

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1148

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide notice of average times for processing claims, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 12, 2013

Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. HELLER) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide notice of average times for processing claims, and for other purposes.

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 Benefits
5 Claims Faster Filing Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NOTICE OF**
2 **AVERAGE TIMES FOR PROCESSING CLAIMS.**

3 (a) PUBLIC NOTICE.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
4 fairs shall post the information described in subsection
5 (c)—

6 (1) in a conspicuous place in each regional of-
7 fice and claims intake facility of the Department of
8 Veterans Affairs; and

9 (2) on the Internet website of the Department.

10 (b) NOTICE TO APPLICANTS.—The Secretary shall
11 provide to each person who submits a claim for a benefit
12 under a law administered by the Secretary before the per-
13 son submits such claim—

14 (1) notice of the information described in sub-
15 section (c); and

16 (2) notice that the person is eligible to receive
17 up to an extra year of benefits payments if the per-
18 son files a claim that is fully developed.

19 (c) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The information described in
21 this subsection is the following:

22 (A) The average processing time of the
23 claims described in paragraph (2).

24 (B) The percentage of each of the fol-
25 lowing types of submitted claims for benefits
26 under the laws administered by the Secretary of

Veterans Affairs for which benefits are awarded:

(i) Claims filed by veterans who authorized a veterans service organization to act on the veterans' behalf under a durable power of attorney.

(ii) Claims filed by veterans who authorized a person other than a veterans service organization to act on the veterans' behalf under a durable power of attorney.

(iii) Claims filed by veterans who did not authorize a person to act on the veterans' behalf under a durable power of attorney.

(2) CLAIMS DESCRIBED.—The claims described in this paragraph are each of the following types of claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs:

(A) A fully developed claim that is submitted in standard electronic form.

(B) A fully developed claim that is submitted in standard paper form.

(C) A claim that is not fully developed that is submitted in standard electronic form.

1 (D) A claim that is not fully developed
2 that is submitted in standard paper form.

3 (E) A claim that is not fully developed that
4 is submitted in non-standard paper form.

5 (3) UPDATE OF INFORMATION.—The informa-
6 tion described in this subsection shall be updated not
7 less frequently than once each fiscal quarter.

○