detailed information regarding the
16 operation of the Department to enable effective
17 planning, policy execution, and oversight; and

18 (C) the sufficiency of resources, including
19 personnel, to carry out current and projected re-
20 quirements in a more effective and efficient man-
21 ner; and

22 (4) possible alternative allocations and realign-
23 ments of authorities and functions within the Office
24 and Department to improve the Department's overall
25 operation and better provide benefits and services.

1 (c) *INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR STUDY.*—The Sec-
2 retary shall enter into a contract with an appropriate enti-
3 ty under which the entity shall carry out an independent
4 study of the same matters required to be considered by the
5 Secretary under subsection (b). The Secretary shall ensure
6 that the entity has full access to such information as the
7 contractor requires in order to conduct the study and that
8 the contractor otherwise receives full cooperation from all
9 officials and entities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

10 (d) *REPORT TO CONGRESS.*—Not later than one year
11 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
12 of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Vet-
13 erans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives
14 a report on the Secretary's study under subsection (a). The
15 report shall include—

16 (1) *the findings and conclusions of the Secretary*
17 *with respect to each of the matters set forth in sub-*
18 *section (b);*

19 (2) *any recommendations of the Secretary for or-*
20 *ganizational changes in the Office of the Secretary*
21 *and the overall Department and a description of the*
22 *means for implementing each recommendation; and*

23 (3) *a copy of the report of the independent con-*
24 *tractor under subsection (c), together with such com-*

1 *ments on such report as the Secretary considers ap-*
2 *propriate.*

3 ***SEC. 7. PERFORMANCE AWARDS IN THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE***
4 ***SERVICE.***

5 *For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, the Sec-*
6 *retary of Veterans Affairs may not pay any performance*
7 *awards under section 5384 of title 5, United States Code.*

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for advance appropriations for certain discretionary accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a Future-Years Veterans Program and a quadrennial veterans review, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Chief Strategy Officer, and for other purposes.”.

Union Calendar No. 156

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1ST Session

H. R. 813

[Report No. 113-212]

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SEPTEMBER 17, 2013

Reported with amendments, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed