

**Calendar No. 258**113TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION**S. 944****[Report No. 113-123]**

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.

---

**IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES**

MAY 14, 2013

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

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

DECEMBER 9, 2013

Reported by Mr. SANDERS, with an amendment and an amendment to the title

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

---

**A BILL**

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to charge veterans tui-

tion and fees at the in-State tuition rate, 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 “Putting Our Veterans  
 5 Back to Work Act of 2013”.

6 **SEC. 2. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**  
 7                   **BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDU-**  
 8                   **CATION FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUNTEER**  
 9                   **FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PRO-**  
 10                   **GRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSIST-**  
 11                   **ANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUITION**  
 12                   **RATE FOR VETERANS.**

13       (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3679 of title 38, United  
 14 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
 15 lowing new subsection:

16       “(e)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this  
 17 chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (5), the  
 18 Secretary shall disapprove a course of education provided  
 19 by a public institution of higher education to a covered  
 20 individual pursuing a course of education with educational  
 21 assistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living  
 22 in the State in which the public institution of higher edu-  
 23 cation is located if the institution charges tuition and fees  
 24 for that course for the covered individual at a rate that

1 is higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition  
2 and fees for that course for residents of the State in which  
3 the institution is located, regardless of the covered individ-  
4 ual's State of residence.

5       “(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered indi-  
6 vidual is any individual as follows:

7           “(A) A veteran who was discharged or released  
8 from a period of not fewer than 180 days of service  
9 in the active military, naval, or air service less than  
10 two years before the date of enrollment in the course  
11 concerned.

12           “(B) An individual who is entitled to assistance  
13 under section 3311(b)(9) or 3319 of this title by vir-  
14 tue of such individual's relationship to a veteran de-  
15 scribed in subparagraph (A).

16       “(3) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course  
17 of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution  
18 of higher education requires a covered individual pursuing  
19 a course of education at the institution to demonstrate an  
20 intent to establish residency in the State in which the in-  
21 stitution is located in order to be charged tuition and fees  
22 for that course at a rate that is equal to or less than the  
23 rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that  
24 course for residents of the State.

1       “~~(4) The Secretary may waive such requirements of~~  
2 paragraph ~~(1)~~ as the Secretary considers appropriate.

3       “~~(5) Disapproval under paragraph ~~(1)~~ shall apply~~  
4 only with respect to educational assistance under chapters  
5 ~~30 and 33~~ of this title.”.

6       ~~(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (e) of section~~  
7 ~~3679 of title 38, United States Code (as added by sub-~~  
8 ~~section (a) of this section) shall apply with respect to edu-~~  
9 ~~ational assistance provided for pursuit of programs of~~  
10 ~~education during academic terms that begin after July 1,~~  
11 ~~2015.~~

12 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

13       ~~(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Vet-~~  
14 ~~erans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013”.~~

15       ~~(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for~~  
16 ~~this Act is as follows:~~

*Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.*

*Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.*

**TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS**

*Sec. 101. Extension of initial period for increased dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses with children.*

*Sec. 102. Eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation, educational assistance, and housing loans for surviving spouses who remarry after age 55.*

*Sec. 103. Extension of marriage delimiting date for surviving spouses of Persian Gulf War veterans to qualify for death pension.*

*Sec. 104. Expansion of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship.*

*Sec. 105. Expansion of Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program.*

*Sec. 106. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.*

*Sec. 107. Program on assisted living for children of Vietnam veterans and certain Korea service veterans born with spina bifida.*

*Sec. 108. Program on grief counseling in retreat settings for surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces.*

*Sec. 109. Program evaluation on survivors' and dependents' educational assistance authorities.*

**TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS**

*Sec. 201. Approval of courses of education provided by public institutions of higher learning for purposes of All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance conditional on in-State tuition rate for veterans.*

*Sec. 202. Extension and expansion of authority for certain qualifying work-study activities for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

*Sec. 203. Report on debt management and collection.*

*Sec. 204. Restoration of prior reporting fee multipliers.*

**TITLE III—HEALTH CARE MATTERS**

*Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvements of Benefits Generally*

*Sec. 301. Expansion of provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans.*

*Sec. 302. Modification of commencement date of period of service at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for eligibility for hospital care and medical services in connection with exposure to contaminated water.*

*Sec. 303. Expansion of eligibility for sexual trauma counseling and treatment to veterans on inactive duty training.*

*Sec. 304. Extension of sunset date regarding transportation of individuals to and from facilities of Department of Veterans Affairs and requirement of report.*

*Sec. 305. Program on health promotion for overweight and obese veterans through support of fitness center memberships.*

*Sec. 306. Program on health promotion for veterans through establishment of Department of Veterans Affairs fitness facilities.*

*Subtitle B—Health Care Administration*

*Sec. 311. Extension of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professional Scholarship Program.*

*Sec. 312. Expansion of availability of prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.*

*Sec. 313. Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.*

*Subtitle C—Complementary and Alternative Medicine*

*Sec. 321. Expansion of research and education on and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine to veterans.*

*Sec. 322. Program on integration of complementary and alternative medicine within Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.*

*Sec. 323. Studies of barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and administrators and clinicians in providing, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

*Sec. 324. Program on use of wellness programs as complementary approach to mental health care for veterans and family members of veterans.*

**TITLE IV—ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS**

*Sec. 401. Administration of Veterans Integrated Service Networks.*

- Sec. 402. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.*
- Sec. 403. Commission on Capital Planning for Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities.*
- Sec. 404. Public access to Department of Veterans Affairs research and data sharing between Departments.*
- Sec. 405. Budget transparency for outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.*
- Sec. 406. Comptroller general report on advisory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

*TITLE V—IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR  
COMPENSATION*

*Subtitle A—Claims Based on Military Sexual Trauma*

- Sec. 501. Medical examination and opinion for disability compensation claims based on military sexual trauma.*
- Sec. 502. Case representative officers for military sexual trauma support.*
- Sec. 503. Report on standard of proof for service-connection of mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma.*
- Sec. 504. Reports on claims for disabilities incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.*

*Subtitle B—Agency of Original Jurisdiction*

- Sec. 511. Working group to improve employee work credit and work management systems of Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.*
- Sec. 512. Task force on retention and training of Department of Veterans Affairs claims processors and adjudicators.*
- Sec. 513. Reports on requests by the Department of Veterans Affairs for records of other Federal agencies.*
- Sec. 514. Recognition of representatives of Indian tribes in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.*
- Sec. 515. Program on participation of local and tribal governments in improving quality of claims for disability compensation submitted to Department of Veterans Affairs.*
- Sec. 516. Quarterly reports on progress of Department of Veterans Affairs in eliminating backlog of claims for compensation that have not been adjudicated.*
- Sec. 517. Reports on use of existing authorities to expedite benefits decisions.*
- Sec. 518. Reports on Department disability medical examinations and prevention of unnecessary medical examinations.*

*Subtitle C—Board of Veterans' Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans  
Claims*

- Sec. 521. Treatment of certain misfiled documents as a notice of appeal to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.*
- Sec. 522. Modification of filing period for notice of disagreement to initiate appellate review of decisions of Department of Veterans Affairs.*
- Sec. 523. Determination of manner of appearance for hearings before Board of Veterans' Appeals.*

TITLE VI—OUTREACH MATTERS

- Sec. 601. Program to increase coordination of outreach efforts between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Federal, State, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations.*
- Sec. 602. Cooperative agreements between Secretary of Veterans Affairs and States on outreach activities.*
- Sec. 603. Advisory committee on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.*
- Sec. 604. Advisory boards on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs relating to health care.*
- Sec. 605. Modification of requirement for periodic reports to Congress on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.*

TITLE VII—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS

*Subtitle A—Employment Matters*

- Sec. 701. Employment of veterans with the Federal Government.*
- Sec. 702. State recognition of military experience of veterans in issuing licenses and credentials to veterans.*
- Sec. 703. Report on unified Government Internet portal for veterans on jobs available through the Federal Government.*
- Sec. 704. Information on disability-related employment and education protections in Transition Assistance Program.*

*Subtitle B—Small Business Matters*

- Sec. 711. Expansion of contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs to include conditionally owned small business concerns 100 percent owned by veterans.*
- Sec. 712. Modification of treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs for small businesses owned by veterans of small businesses after death of disabled veteran owners.*
- Sec. 713. Treatment of businesses after deaths of servicemember-owners for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences.*
- Sec. 714. Special rule for treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs of small business concerns licensed in community property States.*

TITLE VIII—OTHER MATTERS

- Sec. 801. Consideration by Secretary of Veterans Affairs of resources disposed of for less than fair market value by individuals applying for pension.*
- Sec. 802. Office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events.*
- Sec. 803. Adaptive sports programs for disabled veterans and members of the Armed Forces through United States Olympic Committee.*
- Sec. 804. Making effective date provision consistent with provision for benefits eligibility of a veteran's child based upon termination of remarriage by annulment.*
- Sec. 805. Extended period for scheduling of medical exams for veterans receiving temporary disability ratings for severe mental disorders.*
- Sec. 806. Authority to issue Veterans ID Cards.*

Sec. 807. *Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces.*

Sec. 808. *Extension of authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to issue and guarantee certain loans.*

Sec. 809. *Review of determination of certain service in Philippines during World War II.*

Sec. 810. *Report on Laotian military support of Armed Forces of the United States during Vietnam War.*

Sec. 811. *Report on assistance for veterans in obtaining training on purchasing and operating a franchise.*

Sec. 812. *Limitation on aggregate amount of bonuses payable to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs during fiscal year 2014.*

1 **SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.**

2 *Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in*  
 3 *this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of*  
 4 *an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision,*  
 5 *the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or*  
 6 *other provision of title 38, United States Code.*

7 **TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND**  
 8 **DEPENDENT MATTERS**

9 **SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF INITIAL PERIOD FOR INCREASED**  
 10 **DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSA-**  
 11 **TION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES WITH CHIL-**  
 12 **DREN.**

13 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 1311(f)(2) is amended by  
 14 striking “two-year” and inserting “three-year”.

15 (b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendment made by sub-  
 16 section (a) shall take effect as of September 30, 2014, and  
 17 shall apply to any surviving spouse who was eligible for  
 18 or in receipt of benefits under section 1311(f) of title 38,  
 19 United States Code, on or after the date of the enactment  
 20 of this Act.

1 **SEC. 102. ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY**  
2 **COMPENSATION, EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE,**  
3 **AND HOUSING LOANS FOR SURVIVING**  
4 **SPOUSES WHO REMARRY AFTER AGE 55.**

5 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Paragraph (2)(B) of section 103(d)  
6 is amended to read as follows:

7 “(B) The remarriage after age 55 of the surviving  
8 spouse of a veteran shall not bar the furnishing of benefits  
9 specified in paragraph (5) to such person as the surviving  
10 spouse of the veteran.”

11 (b) *CONFORMING AMENDMENT.*—Paragraph (5) of  
12 such section is amended by striking “Paragraphs (2)(A)”  
13 and inserting “Paragraphs (2)”.

14 (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by this  
15 section shall take effect on the date that is one year after  
16 the date of the enactment of this Act.

17 **SEC. 103. EXTENSION OF MARRIAGE DELIMITING DATE FOR**  
18 **SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PERSIAN GULF WAR**  
19 **VETERANS TO QUALIFY FOR DEATH PENSION.**

20 Section 1541(f)(1)(E) is amended by striking “Janu-  
21 ary 1, 2001” and inserting “the date that is 10 years and  
22 one day after the date on which the Persian Gulf War was  
23 terminated, as prescribed by Presidential proclamation or  
24 by law”.

1 **SEC. 104. EXPANSION OF MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT**

2 **JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP.**

3 (a) *EXPANSION OF ENTITLEMENT.*—Subsection (b)(9)  
4 of section 3311 is amended by inserting “or spouse” after  
5 “child”.

6 (b) *LIMITATION AND ELECTION ON CERTAIN BENE-*  
7 *FITS.*—Subsection (f) of such section is amended—

8 (1) *by redesignating paragraph (2) as para-*  
9 *graph (4); and*

10 (2) *by inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-*  
11 *lowing new paragraphs:*

12 “(2) *LIMITATION.*—The entitlement of an indi-  
13 *vidual to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to*  
14 *paragraph (9) of subsection (b) because the individual*  
15 *was a spouse of a person described in such paragraph*  
16 *shall expire on the earlier of—*

17 “(A) *the date that is 15 years after the date*  
18 *on which the person died; and*

19 “(B) *the date on which the individual re-*  
20 *marries.*

21 “(3) *ELECTION ON RECEIPT OF CERTAIN BENE-*  
22 *FITS.*—A surviving spouse entitled to assistance under  
23 *subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of sub-*  
24 *section (b) who is also entitled to educational assist-*  
25 *ance under chapter 35 of this title may not receive as-*  
26 *sistance under both this section and such chapter, but*

1       *shall make an irrevocable election (in such form and*  
 2       *manner as the Secretary may prescribe) under which*  
 3       *section or chapter to receive educational assistance.”.*

4       (c) *CONFORMING AMENDMENT.*—Section 3321(b)(4) is  
 5       amended—

6               (1) *by striking “an individual” and inserting “a*  
 7       *child”;* and

8               (2) *by striking “such individual’s” each time it*  
 9       *appears and inserting “such child’s”.*

10       (d) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*The amendments made by this*  
 11       *section shall take effect on the date that is two years after*  
 12       *the date of the enactment of this Act.*

13       **SEC. 105. EXPANSION OF YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION**  
 14                       **ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.**

15       (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 3317(a) is amended by  
 16       striking “in paragraphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “in  
 17       paragraphs (1), (2), and (9)”.

