

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2654

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct outreach to veterans regarding the effect of certain delayed payments by the Secretary, to require the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report regarding such delayed payments, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 24, 2014

Ms. LANDRIEU introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct outreach to veterans regarding the effect of certain delayed payments by the Secretary, to require the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report regarding such delayed payments, 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’ Credit Pro-
5 tection Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. OUTREACH TO VETERANS REGARDING EFFECT OF**
2 **DELAYED PAYMENTS BY VETERANS INTE-**
3 **GRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.**

4 (a) OUTREACH.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
6 Affairs shall conduct outreach, including through na-
7 tional and local veterans service organizations, to in-
8 form veterans of how to resolve credit issues caused
9 by a delayed payment.

10 (2) ABILITY TO REPORT ISSUES.—The Sec-
11 retary shall establish a toll-free telephone number
12 for veterans to report credit issues described in
13 paragraph (1) to the Veterans Integrated Service
14 Networks of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

15 (b) ANNUAL REPORT.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
17 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not
18 less frequently than annually thereafter, the Sec-
19 retary shall submit to Congress a report on the ef-
20 fectiveness of each Veterans Integrated Service Net-
21 work in providing timely payment of a proper invoice
22 by the required payment date during both the five-
23 year period preceding the date of the report and the
24 one-year period preceding such date.

1 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by para-
2 graph (1) shall include, for each period covered by
3 the report, the following:

4 (A) The number of veterans who contacted
5 the Secretary regarding a delayed payment that
6 negatively affected, or will potentially negatively
7 affect, the credit of the veteran.

8 (B) The total amount of interest penalties
9 paid by the Secretary under section 3902 of
10 title 31, United States Code, by reason of a de-
11 layed payment.

12 (C) The number of proper invoices sub-
13 mitted, listed in a table for each quarter and
14 fiscal year of each such period that includes the
15 following:

16 (i) The total amount owed by the Sec-
17 retary under the proper invoices.

18 (ii) The payment status of each prop-
19 er invoice, as of the date of the report.

20 (iii) The period that elapsed until
21 each proper invoice was paid, including an
22 explanation of any delayed payment.

23 (D) Such comments made by medical pro-
24 viders regarding delayed payments to such med-

1 ical providers that the Secretary has received
2 and considers relevant.

3 (E) An identification of the Veterans Inte-
4 grated Service Network with the least number
5 of delayed payments and the Veterans Inte-
6 grated Service Network with the most number
7 of delayed payments.

8 (F) A description of the best practices that
9 a Veterans Integrated Service Network can
10 carry out to provide timely payment of a proper
11 invoice, including a plan for underperforming
12 Veterans Integrated Service Networks to im-
13 prove such timely payments.

14 (c) COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of
16 the United States shall conduct a study that as-
17 sesses the effectiveness of each Veterans Integrated
18 Service Network in providing timely payment of a
19 proper invoice by the required payment date.

20 (2) SUBMITTAL.—The Comptroller General
21 shall submit to Congress a report on the study con-
22 ducted under paragraph (1), including the total
23 amount of interest penalties paid by the Secretary
24 under section 3902 of title 31, United States Code,
25 by reason of a delayed payment.

1 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 (1) DELAYED PAYMENT.—The term “delayed
3 payment” means a proper invoice that is not paid by
4 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs until after the re-
5 quired payment date.

6 (2) PROPER INVOICE.—The term “proper in-
7 voice” has the meaning given that term in section
8 3901(a) of title 31, United States Code.

9 (3) REQUIRED PAYMENT DATE.—The term “re-
10 quired payment date” means the date that payment
11 is due for a contract pursuant to section 3903(a) of
12 title 31, United States Code.

13 (4) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.—The
14 term “veterans service organization” means an orga-
15 nization recognized by the Secretary for the rep-
16 resentation of veterans under section 5902 of title
17 38, United States Code.

○