18       (b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*The amendment made by sub-*  
 19       *section (a) shall apply with respect to academic terms be-*  
 20       *ginning after July 1, 2015.*

21       **SEC. 106. BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF CERTAIN THAILAND**  
 22                       **SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA**  
 23                       **BIFIDA.**

24       (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Subchapter III of chapter 18 is*  
 25       *amended by adding at the end the following new section:*

1 **“§1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand**  
2 **service veterans born with spina bifida**

3 “(a) *BENEFITS AUTHORIZED.*—*The Secretary may*  
4 *provide to any child of a veteran of covered service in Thai-*  
5 *land who is suffering from spina bifida the health care, vo-*  
6 *catational training and rehabilitation, and monetary allow-*  
7 *ance required to be paid to a child of a Vietnam veteran*  
8 *who is suffering from spina bifida under subchapter I of*  
9 *this chapter as if such child of a veteran of covered service*  
10 *in Thailand were a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suf-*  
11 *fering from spina bifida under such subchapter.*

12 “(b) *SPINA BIFIDA CONDITIONS COVERED.*—*This sec-*  
13 *tion applies with respect to all forms and manifestations*  
14 *of spina bifida, except spina bifida occulta.*

15 “(c) *VETERAN OF COVERED SERVICE IN THAILAND.*—  
16 *For purposes of this section, a veteran of covered service*  
17 *in Thailand is any individual, without regard to the char-*  
18 *acterization of that individual’s service, who—*

19 “(1) *served in the active military, naval, or air*  
20 *service in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary*  
21 *in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during*  
22 *the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending*  
23 *on May 7, 1975; and*

24 “(2) *is determined by the Secretary, in consulta-*  
25 *tion with the Secretary of Defense, to have been ex-*

1       posed to a herbicide agent during such service in  
2       Thailand.

3       “(d) *HERBICIDE AGENT*.—For purposes of this section,  
4       the term ‘herbicide agent’ means a chemical in a herbicide  
5       used in support of United States and allied military oper-  
6       ations in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in con-  
7       sultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period  
8       beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7,  
9       1975.”.

10       (b) *CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF*  
11       “*CHILD*”.—Section 1831(1) is amended—

12               (1) in subparagraph (B)—

13                       (A) by striking “subchapter III of this  
14                       chapter” and inserting “section 1821 of this  
15                       title”; and

16                       (B) in clause (i), by striking “section 1821  
17                       of this title” and inserting “that section”; and

18               (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
19       paragraph:

20                       “(C) For purposes of section 1822 of this title,  
21       an individual, regardless of age or marital status,  
22       who—

23                               “(i) is the natural child of a veteran of cov-  
24                               ered service in Thailand (as determined for pur-  
25                               poses of that section); and

1           “(i) was conceived after the date on which  
2           that veteran first entered service described in  
3           subsection (c) of that section.”.

4           (c) *CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.*—

5           (1) *SUBCHAPTER HEADING.*—The heading for  
6           subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by inserting  
7           “AND THAILAND” after “KOREA”.

8           (2) *TABLE OF SECTIONS.*—The table of sections  
9           at the beginning of chapter 18 is amended—

10           (A) by striking the item relating to sub-  
11           chapter III and inserting the following new item:

“SUBCHAPTER III—CHILDREN OF CERTAIN KOREA AND THAILAND SERVICE  
VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA”;

12           and

13           (B) by inserting after the item relating to  
14           section 1821 the following new item:

“1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina  
bifida.”.

15           (d) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by this  
16           section shall take effect on the date that is one year after  
17           the date of the enactment of this Act.

18           **SEC. 107. PROGRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING FOR CHILDREN**  
19                           **OF VIETNAM VETERANS AND CERTAIN KOREA**  
20                           **SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA**  
21                           **BIFIDA.**

22           (a) *PROGRAM.*—Commencing not later than 180 days  
23           after the date on which this section takes effect, the Sec-

1 *retary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to as-*  
2 *sess the feasibility and advisability of providing assisted*  
3 *living, group home care, or similar services in lieu of nurs-*  
4 *ing home care to covered individuals.*

5 (b) *COVERED INDIVIDUALS.*—*For purposes of this sec-*  
6 *tion, a covered individual is any individual who is entitled*  
7 *to health care under subchapter I or III of chapter 18 of*  
8 *title 38, United States Code.*

9 (c) *DURATION.*—

10 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*Except as otherwise provided*  
11 *in this subsection, the program shall be carried out*  
12 *during the three-year period beginning on the date of*  
13 *the commencement of the program.*

14 (2) *CONTINUATION.*—*Subject to paragraph (3),*  
15 *the Secretary may continue the program for an addi-*  
16 *tional two-year period as the Secretary considers ap-*  
17 *propriate.*

18 (3) *TERMINATION.*—*The program may not oper-*  
19 *ate after the date that is five years after the date of*  
20 *the commencement of the program.*

21 (d) *SCOPE OF SERVICES AND PROGRAM.*—*Under the*  
22 *program, the Secretary shall provide covered individuals*  
23 *with integrated, comprehensive services, including the fol-*  
24 *lowing:*

1           (1) *Assisted living, group home care, or such*  
2 *other similar services as the Secretary considers ap-*  
3 *propriate.*

4           (2) *Transportation services.*

5           (3) *Such other services as the Secretary considers*  
6 *appropriate for the care of covered individuals under*  
7 *the program.*

8           (e) *PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the*  
9 *program, the Secretary shall—*

10           (1) *inform all covered individuals of the services*  
11 *available under the program;*

12           (2) *enter into agreements with appropriate pro-*  
13 *viders of assisted living, group home care, or other*  
14 *similar services for provision of services under the*  
15 *program; and*

16           (3) *determine the appropriate number of covered*  
17 *individuals to be enrolled in the program and criteria*  
18 *for such enrollment.*

19           (f) *REPORTS.—*

20           (1) *PRELIMINARY REPORTS.—*

21           (A) *IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year*  
22 *after the date of the commencement of the pro-*  
23 *gram and, if the program is continued under*  
24 *subsection (c)(2), not later than three years after*  
25 *the date of the commencement of the program,*

1           *the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on*  
2           *Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-*  
3           *mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-*  
4           *resentatives a report on the program.*

5           *(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted*  
6           *under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-*  
7           *lowing:*

8                   *(i) A description of the implementation*  
9                   *and operation of the program.*

10                   *(ii) The number of covered individuals*  
11                   *receiving benefits under the program.*

12                   *(iii) An analysis that compares the*  
13                   *costs of furnishing assisted living, group*  
14                   *home care, or similar service with the costs*  
15                   *of furnishing nursing home care.*

16                   *(iv) An analysis of the costs and bene-*  
17                   *fits under the program.*

18                   *(v) The findings and conclusions of the*  
19                   *Secretary with respect to the program.*

20                   *(vi) Such recommendations for the con-*  
21                   *tinuation or expansion of the program as*  
22                   *the Secretary may have.*

23           *(2) FINAL REPORT.—*

24                   *(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days*  
25                   *after the completion of the program, the Sec-*

1           retary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
 2           erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee  
 3           on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representa-  
 4           tives a report on the program.

5           (B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted  
 6           under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-  
 7           lowing:

8                   (i) The findings and conclusions of the  
 9                   Secretary with respect to the program.

10                   (ii) Such recommendations for the con-  
 11                   tinuation or expansion of the program as  
 12                   the Secretary may have.

13           (g) FUNDING.—Amounts to carry out the program  
 14           shall be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise  
 15           made available for the furnishing of nursing home care  
 16           under chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code.

17           (h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
 18           on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment  
 19           of this Act.

20   **SEC. 108. PROGRAM ON GRIEF COUNSELING IN RETREAT**  
 21                   **SETTINGS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF MEM-**  
 22                   **BERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO DIE**  
 23                   **WHILE SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE**  
 24                   **ARMED FORCES.**

25           (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

1           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—Commencing not later than  
2           180 days after the date on which this section takes ef-  
3           fect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out,  
4           through the Readjustment Counseling Service of the  
5           Veterans Health Administration, a program to assess  
6           the feasibility and advisability of providing grief  
7           counseling services described in subsection (b) in  
8           group retreat settings to surviving spouses of members  
9           of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active  
10          duty in the Armed Forces who would, as determined  
11          by the Readjustment Counseling Service, benefit from  
12          the services provided under the program.

13           (2) *PARTICIPATION AT ELECTION OF SURVIVING*  
14          *SPOUSE.*—The participation of a surviving spouse in  
15          the program under this section shall be at the election  
16          of the surviving spouse.

17          (b) *COVERED SERVICES.*—The services provided to a  
18          surviving spouse under the program shall include the fol-  
19          lowing:

20           (1) *Information and counseling on coping with*  
21          *grief.*

22           (2) *Information about benefits and services*  
23          *available to surviving spouses under laws adminis-*  
24          *tered by the Secretary.*

1           (3) *Such other information and counseling as the*  
2           *Secretary considers appropriate to assist a surviving*  
3           *spouse under the program with adjusting to the death*  
4           *of a spouse.*

5           (c) *EVENTS.—The Secretary shall carry out the pro-*  
6           *gram at not fewer than six events as follows:*

7           (1) *Three events at which surviving spouses with*  
8           *dependent children are encouraged to bring their chil-*  
9           *dren.*

10          (2) *Three events at which surviving spouses with*  
11          *dependent children are not encouraged to bring their*  
12          *children.*

13          (d) *DURATION.—The program shall be carried out*  
14          *during the two-year period beginning on the date of the*  
15          *commencement of the program.*

16          (e) *REPORTS.—*

17               (1) *IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after*  
18               *the completion of the first year of the program and*  
19               *not later than 180 days after the completion of the*  
20               *program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a re-*  
21               *port on the program.*

22               (2) *CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under*  
23               *paragraph (1) shall contain the findings and conclu-*  
24               *sions of the Secretary as a result of the program, and*  
25               *shall include such recommendations for the continu-*

1        *ation or expansion of the program as the Secretary*  
 2        *considers appropriate.*

3        (f) *DEFINITIONS.*—*In this section, the terms “active*  
 4 *duty”, “Armed Forces”, and “surviving spouse” have the*  
 5 *meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United*  
 6 *States Code.*

7        (g) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section shall take effect*  
 8 *on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
 9 *of this Act.*

10 ***SEC. 109. PROGRAM EVALUATION ON SURVIVORS’ AND DE-***  
 11 ***PENDENTS’ EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AU-***  
 12 ***THORITIES.***

13        (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary of Veterans Affairs*  
 14 *shall enter into a contract with an appropriate private sec-*  
 15 *tor entity to conduct a program evaluation of the authori-*  
 16 *ties for survivors’ and dependents’ educational assistance*  
 17 *under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code.*

18        (b) *REPORT.*—*Not later than six months after the*  
 19 *entry into the contract required by subsection (a), the Sec-*  
 20 *retary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs*  
 21 *of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of*  
 22 *the House of Representatives a report setting forth the re-*  
 23 *sults of the program evaluation conducted pursuant to the*  
 24 *contract, together with such comments on the results of the*  
 25 *program evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate.*

1       (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section shall take effect*  
 2 *one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

3       **TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS**

4       **SEC. 201. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PRO-**  
 5                               **VIDED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER**  
 6                               **LEARNING FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUN-**  
 7                               **TEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**  
 8                               **PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL AS-**  
 9                               **SISTANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUI-**  
 10                              **TION RATE FOR VETERANS.**

11       (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Section 3679 is amended by adding*  
 12 *at the end the following new subsection:*

13       “(c)(1) *Notwithstanding any other provision of this*  
 14 *chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (6), the Sec-*  
 15 *retary shall disapprove a course of education provided by*  
 16 *a public institution of higher learning to a covered indi-*  
 17 *vidual pursuing a course of education with educational as-*  
 18 *sistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living*  
 19 *in the State in which the public institution of higher learn-*  
 20 *ing is located if the institution charges tuition and fees for*  
 21 *that course for the covered individual at a rate that is high-*  
 22 *er than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees*  
 23 *for that course for residents of the State in which the insti-*  
 24 *tution is located, regardless of the covered individual’s State*  
 25 *of residence.*

1       “(2) *For purposes of this subsection, a covered indi-*  
2 *vidual is any individual as follows:*

3               “(A) *A veteran who was discharged or released*  
4 *from a period of not fewer than 90 days of service in*  
5 *the active military, naval, or air service less than*  
6 *three years before the date of enrollment in the course*  
7 *concerned.*

8               “(B) *An individual who is entitled to assistance*  
9 *under section 3311(b)(9) or 3319 of this title by vir-*  
10 *tue of such individual’s relationship to a veteran de-*  
11 *scribed in subparagraph (A).*

12       “(3) *If after enrollment in a course of education that*  
13 *is subject to disapproval under paragraph (1) by reason*  
14 *of paragraph (2)(A) or (2)(B) a covered individual pursues*  
15 *one or more courses of education at the same public institu-*  
16 *tion of higher learning while remaining continuously en-*  
17 *rolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between*  
18 *courses, semesters or terms) at that institution of higher*  
19 *learning, any course so pursued by the covered individual*  
20 *at that institution of higher learning while so continuously*  
21 *enrolled shall also be subject to disapproval under para-*  
22 *graph (1).*

23       “(4) *It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course of*  
24 *education under paragraph (1) if a public institution of*  
25 *higher learning requires a covered individual pursuing a*

1 *course of education at the institution to demonstrate an in-*  
2 *tent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence*  
3 *requirement, to establish residency in the State in which*  
4 *the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements*  
5 *not relating to the establishment of residency, in order to*  
6 *be charged tuition and fees for that course at a rate that*  
7 *is equal to or less than the rate the institution charges for*  
8 *tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State.*

9       “(5) *The Secretary may waive such requirements of*  
10 *paragraph (1) as the Secretary considers appropriate.*

11       “(6) *Disapproval under paragraph (1) shall apply*  
12 *only with respect to educational assistance under chapters*  
13 *30 and 33 of this title.”.*

14       **(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.**—*Subsection (c) of section 3679*  
15 *of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)*  
16 *of this section), shall apply with respect to educational as-*  
17 *sistance provided for pursuit of programs of education dur-*  
18 *ing academic terms that begin after July 1, 2015, through*  
19 *courses of education that commence on or after that date.*

1 **SEC. 202. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY FOR**  
2 **CERTAIN QUALIFYING WORK-STUDY ACTIVI-**  
3 **TIES FOR PURPOSES OF THE EDUCATIONAL**  
4 **ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE DEPART-**  
5 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) *EXTENSION OF EXPIRING CURRENT AUTHORITY.*—  
7 *Section 3485(a)(4) is amended by striking “June 30, 2013”*  
8 *each place it appears and inserting “June 30, 2015”.*

9 (b) *EXPANSION TO OUTREACH SERVICES PROVIDED*  
10 *THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES.*—*Such section is fur-*  
11 *ther amended by adding at the end the following new sub-*  
12 *paragraph:*

13 “(K) *During the period beginning on June 30,*  
14 *2013, and ending on June 30, 2015, the following ac-*  
15 *tivities carried out at the offices of Members of Con-*  
16 *gress for such Members:*

17 “(i) *The distribution of information to*  
18 *members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and*  
19 *their dependents about the benefits and services*  
20 *under laws administered by the Secretary and*  
21 *other appropriate governmental and nongovern-*  
22 *mental programs.*

23 “(ii) *The preparation and processing of pa-*  
24 *pers and other documents, including documents*  
25 *to assist in the preparation and presentation of*

1           *claims for benefits under laws administered by*  
2           *the Secretary.”.*

3           *(c) ANNUAL REPORTS.—*

4           *(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 30 of*  
5           *2014 and 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall*  
6           *submit to Congress a report on the work-study allow-*  
7           *ances paid under paragraph (1) of section 3485(a) of*  
8           *title 38, United States Code, during the most recent*  
9           *one-year period for qualifying work-study activities*  
10          *described in paragraph (4) of such section, as amend-*  
11          *ed by subsections (a) and (b) of this section.*

12          *(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under*  
13          *paragraph (1) shall include, for the year covered by*  
14          *such report, the following:*

15                  *(A) A description of the recipients of such*  
16                  *work-study allowances.*

17                  *(B) A list of the locations where qualifying*  
18                  *work-study activities were carried out.*

19                  *(C) A description of the outreach conducted*  
20                  *by the Secretary to increase awareness of the eli-*  
21                  *gibility of such work-study activities for such*  
22                  *work-study allowances.*

1 **SEC. 203. REPORT ON DEBT MANAGEMENT AND COLLEC-**  
2 **TION.**

3 (a) *REPORT.*—Not later than one year after the effec-  
4 tive date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller General  
5 of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
6 erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans'  
7 Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on processes  
8 used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to identify and  
9 resolve cases of incorrect payments associated with edu-  
10 cational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38,  
11 United States Code.

12 (b) *ISSUES ADDRESSED.*—The report required by sub-  
13 section (a) shall, to the extent possible, address the fol-  
14 lowing:

15 (1) *The effectiveness of the processes referred to*  
16 *in subsection (a) in identifying and resolving incor-*  
17 *rect payments associated with educational assistance*  
18 *under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States*  
19 *Code.*

20 (2) *The accuracy of overpayment information*  
21 *provided to veterans by the Education Service and*  
22 *Debt Management Center of the Department.*

23 (3) *How well the Debt Management Center of the*  
24 *Department communicates and works with veterans*  
25 *to resolve disputed debt amounts.*

1           (4) *How the payment and debt collection proc-*  
 2           *esses of the Department compare to comparable pro-*  
 3           *grams in other Federal agencies.*

4           (5) *Any recommendations to improve the pay-*  
 5           *ment and debt collection processes of the Department*  
 6           *that the Comptroller General considers appropriate.*

7           (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section shall take effect*  
 8           *on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
 9           *of this Act.*

10 **SEC. 204. RESTORATION OF PRIOR REPORTING FEE MULTI-**  
 11 **PLIERS.**

12           *Section 3684(c) is amended—*

13           (1) *by striking “\$12” and inserting “\$7”; and*

14           (2) *by striking “\$15” and inserting “\$11”.*

15 **TITLE III—HEALTH CARE**  
 16 **MATTERS**

17 **Subtitle A—Expansion and**  
 18 **Improvements of Benefits Generally**

19 **SEC. 301. EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC**  
 20 **CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.**

21           (a) *PROGRAM FOR PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE*  
 22 *AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.*—*Section 204(c) of the De-*  
 23 *partment of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs En-*  
 24 *hancement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–135; 115 Stat.*  
 25 *2459; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended—*

1           (1) by inserting “(1)” before “The program”;  
2           and

3           (2) by adding at the end the following new para-  
4           graph:

5           “(2) The program shall be carried out at not fewer  
6 than two medical centers or clinics in each Veterans Inte-  
7 grated Service Network by not later than one year after the  
8 effective date specified in section 301(c) of the Veterans  
9 Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, and at not  
10 fewer than 50 percent of all medical centers in each Vet-  
11 erans Integrated Service Network by not later than two  
12 years after such effective date.”.

13           (b) *EXPANDED CHIROPRACTOR SERVICES AVAILABLE*  
14 *TO VETERANS.*—

15           (1) *MEDICAL SERVICES.*—Paragraph (6) of sec-  
16 tion 1701 is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
17 lowing new subparagraph:

18                   “(H) Chiropractic services.”.

19           (2) *REHABILITATIVE SERVICES.*—Paragraph (8)  
20 of such section is amended by inserting “chiro-  
21 practic,” after “counseling,”.

22           (3) *PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.*—Paragraph  
23 (9) of such section is amended—

1           (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (F)  
2 through (K) as subparagraphs (G) through (L),  
3 respectively; and

4           (B) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the  
5 following new subparagraph (F):

6           “(F) periodic and preventive chiropractic exami-  
7 nations and services;”.

8           (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—This section and the amend-  
9 ments made by this section shall take effect on the date that  
10 is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

11 **SEC. 302. MODIFICATION OF COMMENCEMENT DATE OF PE-**  
12 **RIOD OF SERVICE AT CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH**  
13 **CAROLINA, FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR HOSPITAL**  
14 **CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN CONNEC-**  
15 **TION WITH EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINATED**  
16 **WATER.**

17           (a) *MODIFICATION.*—Section 1710(e)(1)(F) is amend-  
18 ed by striking “January 1, 1957,” and inserting “August  
19 1, 1953 (or such earlier date for the commencement of expo-  
20 sure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune as the Sec-  
21 retary, in consultation with the Agency for Toxic Sub-  
22 stances and Disease Registry, shall specify),”.

23           (b) *PUBLICATION.*—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
24 shall publish in the Federal Register a notice of any earlier  
25 date for the commencement of exposure to contaminated

1 *water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for purposes of*  
 2 *section 1710(e)(1)(F) of title 38, United States Code, as*  
 3 *amended by subsection (a).*

4 **SEC. 303. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA**  
 5 **COUNSELING AND TREATMENT TO VETERANS**  
 6 **ON INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING.**

7 *Section 1720D(a)(1) is amended by striking “or active*  
 8 *duty for training” and inserting “, active duty for training,*  
 9 *or inactive duty training”.*

10 **SEC. 304. EXTENSION OF SUNSET DATE REGARDING TRANS-**  
 11 **PORTATION OF INDIVIDUALS TO AND FROM**  
 12 **FACILITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
 13 **AFFAIRS AND REQUIREMENT OF REPORT.**

14 *(a) EXTENSION OF SUNSET DATE.—Subsection (a)(2)*  
 15 *of section 111A is amended by striking “the date that is*  
 16 *one year after the date of the enactment of this section”*  
 17 *and inserting “September 30, 2015”.*

18 *(b) FUNDING AVAILABLE.—Such section is further*  
 19 *amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:*

20 *“(c) FUNDING.—There is hereby authorized to be ap-*  
 21 *propriated for each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for the*  
 22 *Department, \$4,000,000 to carry out this section.”.*

23 *(c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date*  
 24 *of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to*  
 25 *the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the*

1 *Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representa-*  
2 *tives a report on—*

3           (1) *the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the*  
4 *transportation services required by section 111A(a) of*  
5 *title 38, United States Code;*

6           (2) *the utilization of those services by covered*  
7 *veterans; and*

8           (3) *the feasibility and advisability of the con-*  
9 *tinuation of the provision of such services after Sep-*  
10 *tember 30, 2015.*

11 **SEC. 305. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR OVER-**  
12 **WEIGHT AND OBESE VETERANS THROUGH**  
13 **SUPPORT OF FITNESS CENTER MEMBER-**  
14 **SHIPS.**

15           (a) *PROGRAM REQUIRED.*—*Commencing not later*  
16 *than 180 days after the date on which this section takes*  
17 *effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, through the*  
18 *National Center for Preventive Health, carry out a program*  
19 *to assess the feasibility and advisability of promoting health*  
20 *in covered veterans, including achieving a healthy weight*  
21 *and reducing risks of chronic disease, through support for*  
22 *fitness center membership.*

23           (b) *COVERED VETERANS.*—*For purposes of this sec-*  
24 *tion, a covered veteran is any veteran who—*

1           (1) *is enrolled in the system of annual patient*  
2 *enrollment established and operated by the Secretary*  
3 *under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code;*

4           (2) *is determined by a clinician of the Depart-*  
5 *ment of Veterans Affairs to be overweight or obese as*  
6 *of the date of the commencement of the program; and*

7           (3) *resides in a location that is more than 15*  
8 *minutes driving distance from a fitness center at a*  
9 *facility of the Department that would otherwise be*  
10 *available to the veteran for at least eight hours per*  
11 *day during five or more days per week.*

12       (c) *DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be*  
13 *carried out during the two-year period beginning on the*  
14 *date of the commencement of the program.*

15       (d) *LOCATIONS.—*

16           (1) *IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program,*  
17 *the Secretary shall select—*

18               (A) *not less than five medical centers of the*  
19 *Department at which the Secretary shall cover*  
20 *the full reasonable cost of a fitness center mem-*  
21 *bership for covered veterans within the catchment*  
22 *area of such centers; and*

23               (B) *not less than five medical centers of the*  
24 *Department at which the Secretary shall cover*  
25 *half the reasonable cost of a fitness center mem-*

1            *bership for covered veterans within the catchment*  
2            *area of such centers.*

3            (2) *CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for*  
4            *the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasi-*  
5            *bility and advisability of selecting locations in the*  
6            *following areas:*

7                    (A) *Rural areas.*

8                    (B) *Areas that are not in close proximity to*  
9                    *an active duty military installation.*

10                   (C) *Areas in different geographic locations.*

11            (e) *PARTICIPATION.—*

12                    (1) *MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—The*  
13                    *number of covered veterans who may participate in*  
14                    *the program at each location selected under subsection*  
15                    *(d) may not exceed 100.*

16                    (2) *VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participa-*  
17                    *tion of a covered veteran in the program shall be at*  
18                    *the election of the covered veteran in consultation*  
19                    *with a clinician of the Department.*

20            (f) *MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT.—*

21                    (1) *IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-*  
22                    *graph (2), in carrying out the program, the Secretary*  
23                    *shall pay the following:*

24                            (A) *The full reasonable cost of a fitness cen-*  
25                            *ter membership for covered veterans within the*

1           *catchment area of centers selected under sub-*  
2           *section (d)(1)(A) who are participating in the*  
3           *program.*

4                   *(B) Half the reasonable cost of a fitness cen-*  
5           *ter membership for covered veterans within the*  
6           *catchment area of centers selected under sub-*  
7           *section (d)(1)(B) who are participating in the*  
8           *program.*

9           *(2) LIMITATION.—Payment for a fitness center*  
10          *membership of a covered veteran may not exceed \$50*  
11          *per month of membership.*

12          *(g) REPORTS.—*

13                   *(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days*  
14          *after the date of the commencement of the program*  
15          *and not less frequently than once every 90 days there-*  
16          *after, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on*  
17          *Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on*  
18          *Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-*  
19          *port on activities carried out to implement the pro-*  
20          *gram, including outreach activities to veterans and*  
21          *community organizations.*

22                   *(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days*  
23          *after the date of the completion of the program, the*  
24          *Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'*  
25          *Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans'*

1       *Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on*  
2       *the program detailing—*

3               *(A) the findings and conclusions of the Sec-*  
4               *retary as a result of the program; and*

5               *(B) recommendations for the continuation*  
6               *or expansion of the program.*

7       *(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect*  
8       *on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
9       *of this Act.*

10 **SEC. 306. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR VET-**  
11               **ERANS THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF DE-**  
12               **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FITNESS**  
13               **FACILITIES.**

14       *(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later*  
15       *than 180 days after the date on which this section takes*  
16       *effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a*  
17       *program to assess the feasibility and advisability of pro-*  
18       *moting health in covered veterans, including achieving a*  
19       *healthy weight, through establishment of Department of Vet-*  
20       *erans Affairs fitness facilities.*

21       *(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this sec-*  
22       *tion, a covered veteran is any veteran who is enrolled in*  
23       *the system of annual patient enrollment established and op-*  
24       *erated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38,*  
25       *United States Code.*

1       (c) *DURATION OF PROGRAM.*—*The program shall be*  
2 *carried out during the three-year period beginning on the*  
3 *date of the commencement of the program.*

4       (d) *LOCATIONS.*—

5           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary shall carry out*  
6 *the program by establishing fitness facilities in De-*  
7 *partment facilities as follows:*

8                   (A) *In not fewer than five Department of*  
9 *Veterans Affairs medical centers selected by the*  
10 *Secretary for purposes of the program.*

11                   (B) *In not fewer than five outpatient clinics*  
12 *of the Department selected by the Secretary for*  
13 *purposes of the program.*

14           (2) *CONSIDERATIONS.*—*In selecting locations for*  
15 *the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasi-*  
16 *bility and advisability of selecting locations in the*  
17 *following areas:*

18                   (A) *Rural areas.*

19                   (B) *Areas that are not in close proximity to*  
20 *an active duty military installation.*

21                   (C) *Areas in different geographic locations.*

22       (e) *LIMITATION ON EXPENSES.*—*In establishing and*  
23 *supporting a fitness facility in a facility of the Department*  
24 *under the program, the Secretary may expend amounts as*  
25 *follows:*

1           (1) *For establishment and support of a fitness*  
2 *facility in a Department of Veterans Affairs medical*  
3 *center, not more than \$60,000.*

4           (2) *For establishment and support of a fitness*  
5 *facility in an outpatient clinic of the Department, not*  
6 *more than \$40,000.*

7           (f) *REPURPOSING OF PHYSICAL SPACE AND PUR-*  
8 *CHASES OF EQUIPMENT.—*

9           (1) *IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (e), the*  
10 *Secretary may, in carrying out the program, repur-*  
11 *pose existing physical space of the Department and*  
12 *purchase such fitness equipment and supplies as the*  
13 *Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the*  
14 *program.*

15           (2) *REPURPOSING EXCEPTION.—Existing phys-*  
16 *ical space used for the direct delivery of health care*  
17 *to patients may not be repurposed under paragraph*  
18 *(1).*

19           (g) *PROHIBITION ON ASSESSMENT OF USER FEES.—*  
20 *The Secretary may not assess a fee upon a covered veteran*  
21 *for use of a fitness facility established under the program.*

22           (h) *VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of*  
23 *a covered veteran in the program shall be at the election*  
24 *of the covered veteran.*

25           (i) *REPORTS.—*

1           (1) *PERIODIC REPORTS.*—Not later than 90 days  
2 after the date of the commencement of the program  
3 and not less frequently than once every 90 days there-  
4 after, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on  
5 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on  
6 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-  
7 port on activities carried out to implement the pro-  
8 gram, including outreach activities to veterans and  
9 community organizations.

10           (2) *FINAL REPORT.*—Not later than 180 days  
11 after the date of the completion of the program, the  
12 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'  
13 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans'  
14 Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on  
15 the program detailing—

16                   (A) the findings and conclusions of the Sec-  
17 retary as a result of the program; and

18                   (B) recommendations for the continuation  
19 or expansion of the program.

20           (j) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—This section shall take effect on  
21 the date that is one year after the date of the enactment  
22 of this Act.

1                   **Subtitle B—Health Care**  
2                   **Administration**

3   **SEC. 311. EXTENSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
4                   **FAIRS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOLARSHIP**  
5                   **PROGRAM.**

6           *Section 7619 is amended by striking “December 31,*  
7   *2014” and inserting “December 31, 2019”.*

8   **SEC. 312. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC**  
9                   **AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.**

10           *(a) ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF ADVANCED*  
11   *DEGREE PROGRAMS TO EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF PROVI-*  
12   *SION OF CARE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall*  
13   *work with institutions of higher education to develop part-*  
14   *nerships for the establishment or expansion of programs of*  
15   *advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to*  
16   *improve and enhance the availability of high quality pros-*  
17   *thetic and orthotic care for veterans.*

18           *(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date*  
19   *of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to*  
20   *the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the*  
21   *Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representa-*  
22   *tives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out sub-*  
23   *section (a). The Secretary shall develop the plan in con-*  
24   *sultation with veterans service organizations, institutions*  
25   *of higher education with accredited degree programs in*

1 *prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the pros-*  
 2 *thetics and orthotics field.*

3 (c) *FUNDING.*—

4 (1) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—

5 *There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for fis-*  
 6 *cal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs,*  
 7 *\$10,000,000 to carry out this section.*

8 (2) *AVAILABILITY.*—*The amount authorized to be*  
 9 *appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain available*  
 10 *for expenditure until September 30, 2017.*

11 **SEC. 313. CORPORAL MICHAEL J. CRESCENZ DEPARTMENT**  
 12 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.**

13 (a) *DESIGNATION.*—*The medical center of the Depart-*  
 14 *ment of Veterans Affairs located at 3900 Woodland Avenue*  
 15 *in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shall after the date of the*  
 16 *enactment of this Act be known and designated as the “Cor-*  
 17 *poral Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs*  
 18 *Medical Center”.*

19 (b) *REFERENCES.*—*Any reference in any law, regula-*  
 20 *tion, map, document, paper, or other record of the United*  
 21 *States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a)*  
 22 *shall be considered to be a reference to the Corporal Michael*  
 23 *J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.*

1       ***Subtitle C—Complementary and***  
2                   ***Alternative Medicine***

3       ***SEC. 321. EXPANSION OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON***  
4                   ***AND DELIVERY OF COMPLEMENTARY AND AL-***  
5                   ***TERNATIVE MEDICINE TO VETERANS.***

6           (a) *DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN TO EXPAND RESEARCH,*  
7 *EDUCATION, AND DELIVERY.*—Not later than six months  
8 *after the effective date specified in subsection (f), the Sec-*  
9 *retary of Veterans Affairs shall develop a plan to expand*  
10 *materially and substantially the scope of research and edu-*  
11 *cation on, and delivery and integration of, complementary*  
12 *and alternative medicine services into the health care serv-*  
13 *ices provided to veterans.*

14           (b) *ELEMENTS.*—The plan required by subsection (a)  
15 *shall provide for the following:*

16                   (1) *Research on the following:*

17                           (A) *The comparative effectiveness of various*  
18 *complementary and alternative medicine thera-*  
19 *pies.*

20                           (B) *Approaches to integrating complemen-*  
21 *tary and alternative medicine services into other*  
22 *health care services provided by the Department.*

23                   (2) *Education and training for health care pro-*  
24 *fessionals of the Department on the following:*

1           (A) *Complementary and alternative medi-*  
2           *cine services selected by the Secretary for pur-*  
3           *poses of the plan.*

4           (B) *Appropriate uses of such services.*

5           (C) *Integration of such services into the de-*  
6           *livery of health care to veterans.*

7           (3) *Research, education, and clinical activities*  
8           *on complementary and alternative medicine at cen-*  
9           *ters of innovation at Department medical centers.*

10          (4) *Identification or development of metrics and*  
11          *outcome measures to evaluate the provision and inte-*  
12          *gration of complementary and alternative medicine*  
13          *services into the delivery of health care to veterans.*

14          (5) *Integration and delivery of complementary*  
15          *and alternative medicine services with other health*  
16          *care services provided by the Department.*

17          (c) *CONSULTATION.—*

18               (1) *IN GENERAL.—In carrying out subsection*  
19               *(a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:*

20                       (A) *The Director of the National Center on*  
21                       *Complementary and Alternative Medicine of the*  
22                       *National Institutes of Health.*

23                       (B) *The Commissioner of Food and Drugs.*

24                       (C) *Institutions of higher education, private*  
25                       *research institutes, and individual researchers*

1           *with extensive experience in complementary and*  
2           *alternative medicine and the integration of com-*  
3           *plementary and alternative medicine practices*  
4           *into the delivery of health care.*

5                     *(D) Nationally recognized providers of com-*  
6                     *plementary and alternative medicine.*

7                     *(E) Such other officials, entities, and indi-*  
8                     *viduals with expertise on complementary and al-*  
9                     *ternative medicine as the Secretary considers ap-*  
10                    *propriate.*

11           (2) *SCOPE OF CONSULTATION.*—*The Secretary*  
12           *shall undertake consultation under paragraph (1) in*  
13           *carrying out subsection (a) with respect to the fol-*  
14           *lowing:*

15                     *(A) To develop the plan.*

16                     *(B) To identify specific complementary and*  
17                     *alternative medicine practices that, on the basis*  
18                     *of research findings or promising clinical inter-*  
19                     *ventions, are appropriate to include as services*  
20                     *to veterans.*

21                     *(C) To identify barriers to the effective pro-*  
22                     *vision and integration of complementary and al-*  
23                     *ternative medicine services into the delivery of*  
24                     *health care to veterans, and to identify mecha-*  
25                     *nisms for overcoming such barriers.*

1       (d) *FUNDING.*—*There is authorized to be appropriated*  
 2 *to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary to carry*  
 3 *out this section.*

4       (e) *COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE*  
 5 *DEFINED.*—*In this section, the term “complementary and*  
 6 *alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that*  
 7 *term in regulations the Secretary shall prescribe for pur-*  
 8 *poses of this section, which shall, to the degree practicable,*  
 9 *be consistent with the meaning given such term by the Sec-*  
 10 *retary of Health and Human Services.*

11       (f) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section shall take effect on*  
 12 *the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
 13 *of this Act.*

14 **SEC. 322. PROGRAM ON INTEGRATION OF COMPLEMENTARY**  
 15 **AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE WITHIN DE-**  
 16 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL**  
 17 **CENTERS.**

18       (a) *PROGRAM REQUIRED.*—*The Secretary of Veterans*  
 19 *Affairs shall—*

20               (1) *carry out, through the Office of Patient Cen-*  
 21 *tered Care and Cultural Transformation of the De-*  
 22 *partment of Veterans Affairs, a program to assess the*  
 23 *feasibility and advisability of integrating the delivery*  
 24 *of complementary and alternative medicine services*  
 25 *selected by the Secretary with other health care serv-*

1        *ices provided by the Department for veterans with*  
2        *mental health conditions, chronic pain conditions,*  
3        *other chronic conditions, and such other conditions as*  
4        *the Secretary determines appropriate; and*

5                *(2) in developing the program, identify and re-*  
6        *solve barriers to the provision of complementary and*  
7        *alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary*  
8        *and the integration of those services with other health*  
9        *care services provided by the Department.*

10        *(b) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be*  
11        *carried out during the three-year period beginning on the*  
12        *effective date specified in subsection (j).*

13        *(c) LOCATIONS.—*

14                *(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out*  
15        *the program at not fewer than 15 separate Depart-*  
16        *ment medical centers.*

17                *(2) POLYTRAUMA CENTERS.—Not less than two*  
18        *of the medical centers designated under paragraph (1)*  
19        *shall be located at polytrauma rehabilitation centers*  
20        *of the Department.*

21                *(3) SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.—In carrying out*  
22        *the program, the Secretary shall select locations that*  
23        *include the following areas:*

24                        *(A) Rural areas.*

1           (B) Areas that are not in close proximity to  
2           an active duty military installation.

3           (C) Areas representing different geographic  
4           locations, such as census tracts established by the  
5           Bureau of the Census.

6           (d) *PROVISION OF SERVICES.*—Under the program, the  
7           Secretary shall provide covered services to covered veterans  
8           by integrating complementary and alternative medicine  
9           services with other services provided by the Department at  
10          the medical centers designated under subsection (c)(1).

11          (e) *COVERED VETERANS.*—For purposes of the pro-  
12          gram, a covered veteran is any veteran who—

13               (1) has a mental health condition diagnosed by  
14               a clinician of the Department;

15               (2) experiences chronic pain; or

16               (3) has a chronic condition being treated by a  
17               clinician of the Department.

18          (f) *COVERED SERVICES.*—

19               (1) *IN GENERAL.*—For purposes of the program,  
20               covered services are services consisting of complemen-  
21               tary and alternative medicine as selected by the Sec-  
22               retary.

23               (2) *ADMINISTRATION OF SERVICES.*—Covered  
24               services shall be administered under the program as  
25               follows:

1           (A) Covered services shall be administered  
2 by clinicians employed by the Secretary for pur-  
3 poses of this section who, to the extent prac-  
4 ticable, shall provide services consisting of com-  
5 plementary and alternative medicine, including  
6 those clinicians who solely provide such services.

7           (B) Covered services shall be included as  
8 part of the Patient Aligned Care Teams initia-  
9 tive of the Office of Patient Care Services, Pri-  
10 mary Care Program Office, in coordination with  
11 the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural  
12 Transformation.

13           (C) Covered services shall be made available  
14 to both—

15           (i) covered veterans with mental health  
16 conditions, pain conditions, or chronic con-  
17 ditions described in subsection (e) who have  
18 received conventional treatments from the  
19 Department for such conditions; and

20           (ii) covered veterans with mental  
21 health conditions, pain conditions, or  
22 chronic conditions described in subsection  
23 (e) who have not received conventional  
24 treatments from the Department for such  
25 conditions.

1           (g) *VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.*—*The participation of*  
2 *a veteran in the program shall be at the election of the vet-*  
3 *eran and in consultation with a clinician of the Depart-*  
4 *ment.*

5           (h) *REPORTS TO CONGRESS.*—

6                 (1) *QUARTERLY REPORTS.*—*Not later than 90*  
7 *days after the date of the commencement of the pro-*  
8 *gram and not less frequently than once every 90 days*  
9 *thereafter for the duration of the program, the Sec-*  
10 *retary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Af-*  
11 *airs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans'*  
12 *Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on*  
13 *the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the program,*  
14 *including a description of the outreach conducted by*  
15 *the Secretary to veterans and community organiza-*  
16 *tions to inform such organizations about the program.*

17                 (2) *FINAL REPORT.*—

18                     (A) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 180 days*  
19 *after the completion of the program, the Sec-*  
20 *retary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-*  
21 *erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee*  
22 *on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representa-*  
23 *tives a report on the program.*

1           (B) *CONTENTS.*—*The report submitted*  
2           *under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-*  
3           *lowing:*

4                   (i) *The findings and conclusions of the*  
5                   *Secretary with respect to the program, in-*  
6                   *cluding with respect to—*

7                           (I) *the utilization and efficacy of*  
8                           *the complementary and alternative*  
9                           *medicine services established under the*  
10                           *program;*

11                           (II) *an assessment of the benefit of*  
12                           *the program to covered veterans in*  
13                           *mental health diagnoses, pain manage-*  
14                           *ment, and treatment of chronic illness;*  
15                           *and*

16                           (III) *the comparative effectiveness*  
17                           *of various complementary and alter-*  
18                           *native medicine therapies.*

19                   (ii) *Barriers identified under sub-*  
20                   *section (a)(2) that were not resolved.*

21                   (iii) *Such recommendations for the*  
22                   *continuation or expansion of the program*  
23                   *as the Secretary considers appropriate.*

24           (i) *COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE*  
25 *DEFINED.*—*In this section, the term “complementary and*

1 *alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that*  
 2 *term in section 321(e) of this Act.*

3 (j) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section shall take effect on*  
 4 *the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
 5 *of this Act.*

6 **SEC. 323. STUDIES OF BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY VET-**  
 7 **ERANS IN RECEIVING, AND ADMINISTRATORS**  
 8 **AND CLINICIANS IN PROVIDING, COM-**  
 9 **PLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE**  
 10 **SERVICES FURNISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT**  
 11 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

12 (a) *STUDIES REQUIRED.*—

13 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
 14 *fairs shall conduct comprehensive studies of the bar-*  
 15 *riers encountered by veterans in receiving, and ad-*  
 16 *ministrators and clinicians in providing, complemen-*  
 17 *tary and alternative medicine services furnished by*  
 18 *the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

19 (2) *STUDIES CONDUCTED.*—

20 (A) *VETERANS.*—*In conducting the study of*  
 21 *veterans, the Secretary shall—*

22 (i) *survey veterans who seek or receive*  
 23 *hospital care or medical services furnished*  
 24 *by the Department, as well as veterans who*  
 25 *do not seek or receive such care or services;*

1           (ii) administer the survey to a rep-  
2           resentative sample of veterans from each  
3           Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

4           (iii) ensure that the sample of veterans  
5           surveyed is of sufficient size for the study  
6           results to be statistically significant.

7           (B) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—In  
8           conducting the study of clinicians and adminis-  
9           trators, the Secretary shall—

10           (i) survey administrators of the De-  
11           partment who are involved in the provision  
12           of health care services;

13           (ii) survey clinicians that have pro-  
14           vided complementary and alternative medi-  
15           cine services through the program estab-  
16           lished under section 322 of this Act, after  
17           those clinicians have provided those services  
18           through such program for at least 90 days;  
19           and

20           (iii) administer the survey to adminis-  
21           trators under clause (i)—

22           (I) before the introduction of com-  
23           plementary and alternative medicine  
24           services through such program; and

1                   (II) not earlier than 90 days after  
2                   the introduction of complementary and  
3                   alternative medicine services through  
4                   such program.

5           (b) *ELEMENTS OF STUDIES.*—

6                   (1) *VETERANS.*—In conducting the study of vet-  
7                   erans required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall  
8                   study the following:

9                           (A) *The perceived barriers associated with*  
10                           *obtaining complementary and alternative medi-*  
11                           *cine services from the Department.*

12                           (B) *The satisfaction of veterans with com-*  
13                           *plementary and alternative medicine services in*  
14                           *primary care.*

15                           (C) *The degree to which veterans are aware*  
16                           *of eligibility requirements for, and the scope of*  
17                           *services available under, complementary and al-*  
18                           *ternative medicine services furnished by the De-*  
19                           *partment.*

20                           (D) *The effectiveness of outreach to veterans*  
21                           *on the availability of complementary and alter-*  
22                           *native medicine for veterans.*

23                           (E) *Such other barriers as the Secretary*  
24                           *considers appropriate.*

1           (2) *ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.*—*In con-*  
2 *ducting the study of administrators and clinicians re-*  
3 *quired by subsection (a), the Secretary shall study the*  
4 *following:*

5                   (A) *The extent of the integration of com-*  
6 *plementary and alternative medicine services*  
7 *within the services provided by the Department.*

8                   (B) *The perception by administrators and*  
9 *clinicians of the structural and attitudinal bar-*  
10 *riers to the delivery of high quality complemen-*  
11 *tary and alternative medicine services by the De-*  
12 *partment.*

13                   (C) *Strategies that have been used to reduce*  
14 *or eliminate such barriers and the results of such*  
15 *strategies.*

16                   (D) *The satisfaction of administrators and*  
17 *clinicians regarding the integration of com-*  
18 *plementary and alternative medicine services*  
19 *within the services provided by the Department.*

20                   (E) *The perception by administrators and*  
21 *clinicians of the value of specific complementary*  
22 *and alternative medicine services for inpatient*  
23 *and outpatient veteran populations.*

24           (c) *DISCHARGE BY CONTRACT.*—*The Secretary shall*  
25 *enter into a contract with a qualified independent entity*

1 *or organization to carry out the studies required by this*  
2 *section.*

3 *(d) MANDATORY REVIEW OF DATA BY THE NATIONAL*  
4 *RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL.—*

5 *(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure*  
6 *that the head of the National Research Advisory*  
7 *Council reviews the results of the studies conducted*  
8 *under this section.*

9 *(2) SUBMITTAL OF FINDINGS.—The head of the*  
10 *National Research Advisory Council shall submit*  
11 *findings with respect to the studies to the Under Sec-*  
12 *retary for Health and to other pertinent program of-*  
13 *fices within the Department with responsibilities re-*  
14 *lating to health care services for veterans.*

15 *(e) REPORTS.—*

16 *(1) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later*  
17 *than one year after the date of the enactment of this*  
18 *Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report*  
19 *on the status of the implementation of this section.*

20 *(2) REPORT ON STUDY.—*

21 *(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days*  
22 *after the date of the completion of the study, the*  
23 *Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on*  
24 *the study required by subsection (a).*

1           (B) *CONTENTS.*—*The report required by*  
2           *subparagraph (A) shall include the following:*

3                   (i) *Recommendations for such admin-*  
4                   *istrative and legislative proposals and ac-*  
5                   *tions as the Secretary considers appro-*  
6                   *priate.*

7                   (ii) *The findings of the head of the Na-*  
8                   *tional Research Advisory Council and of the*  
9                   *Under Secretary for Health.*

10          (f) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—*There is*  
11          *authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the*  
12          *Department of Veterans Affairs, \$2,000,000 to carry out*  
13          *this section.*

14          (g) *COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE*  
15          *DEFINED.*—*In this section, the term “complementary and*  
16          *alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that*  
17          *term in section 321(e) of this Act.*

18          **SEC. 324. PROGRAM ON USE OF WELLNESS PROGRAMS AS**  
19                   **COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH TO MENTAL**  
20                   **HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS AND FAMILY**  
21                   **MEMBERS OF VETERANS.**

22          (a) *PROGRAM REQUIRED.*—

23                   (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
24                   *fairs shall carry out a program through the award of*  
25                   *grants to public or private nonprofit entities to assess*

1       *the feasibility and advisability of using wellness pro-*  
2       *grams to complement the provision of mental health*  
3       *care to veterans and family members eligible for coun-*  
4       *seling under section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38,*  
5       *United States Code.*

6               (2) *MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The program*  
7       *shall be carried out so as to assess the following:*

8                       (A) *Means of improving coordination be-*  
9                       *tween Federal, State, local, and community pro-*  
10                      *viders of health care in the provision of mental*  
11                      *health care to veterans and family members de-*  
12                      *scribed in paragraph (1).*

13                     (B) *Means of enhancing outreach, and co-*  
14                     *ordination of outreach, by and among providers*  
15                     *of health care referred to in subparagraph (A) on*  
16                     *the mental health care services available to vet-*  
17                     *erans and family members described in para-*  
18                     *graph (1).*

19                     (C) *Means of using wellness programs of*  
20                     *providers of health care referred to in subpara-*  
21                     *graph (A) as complements to the provision by the*  
22                     *Department of Veterans Affairs of mental health*  
23                     *care to veterans and family members described*  
24                     *in paragraph (1).*

1           (D) Whether wellness programs described in  
2           subparagraph (C) are effective in enhancing the  
3           quality of life and well-being of veterans and  
4           family members described in paragraph (1).

5           (E) Whether wellness programs described in  
6           subparagraph (C) are effective in increasing the  
7           adherence of veterans described in paragraph (1)  
8           to the primary mental health services provided  
9           such veterans by the Department.

10          (F) Whether wellness programs described in  
11          subparagraph (C) have an impact on the sense  
12          of wellbeing of veterans described in paragraph  
13          (1) who receive primary mental health services  
14          from the Department.

15          (G) Whether wellness programs described in  
16          subparagraph (C) are effective in encouraging  
17          veterans receiving health care from the Depart-  
18          ment to adopt a more healthy lifestyle.

19          (b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pro-  
20          gram for a period of three years beginning on the date that  
21          is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

22          (c) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the  
23          program at facilities of the Department providing mental  
24          health care services to veterans and family members de-  
25          scribed in subsection (a)(1).

1       (d) *GRANT PROPOSALS.*—

2           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*A public or private nonprofit*  
3 *entity seeking the award of a grant under this section*  
4 *shall submit an application therefor to the Secretary*  
5 *in such form and in such manner as the Secretary*  
6 *may require.*

7           (2) *APPLICATION CONTENTS.*—*Each application*  
8 *submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the fol-*  
9 *lowing:*

10           (A) *A plan to coordinate activities under*  
11 *the program, to the extent possible, with the Fed-*  
12 *eral, State, and local providers of services for*  
13 *veterans to enhance the following:*

14                   (i) *Awareness by veterans of benefits*  
15 *and health care services provided by the De-*  
16 *partment.*

17                   (ii) *Outreach efforts to increase the use*  
18 *by veterans of services provided by the De-*  
19 *partment.*

20                   (iii) *Educational efforts to inform vet-*  
21 *erans of the benefits of a healthy and active*  
22 *lifestyle.*

23           (B) *A statement of understanding from the*  
24 *entity submitting the application that, if se-*  
25 *lected, such entity will be required to report to*

1           *the Secretary periodically on standardized data*  
2           *and other performance data necessary to evalu-*  
3           *ate individual outcomes and to facilitate evalua-*  
4           *tions among entities participating in the pro-*  
5           *gram.*

6                   *(C) Other requirements that the Secretary*  
7                   *may prescribe.*

8           *(e) GRANT USES.—*

9                   *(1) IN GENERAL.—A public or private nonprofit*  
10           *entity awarded a grant under this section shall use*  
11           *the award for purposes prescribed by the Secretary.*

12                   *(2) ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND FAMILY.—In car-*  
13           *rying out the purposes prescribed by the Secretary in*  
14           *paragraph (1), a public or private nonprofit entity*  
15           *awarded a grant under this section shall use the*  
16           *award to furnish services only to individuals specified*  
17           *in section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United States*  
18           *Code.*

19           *(f) REPORTS.—*

20                   *(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—*

21                    *(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days*  
22            *after the date of the commencement of the pro-*  
23            *gram, and every 180 days thereafter, the Sec-*  
24            *retary shall submit to Congress a report on the*  
25            *program.*

1           (B) *REPORT ELEMENTS.*—Each report re-  
 2           quired by subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-  
 3           lowing:

4                   (i) *The findings and conclusions of the*  
 5                   *Secretary with respect to the program dur-*  
 6                   *ing the 180-day period preceding the report.*

7                   (ii) *An assessment of the benefits of the*  
 8                   *program to veterans and their family mem-*  
 9                   *bers during the 180-day period preceding*  
 10                  *the report.*

11           (2) *FINAL REPORT.*—Not later than 180 days  
 12           after the end of the program, the Secretary shall sub-  
 13           mit to Congress a report detailing the recommenda-  
 14           tions of the Secretary as to the advisability of con-  
 15           tinuing or expanding the program.

16           (g) *WELLNESS DEFINED.*—In this section, the term  
 17           “wellness” has the meaning given that term in regulations  
 18           prescribed by the Secretary.

19           **TITLE IV—ACCOUNTABILITY AND**  
 20           **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVE-**  
 21           **MENTS**

22           **SEC. 401. ADMINISTRATION OF VETERANS INTEGRATED**  
 23           **SERVICE NETWORKS.**

24           (a) *VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.*—

1           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—Subchapter I of chapter 73 is  
2           amended by adding at the end the following new sec-  
3           tion:

4           **“§ 7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks**

5           “(a) *ORGANIZATION.*—(1) *The Secretary shall organize*  
6           *the Veterans Health Administration in geographically de-*  
7           *finied Veterans Integrated Service Networks.*

8           “(2) *Each Veterans Integrated Service Network shall*  
9           *be organized in consideration of the following:*

10           “(A) *The size of the veteran population of the re-*  
11           *gion of the network.*

12           “(B) *The complexity of the medical needs of the*  
13           *veterans in such region.*

14           “(C) *Patient referral patterns.*

15           “(D) *The availability of a full continuum of*  
16           *health care services.*

17           “(E) *The ability of the Department to furnish*  
18           *health care efficiently.*

19           “(F) *Partnerships with non-Department health*  
20           *care entities.*

21           “(b) *STAFFING MODEL.*—(1) *The Secretary shall es-*  
22           *tablish a staffing model for each Veterans Integrated Service*  
23           *Network that—*

1           “(A) is appropriate for the mission and respon-  
2           sibilities of the Veterans Integrated Service Network;  
3           and

4           “(B) accounts for the specific health care needs  
5           of differing populations in the Veterans Integrated  
6           Service Network.

7           “(2) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans In-  
8           tegrated Service Network complies with the staffing model  
9           established by the Secretary under paragraph (1) for such  
10          Veterans Integrated Service Network.

11          “(c) INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.—The Sec-  
12          retary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service  
13          Network maintains a regional integrated healthcare system  
14          by—

15                 “(1) implementing alliances with such other gov-  
16                 ernmental, public, and private health care organiza-  
17                 tions and practitioners as the Secretary considers ap-  
18                 propriate to meet the needs of veterans in the Net-  
19                 work;

20                 “(2) providing oversight and management of,  
21                 and taking responsibility for, a regional budget for  
22                 the activities of the Veterans Health Administration  
23                 in the geographic area of the Network that is—

1           “(A) aligned with the budget guidelines of  
2           the Department and the Veterans Health Admin-  
3           istration;

4           “(B) balanced at the end of each fiscal year;  
5           and

6           “(C) sufficient to provide high-quality  
7           health care to veterans within the region and to  
8           meet any unique needs of the veterans of the re-  
9           gion;

10          “(3) using national metrics to develop systems to  
11          provide effective, efficient, and safe delivery of health  
12          care; and

13          “(4) ensuring high-quality clinical programs  
14          and services are rendered in and through—

15                 “(A) the medical centers and outpatient  
16                 clinics of the Department that are located in the  
17                 Network; and

18                 “(B) other non-Department clinical or  
19                 health care delivery settings located in the Net-  
20                 work.

21          “(d) *REDUCTION IN DUPLICATE FUNCTIONS.*—The  
22          Secretary shall ensure that the Veterans Integrated Service  
23          Networks identify and reduce, whenever practicable, the du-  
24          plication of functions in clinical, administrative, and oper-

1 *ational processes and practices of the Veterans Health Ad-*  
2 *ministration.*

3       “(e) *COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION.—The Sec-*  
4 *retary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service*  
5 *Network—*

6               “(1) *works to achieve maximum effectiveness in*  
7 *patient care and safety, graduate medical education,*  
8 *and research; and*

9               “(2) *assesses the consolidation or realignment of*  
10 *institutional functions, including capital asset, safety,*  
11 *and operational support functions, in collaboration*  
12 *and cooperation with other Veterans Integrated Serv-*  
13 *ice Networks and the following offices or entities with-*  
14 *in the geographical area of the Network:*

15                       “(A) *The offices of the Veterans Benefits Ad-*  
16 *ministration and the National Cemetery Admin-*  
17 *istration.*

18                       “(B) *The offices, installations, and facilities*  
19 *of the Department of Defense, including the of-*  
20 *fices, installations, and facilities of each branch*  
21 *of the Armed Forces and the reserve components*  
22 *of the Armed Forces.*

23                       “(C) *The offices, installations, and facilities*  
24 *of the Coast Guard.*

1           “(D) *Offices of State and local agencies that*  
2           *have a mission to provide assistance to veterans.*

3           “(E) *Medical schools and other affiliates.*

4           “(F) *Offices of Congress, offices of State and*  
5           *local elected officials, and other government of-*  
6           *fices.*

7           “(G) *Federal, State, and local emergency*  
8           *preparedness organizations.*

9           “(H) *Community and nonprofit organiza-*  
10          *tions.*

11          “(I) *Such other entities of the Federal Gov-*  
12          *ernment as the Secretary considers appropriate.*

13          “(f) *HEADQUARTERS.—(1) The Secretary shall ensure*  
14          *that each Veterans Integrated Service Network has only one*  
15          *headquarters office.*

16          “(2) *The location of a headquarters office for a Vet-*  
17          *erans Integrated Service Network shall be determined by the*  
18          *Secretary and co-located with a Department of Veterans Af-*  
19          *airs medical center.*

20          “(3)(A) *The Secretary may employ or contract for the*  
21          *services of such full time equivalent employees and contrac-*  
22          *tors at the headquarters of each Veterans Integrated Service*  
23          *Network as the Secretary considers appropriate in accord-*  
24          *ance with the staffing models established under subsection*  
25          *(b).*

1       “(B) Not later than December 31 each year, the Sec-  
2 retary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
3 of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of  
4 the House of Representatives a report on employment at  
5 the headquarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks  
6 during the most recently completed fiscal year.

7       “(C) Each report submitted under subparagraph (B)  
8 shall include the following for the year covered by the report:

9           “(i) The number of individuals employed at each  
10 headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Net-  
11 work.

12           “(ii) The number of individuals employed by the  
13 Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans In-  
14 tegrated Service Network who are not employed at the  
15 same location as the headquarters of the Network.

16           “(iii) The title for each position of employment  
17 at a headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service  
18 Network.

19           “(iv) The title for each position of employment  
20 with the Veterans Health Administration in each Vet-  
21 erans Integrated Service Network that is not at the  
22 same location as the headquarters of the Network.

23           “(v) An assessment of the impact on the budget  
24 of the Department by the employment of individuals

1       *at the headquarters of the Veterans Integrated Service*  
2       *Networks.*

3       “(g) *TRIENNIAL STRUCTURE REVIEW, REASSESS-*  
4       *MENT, AND REPORT.—(1) Beginning three years after the*  
5       *date of the enactment of this section and not less frequently*  
6       *than once every three years thereafter, the Secretary shall*  
7       *conduct a review and assessment of the structure and oper-*  
8       *ations of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks in order*  
9       *to identify recommendations—*

10               “(A) *for streamlining and reducing costs associ-*  
11               *ated with the operation of each headquarters of a Vet-*  
12               *erans Integrated Service Network; and*

13               “(B) *for reducing costs of health care within the*  
14               *Veterans Health Administration.*

15       “(2) *Not later than 180 days after conducting a review*  
16       *and assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall*  
17       *submit to the Committee of Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate*  
18       *and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Rep-*  
19       *resentatives a report on such review and assessment, which*  
20       *shall include such recommendations for legislative or ad-*  
21       *ministrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate*  
22       *to improve the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”.*

23               (2) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-*  
24       *tions at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by*

1        *inserting after the item relating to section 7309 the*  
2        *following new item:*

      “7310. *Veterans Integrated Service Networks.*”.

3        *(b) RELOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS.—*

4            *(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a headquarters*  
5        *office of a Veterans Integrated Service Network that*  
6        *on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act*  
7        *was in a location that was not co-located with a De-*  
8        *partment of Veterans Affairs medical center and the*  
9        *Secretary is engaged in a lease for such location, the*  
10       *Secretary may—*

11            *(A) relocate such headquarters upon the ex-*  
12        *piration of such lease so that such headquarters*  
13        *is co-located as required by section 7310(f)(2) of*  
14        *title 38, United States Code (as added by sub-*  
15        *section (a)(1)); or*

16            *(B) notwithstanding such section 7310(f)(2)*  
17        *(as so added), renew such lease or enter into a*  
18        *new lease to keep such headquarters in such loca-*  
19        *tion.*

20            *(2) REPORT.—If the Secretary renews a lease or*  
21        *engages in a new lease under paragraph (1)(B), the*  
22        *Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’*  
23        *Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’*  
24        *Affairs of the House of Representatives, before renew-*  
25        *ing such lease or engaging in such lease, a report de-*

1        *scribing the reasons for such renewal or engagement.*

2        *Such report shall include the following:*

3                *(A) A list of Department of Veterans Affairs*  
4                *medical centers in the Veterans Integrated Serv-*  
5                *ice Network of the headquarters with underuti-*  
6                *lized buildings, the number of such buildings,*  
7                *and the total underutilized square footage for*  
8                *each such medical center.*

9                *(B) The cost of the current lease (the annual*  
10                *amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the*  
11                *lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the*  
12                *current square footage being leased.*

13                *(C) The cost of the new lease (the annual*  
14                *amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the*  
15                *lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the*  
16                *square footage to be leased.*

17        *(c) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be*  
18        *construed to require any change in the location or type of*  
19        *medical care or service provided by a Department of Vet-*  
20        *erans Affairs medical center, a Department community*  
21        *based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment coun-*  
22        *seling and related mental health services for veterans under*  
23        *section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as*  
24        *a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care*

1 *or services under a law administered by the Secretary of*  
 2 *Veterans Affairs.*

3       (d) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section, and the amend-*  
 4 *ments made by this section, shall take effect on the date*  
 5 *that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

6 **SEC. 402. REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS FOR VETERANS IN-**  
 7 **TEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.**

8       (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Subchapter I of chapter 73, as*  
 9 *amended by section 401(a)(1) of this Act, is further amend-*  
 10 *ed by adding at the end the following new section:*

11 **“§ 7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Inte-**  
 12 **grated Service Networks**

13       “(a) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—*The Secretary shall establish*  
 14 *not more than four regional support centers within the Vet-*  
 15 *erans Health Administration to assess the effectiveness and*  
 16 *efficiency of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks. The*  
 17 *head of each regional support center shall report to the*  
 18 *Under Secretary of Health.*

19       “(b) *FUNCTIONS.*—*The functions of the regional sup-*  
 20 *port centers established under subsection (a) are as follows:*

21               “(1) *To assess the quality of work performed*  
 22 *within finance operations and other compliance re-*  
 23 *lated activities of the Veterans Integrated Service Net-*  
 24 *works.*

1           “(2) *To assess how effectively and efficiently each*  
2 *Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts out-*  
3 *reach to veterans who served in Operation Enduring*  
4 *Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New*  
5 *Dawn, or any other contingency operation (as that*  
6 *term is defined in section 101 of title 10).*

7           “(3) *To assess how effectively and efficiently each*  
8 *Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts pro-*  
9 *grams for the benefit of women veterans.*

10           “(4) *To assess how effectively and efficiently each*  
11 *Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts pro-*  
12 *grams that address homelessness among veterans.*

13           “(5) *To assess how effectively and efficiently each*  
14 *Veterans Integrated Service Network consumes energy.*

15           “(6) *To assess such other matters concerning the*  
16 *operations and activities of the Veterans Integrated*  
17 *Service Networks as the Secretary considers appro-*  
18 *priate.*

19           “(c) *STAFF.—The Secretary may hire such employees*  
20 *and contractors as the Secretary considers appropriate to*  
21 *carry out the functions of the regional support centers.*

22           “(d) *LOCATION OF REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS.—*  
23 *(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the location of*  
24 *each regional support center established under subsection*

1 *(a) shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located with*  
2 *a medical center of the Department.*

3       *“(2) The Secretary may choose a location for a re-*  
4 *gional support center established under subsection (a) that*  
5 *is not co-located with a medical center of the Department*  
6 *if the Secretary submits to the Committee on Veterans’ Af-*  
7 *airs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs*  
8 *of the House of Representatives, before entering into a con-*  
9 *tract for a location that is not co-located with a medical*  
10 *center, a report describing the reasons for choosing a loca-*  
11 *tion for the regional support center that is not co-located*  
12 *with a medical center of the Department. Such report shall*  
13 *include the following:*

14           *“(A) A list of medical centers of the Department*  
15 *in the Veterans Integrated Service Network of the re-*  
16 *gional support center with underutilized buildings,*  
17 *the number of all Veterans Health Administration*  
18 *buildings in such Network, and the total underutilized*  
19 *square footage for each medical center of the Depart-*  
20 *ment in such Network.*

21           *“(B) The estimated cost of such lease (the annual*  
22 *amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease,*  
23 *and the total cost per square foot) and the square foot-*  
24 *age to be leased.”.*

1           (b) *INITIAL STAFFING.*—*In providing for the initial*  
2 *staff of each regional support center established under sec-*  
3 *tion 7310A(a) of title 38, United States Code, as added by*  
4 *subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to*  
5 *the degree practicable, transfer employees from headquarters*  
6 *of Veterans Integrated Service Networks to regional support*  
7 *centers who were employed in positions at such head-*  
8 *quarters that covered functions similar to those described*  
9 *in section 7310A(b) of such title, as so added.*

10           (c) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.*—*The table of sections at*  
11 *the beginning of chapter 73, as amended by section*  
12 *401(a)(2) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after*  
13 *the item relating to section 7310 the following new item:*

          “7310A. *Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.*”.

14           (d) *CONSTRUCTION.*—*Nothing in this section shall be*  
15 *construed to require any change in the location or type of*  
16 *medical care or service provided by a Department of Vet-*  
17 *erans Affairs medical center, a Department community*  
18 *based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment coun-*  
19 *seling and related mental health services for veterans under*  
20 *section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as*  
21 *a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care*  
22 *or services under a law administered by the Secretary of*  
23 *Veterans Affairs.*

1       (e) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section, and the amend-*  
 2 *ments made by this section, shall take effect on the date*  
 3 *that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

4 **SEC. 403. COMMISSION ON CAPITAL PLANNING FOR DE-**  
 5 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL**  
 6 **FACILITIES.**

7       (a) *ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.*—

8           (1) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—*There is established the*  
 9 *Commission on Capital Planning for Department of*  
 10 *Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities (in this section re-*  
 11 *ferred to as the “Commission”).*

12           (2) *MEMBERSHIP.*—

13           (A) *VOTING MEMBERS.*—*The Commission*  
 14 *shall, subject to subparagraph (B), be composed*  
 15 *of 10 voting members as follows:*

16                   (i) *1 shall be appointed by the Presi-*  
 17 *dent.*

18                   (ii) *1 shall be appointed by the Admin-*  
 19 *istrator of General Services.*

20                   (iii) *3 shall be appointed by the Sec-*  
 21 *retary of Veterans Affairs, of whom—*

22                           (I) *1 shall be an employee of the*  
 23 *Veterans Health Administration;*

24                           (II) *1 shall be an employee of the*  
 25 *Office of Asset Enterprise Management*

1                   *of the Department of Veterans Affairs;*  
2                   *and*

3                   (iii) *1 shall be an employee of the*  
4                   *Office of Construction and Facilities*  
5                   *Management of the Department of Vet-*  
6                   *erans Affairs.*

7                   (iv) *1 shall be appointed by the Sec-*  
8                   *retary of Defense from among employees of*  
9                   *the Army Corps of Engineers.*

10                  (v) *1 shall be appointed by the major-*  
11                  *ity leader of the Senate.*

12                  (vi) *1 shall be appointed by the minor-*  
13                  *ity leader of the Senate.*

14                  (vii) *1 shall be appointed by the*  
15                  *Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

16                  (viii) *1 shall be appointed by the mi-*  
17                  *nority leader of the House of Representa-*  
18                  *tives.*

19                  (B) *REQUIREMENT RELATING TO CERTAIN*  
20                  *APPOINTMENTS OF VOTING MEMBERS.—Of the*  
21                  *members appointed pursuant to clause (i), (ii),*  
22                  *and (iv) through (viii) of subparagraph (A), all*  
23                  *shall have expertise in capital leasing, construc-*  
24                  *tion, or health facility management planning.*

1           (C) *NON-VOTING MEMBERS.*—*The Commis-*  
2           *sion shall be assisted by 10 non-voting members,*  
3           *appointed by the vote of a majority of members*  
4           *of the Commission under subparagraph (A), of*  
5           *whom—*

6                   (i) *6 shall be representatives of vet-*  
7                   *erans service organizations recognized by*  
8                   *the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and*

9                   (ii) *4 shall be individuals from outside*  
10                  *the Department of Veterans Affairs with ex-*  
11                  *perience and expertise in matters relating*  
12                  *to management, construction, and leasing of*  
13                  *capital assets.*

14           (D) *DATE OF APPOINTMENT OF VOTING*  
15           *MEMBERS.*—*The appointments of the members of*  
16           *the Commission under subparagraph (A) shall be*  
17           *made not later than 60 days after the date of the*  
18           *enactment of this Act.*

19           (3) *PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.*—  
20           *Members shall be appointed for the life of the Com-*  
21           *mission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not af-*  
22           *fect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner*  
23           *as the original appointment.*

24           (4) *INITIAL MEETING.*—*Not later than 15 days*  
25           *after the date on which 7 members of the Commission*

1       *have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its*  
2       *first meeting.*

3               (5) *MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at*  
4       *the call of the Chair.*

5               (6) *QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the*  
6       *Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser*  
7       *number of members may hold hearings.*

8               (7) *CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.—The Commission*  
9       *shall select a Chair and Vice Chair from among its*  
10       *members.*

11       (b) *DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—*

12               (1) *IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall under-*  
13       *take a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of*  
14       *various options for capital planning for Department*  
15       *of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, including an*  
16       *evaluation and assessment of the mechanisms by*  
17       *which the Department currently selects means for the*  
18       *delivery of health care, whether by major construction,*  
19       *major medical facility leases, sharing agreements with*  
20       *the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service,*  
21       *and Federally Qualified Health Clinics under section*  
22       *330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.*  
23       *254b), contract care, multisite care, telemedicine, ex-*  
24       *tended hours for care, or other means.*

1           (2) *CONTEXT OF EVALUATION AND ASSESS-*  
2           *MENT.—In undertaking the evaluation and assess-*  
3           *ment, the Commission shall consider—*

4                   (A) *the importance of access to health care*  
5                   *through the Department, including associated*  
6                   *guidelines of the Department on access to, and*  
7                   *drive time for, health care;*

8                   (B) *limitations and requirements applicable*  
9                   *to the construction and leasing of medical facili-*  
10                   *ties for the Department, including applicable*  
11                   *laws, regulations, and costs as determined by*  
12                   *both the Congressional Budget Office and the Of-*  
13                   *fice of Management and Budget;*

14                   (C) *the nature of capital planning for De-*  
15                   *partment medical facilities in an era of fiscal*  
16                   *uncertainty;*

17                   (D) *projected future fluctuations in the pop-*  
18                   *ulation of veterans; and*

19                   (E) *the extent to which the Department was*  
20                   *able to meet the mandates of the Capital Asset*  
21                   *Realignment for Enhanced Services Commission.*

22           (3) *PARTICULAR CONSIDERATIONS.—In under-*  
23           *taking the evaluation and assessment, the Commission*  
24           *shall address, in particular, the following:*

1           (A) *The Major Medical Facility Lease Pro-*  
2 *gram of the Department, including an identi-*  
3 *fication of potential improvements to the lease*  
4 *authorization processes under that Program.*

5           (B) *The management processes of the De-*  
6 *partment for its Major Medical Facility Con-*  
7 *struction Program, including processes relating*  
8 *to contract award and management, project*  
9 *management, and processing of change orders.*

10          (C) *The overall capital planning program*  
11 *of the Department for medical facilities, includ-*  
12 *ing an evaluation and assessment of—*

13           (i) *the manner in which the Depart-*  
14 *ment determines whether to use capital or*  
15 *non-capital means to expand access to*  
16 *health care;*

17           (ii) *the manner in which the Depart-*  
18 *ment determines the disposition of under-*  
19 *utilized and un-utilized buildings on cam-*  
20 *pus of Department medical centers, and*  
21 *any barriers to disposition;*

22           (iii) *the effectiveness of the facility*  
23 *master planning initiative of the Depart-*  
24 *ment; and*

1                   (iv) the extent to which sustainable at-  
2                   tributes are planned for to decrease oper-  
3                   ating costs for Department medical facili-  
4                   ties.

5                   (D) The current backlog of construction  
6                   projects for Department medical facilities, in-  
7                   cluding an identification of the most effective  
8                   means to quickly secure the most critical repairs  
9                   required, including repairs relating to facility  
10                  condition deficiencies, structural safety, and  
11                  compliance with the Americans With Disabilities  
12                  Act of 1990.

13                  (4) *REPORTS*.—Subject to paragraph (5), the  
14                  Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans  
15                  Affairs, and to the Committee Veterans' Affairs of the  
16                  Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
17                  House of Representatives, reports as follows:

18                         (A) Not later than six months after its ini-  
19                         tial meeting under subsection (a)(4), a report on  
20                         the Major Medical Facility Lease Program and  
21                         the Congressional lease authorization process.

22                         (B) Not later than one year after its initial  
23                         meeting, a report—

1                   (i) on the management processes of the  
2                   Department for the construction of Depart-  
3                   ment medical facilities; and

4                   (ii) setting forth an update of any  
5                   matters covered in the report under sub-  
6                   paragraph (A).

7                   (C) Not later than 18 months after its ini-  
8                   tial meeting, a report—

9                   (i) on the overall capital planning pro-  
10                  gram of the Department for medical facili-  
11                  ties; and

12                  (ii) setting forth an update of any  
13                  matters covered in earlier reports under this  
14                  paragraph.

15                  (D) Not later than two years after its ini-  
16                  tial meeting, a report—

17                  (i) on the current backlog of construc-  
18                  tion projects for Department medical facili-  
19                  ties;

20                  (ii) setting forth an update of any  
21                  matters covered in earlier reports under this  
22                  paragraph; and

23                  (iii) including such other matters re-  
24                  lating to the duties of the Commission that  
25                  the Commission considers appropriate.

1           (E) *Not later than 27 months after its ini-*  
2           *tial meeting, a report on the implementation by*  
3           *the Secretary of Veterans Affairs pursuant to*  
4           *subsection (g) of the recommendations included*  
5           *pursuant to paragraph (5) in the reports under*  
6           *this paragraph.*

7           (5) *RECOMMENDATIONS.—Each report under*  
8           *paragraph (4) shall include, for the aspect of the cap-*  
9           *ital asset planning process of the Department covered*  
10          *by such report, such recommendations as the Commis-*  
11          *sion considers appropriate for the improvement and*  
12          *enhancement of such aspect of the capital asset plan-*  
13          *ning process.*

14          (c) *POWERS OF COMMISSION.—*

15               (1) *HEARINGS.—The Commission may hold such*  
16               *hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take*  
17               *such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Com-*  
18               *mission considers advisable to carry out this section.*

19               (2) *INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—*  
20               *The Commission may secure directly from any Fed-*  
21               *eral department or agency such information as the*  
22               *Commission considers necessary to carry out this sec-*  
23               *tion. Upon request of the Chair of the Commission,*  
24               *the head of such department or agency shall furnish*  
25               *such information to the Commission.*

1       (d) *COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.*—

2           (1) *COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.*—Each mem-  
3       ber of the Commission who is not an officer or em-  
4       ployee of the Federal Government shall be com-  
5       pensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the  
6       annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the  
7       Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5,  
8       United States Code, for each day (including travel  
9       time) during which such member is engaged in the  
10      performance of the duties of the Commission. All  
11      members of the Commission who are officers or em-  
12      ployees of the United States shall serve without com-  
13      pensation in addition to that received for their serv-  
14      ices as officers or employees of the United States.

15          (2) *TRAVEL EXPENSES.*—The members of the  
16      Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, includ-  
17      ing per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates author-  
18      ized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of  
19      chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away  
20      from their homes or regular places of business in the  
21      performance of services for the Commission.

22          (3) *STAFF.*—

23           (A) *IN GENERAL.*—The Chair of the Com-  
24      mission may, without regard to the civil service  
25      laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an

1           *executive director and such other additional per-*  
2           *sonnel as may be necessary to enable the Com-*  
3           *mission to perform its duties. The employment of*  
4           *an executive director shall be subject to confirma-*  
5           *tion by the Commission.*

6           (B) *COMPENSATION.*—*The Chair of the*  
7           *Commission may fix the compensation of the ex-*  
8           *ecutive director and other personnel without re-*  
9           *gard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter*  
10          *53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to clas-*  
11          *sification of positions and General Schedule pay*  
12          *rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive*  
13          *director and other personnel may not exceed the*  
14          *rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule*  
15          *under section 5316 of such title.*

16          (4) *DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.*—*Any*  
17          *Federal Government employee may be detailed to the*  
18          *Commission without reimbursement, and such detail*  
19          *shall be without interruption or loss of civil service*  
20          *status or privilege.*

21          (5) *PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTER-*  
22          *MITTENT SERVICES.*—*The Chair of the Commission*  
23          *may procure temporary and intermittent services*  
24          *under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code,*  
25          *at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily*

1        *equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed*  
2        *for level V of the Executive Schedule under section*  
3        *5316 of such title.*

4        *(e) TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.—The Commission*  
5        *shall terminate 60 days after the date on which the Com-*  
6        *mission submits its report under subsection (b)(4)(E).*

7        *(f) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall*  
8        *make available to the Commission such amounts as the Sec-*  
9        *retary and the Chair of the Commission jointly consider*  
10       *appropriate for the Commission to perform its duties under*  
11       *this section.*

12       *(g) ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS.—*

13                *(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
14        *fairs shall implement each recommendation included*  
15        *in a report under subsection (b)(4) that the Secretary*  
16        *considers feasible and advisable and can be imple-*  
17        *mented without further legislative action.*

18                *(2) REPORTS.—Not later than 120 days after re-*  
19        *ceipt of a report under subparagraphs (A) through*  
20        *(D) of subsection (b)(4), the Secretary shall submit to*  
21        *the Committee Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the*  
22        *Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-*  
23        *resentatives a report setting forth the following:*

1           (A) *An assessment of the feasibility and ad-*  
2           *visability of each recommendation contained in*  
3           *such report.*

4           (B) *For each recommendation assessed as*  
5           *feasible and advisable—*

6                   (i) *if such recommendation does not re-*  
7                   *quire further legislative action for imple-*  
8                   *mentation, a description of the actions*  
9                   *taken, and to be taken, by the Secretary to*  
10                  *implement such recommendation; and*

11                   (ii) *if such recommendation requires*  
12                   *further legislative action for implementa-*  
13                   *tion, recommendations for such legislative*  
14                  *action.*

15 **SEC. 404. PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
16 **AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND DATA SHARING BE-**  
17 **TWEEN DEPARTMENTS.**

18           (a) *ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNET WEBSITE.—The*  
19 *Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available on an*  
20 *Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs*  
21 *available to the public the following:*

22                   (1) *Data files that contain information on re-*  
23                   *search of the Department.*

24                   (2) *A data dictionary on each data file.*

1           (3) *Instructions for how to obtain access to each*  
2           *data file for use in research.*

3           (b) *PUBLIC ACCESS TO MANUSCRIPTS ON DEPART-*  
4           *MENT FUNDED RESEARCH.—*

5           (1) *IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than 540*  
6           *days after the effective date specified in subsection (e),*  
7           *the Secretary shall require, as a condition on the use*  
8           *of any data gathered or formulated from research*  
9           *funded by the Department, that any final, peer-re-*  
10          *viewed manuscript prepared for publication that uses*  
11          *such data be submitted to the Secretary for deposit in*  
12          *the digital archive under paragraph (2) and publica-*  
13          *tion under paragraph (3).*

14          (2) *DIGITAL ARCHIVE.—Not later than 540 days*  
15          *after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the*  
16          *Secretary shall—*

17                 (A) *establish a digital archive consisting of*  
18                 *manuscripts described in paragraph (1); or*

19                 (B) *partner with another executive agency*  
20                 *to compile such manuscripts in a digital archive.*

21          (3) *PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—*

22                 (A) *AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVE.—The Sec-*  
23                 *retary shall ensure that the digital archive under*  
24                 *paragraph (2) and the contents of such archive*

1           are available to the public via a publicly acces-  
2           sible Internet website at no cost to the public.

3           (B) *AVAILABILITY OF MANUSCRIPTS.*—The  
4           Secretary shall ensure that each manuscript sub-  
5           mitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1) is  
6           available to the public under subparagraph (A)  
7           not later than one year after the official date on  
8           which the manuscript is otherwise published.

9           (4) *CONSISTENT WITH COPYRIGHT LAW.*—The  
10          Secretary shall carry out this subsection in a manner  
11          consistent with applicable copyright law.

12          (5) *ANNUAL REPORT.*—

13                (A) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than one year  
14                after the date the Secretary begins making  
15                manuscripts available to the public under this  
16                subsection and not less frequently than once each  
17                year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the  
18                Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate  
19                and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
20                House of Representatives a report on the imple-  
21                mentation of this subsection during the most re-  
22                cent one-year period.

23                (B) *CONTENTS.*—Each report submitted  
24                under subparagraph (A) shall include for the pe-  
25                riod of the report:

1                   (i) *The number of manuscripts sub-*  
2                   *mitted under paragraph (1).*

3                   (ii) *The titles of such manuscripts.*

4                   (iii) *The authors of such manuscripts.*

5                   (iv) *For each such manuscript, the*  
6                   *name and issue number or volume number,*  
7                   *as the case may be, of the journal or other*  
8                   *publication in which such manuscript was*  
9                   *published.*

10           (c) *RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA SHARING BETWEEN*  
11 *DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF*  
12 *DEFENSE.—Not later than one year after the effective date*  
13 *specified in subsection (e), the Department of Veterans Af-*  
14 *fairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee es-*  
15 *tablished by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code,*  
16 *shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the*  
17 *Secretary of Defense options and recommendations for the*  
18 *establishment of a program for long-term cooperation and*  
19 *data sharing between and within the Department of Vet-*  
20 *erans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate*  
21 *research on outcomes of military service, readjustment after*  
22 *combat deployment, and other topics of importance to the*  
23 *following:*

24                   (1) *Veterans.*

25                   (2) *Members of the Armed Forces.*

1           (3) *Family members of veterans.*

2           (4) *Family members of members of the Armed*  
3 *Forces.*

4           (5) *Members of communities that have a signifi-*  
5 *cant population of veterans or members of the Armed*  
6 *Forces.*

7           (d) *EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section,*  
8 *the term “executive agency” has the meaning given that*  
9 *term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.*

10          (e) *EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on*  
11 *the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
12 *of this Act.*

13 **SEC. 405. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY FOR OUTREACH ACTIVI-**  
14 **TIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
15 **FAIRS.**

16          (a) *IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 is amended by insert-*  
17 *ing after section 6308 the following new section:*

18 **“§ 6309. Budget transparency**

19          “(a) *BUDGET REQUIREMENTS.—In the budget jus-*  
20 *tification materials submitted to Congress in support of the*  
21 *Department budget for a fiscal year (as submitted with the*  
22 *budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31),*  
23 *the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the*  
24 *amount requested for such fiscal year for activities of the*  
25 *Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs as follows:*

1           “(1) For outreach activities of the Department in  
2           aggregate.

3           “(2) For outreach activities of each element of  
4           the Department specified in subsection (b)(1).

5           “(b) PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTIVE COORDINATION  
6           AND COLLABORATION.—(1) Not later than 180 days after  
7           the date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Bene-  
8           fits Improvement Act of 2013, the Secretary shall establish  
9           and maintain procedures for the Office of Public and Inter-  
10          governmental Affairs to ensure the effective coordination  
11          and collaboration of outreach activities of the Department  
12          between and among the following:

13                 “(A) Office of the Secretary.

14                 “(B) Veterans Health Administration.

15                 “(C) Veterans Benefits Administration.

16                 “(D) National Cemetery Administration.

17           “(2) The Secretary shall—

18                 “(A) beginning after the date on which the Sec-  
19                 retary establishes procedures under paragraph (1),  
20                 not less frequently than once every two years conduct  
21                 a review of the procedures established and maintained  
22                 under paragraph (1) to ensure that such procedures  
23                 meet the requirements of such paragraph;

24                 “(B) make such modifications to such procedures  
25                 as the Secretary considers appropriate based upon re-

1 *views conducted under subparagraph (A) in order to*  
 2 *better meet such requirements; and*

3 *“(C) not later than 45 days after completing a*  
 4 *review under subparagraph (A), submit to Congress a*  
 5 *report on the findings of such review.”.*

6 *(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at*  
 7 *the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after*  
 8 *the item relating to section 6308 the following new item:*  
*“6309. Budget transparency.”.*

9 **SEC. 406. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON ADVISORY**  
 10 **COMMITTEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
 11 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

12 *(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the*  
 13 *effective date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller*  
 14 *General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs*  
 15 *of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of*  
 16 *the House of Representatives a report on the advisory com-*  
 17 *mittees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

18 *(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection*  
 19 *(a)—*

20 *(1) shall include—*

21 *(A) recommendations or proposals for con-*  
 22 *tinuing, modifying, or terminating certain advi-*  
 23 *sory committees, including noting areas of over-*  
 24 *lap and duplication among the advisory commit-*  
 25 *tees; and*

1           (B) such other information as the Comp-  
2 troller General considers appropriate; and

3           (2) may include—

4           (A) a description of each advisory com-  
5 mittee, including with respect to each com-  
6 mittee—

7                   (i) the purpose of the committee;

8                   (ii) the commencement date of the com-  
9 mittee; and

10                   (iii) the anticipated termination date  
11 of the committee;

12           (B) a summary of the anticipated expenses  
13 and the actual expenses incurred for each advi-  
14 sory committee during the most recent three fis-  
15 cal years ending before the date of the enactment  
16 of this Act; and

17           (C) with respect to meetings held by each  
18 advisory committee—

19                   (i) the frequency with which each com-  
20 mittee has met during the shorter of—

21                           (I) the most recent three fiscal  
22 years ending before the date of the en-  
23 actment of this Act; and

24                           (II) the life of the committee;

1                   (ii) the date of the most recent meeting  
2 held by the committee before such date of en-  
3 actment; and

4                   (iii) the date of the most recent report  
5 or other written product developed by the  
6 committee before such date of enactment.

7           (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—This section shall take effect  
8 on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment  
9 of this Act.

10 **TITLE V—IMPROVEMENT OF**  
11 **PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR**  
12 **COMPENSATION**

13 **Subtitle A—Claims Based on**  
14 **Military Sexual Trauma**

15 **SEC. 501. MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND OPINION FOR DIS-**  
16 **ABILITY COMPENSATION CLAIMS BASED ON**  
17 **MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**

18           (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 5103A(d) is amended by  
19 adding at the end the following new paragraph:

20           “(3)(A) In the case of a claim for disability compensa-  
21 tion based on a mental health condition related to military  
22 sexual trauma, the Secretary shall treat an examination or  
23 opinion as being necessary to make a decision on a claim  
24 for purposes of paragraph (1) if the evidence of record before  
25 the Secretary, taking into consideration all information

1 *and lay or medical evidence (including statements of the*  
2 *claimant)—*

3           “(i)(I) *contains competent evidence that the*  
4 *claimant has a current disability, or persistent or re-*  
5 *current symptoms of disability; and*

6           “(II) *indicates that the disability or symptoms*  
7 *may be associated with the claimant’s active military,*  
8 *naval, or air service; but*

9           “(ii) *does not contain a diagnosis or opinion by*  
10 *a mental health professional that may assist in cor-*  
11 *roborating the occurrence of a military sexual trauma*  
12 *stressor related to a diagnosable mental health condi-*  
13 *tion.*

14           “(B) *In this paragraph, the term ‘military sexual*  
15 *trauma’ shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary*  
16 *for purposes of this paragraph, and shall include ‘sexual*  
17 *harassment’ (as so specified).”.*

18           (b) *REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date*  
19 *of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
20 *airs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of*  
21 *the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the*  
22 *House of Representatives a report on the number of exami-*  
23 *nations and opinions conducted by the Secretary pursuant*  
24 *to paragraph (3) of section 5103A(d) of title 38, United*

1 *States Code (as added by subsection (a)), including the fol-*  
2 *lowing:*

3           (1) *The number of examinations conducted using*  
4           *a standardized disability assessment.*

5           (2) *The number of examinations conducted using*  
6           *a non-standardized clinical interview.*

7 **SEC. 502. CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICERS FOR MILITARY**  
8           **SEXUAL TRAUMA SUPPORT.**

9           (a) *IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs*  
10 *shall assign to each individual seeking compensation under*  
11 *the laws administered by the Secretary based on military*  
12 *sexual trauma a case representative officer who shall pro-*  
13 *vide advice and general information to such individual on*  
14 *the claims process for such compensation. Each case rep-*  
15 *resentative officer so assigned shall be assigned from among*  
16 *current personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

17           (b) *LIAISON.—A case representative officer assigned to*  
18 *an individual under subsection (a) shall be responsible for*  
19 *servng as a liaison between the individual, an authorized*  
20 *agent or attorney of the individual under section 5904 of*  
21 *title 38, United States Code, or an otherwise accredited rep-*  
22 *resentative of the individual, and the Department of Vet-*  
23 *erans Affairs on matters relating to the claim of the indi-*  
24 *vidual for compensation under the laws administered by*  
25 *the Secretary.*

1       (c) *CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICER REQUIRE-*  
2 *MENTS.—*

3           (1) *COMPETENCE AND KNOWLEDGE.—Each case*  
4 *representative officer assigned under subsection (a)*  
5 *shall be competent and knowledgeable about the fol-*  
6 *lowing:*

7                   (A) *The claims adjudication process and*  
8 *applicable laws, regulations, and other authority*  
9 *applicable to the adjudication of disability*  
10 *claims based on military sexual trauma.*

11                   (B) *Such other services to victims of sexual*  
12 *trauma as the Secretary considers appropriate.*

13           (2) *LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO*  
14 *WHICH ASSIGNED.—A case representative officer may*  
15 *not be assigned to more individuals described in sub-*  
16 *section (a) than, as determined by the Secretary, is*  
17 *appropriate for the provision of individual case man-*  
18 *agement assistance by such officer.*

19       (d) *INFORMATION ON BENEFITS AND PROGRAMS RE-*  
20 *LATING TO MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—*

21           (1) *IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make*  
22 *available to the public information on the availability*  
23 *of case representative officers under subsection (a) to*  
24 *assist in the application for benefits based on mili-*  
25 *tary sexual trauma. The Secretary shall revise and*

1        *update the information so made available in order to*  
2        *ensure that the information is as current as possible.*

3            (2) *INDIVIDUALS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY*  
4        *SERVICE.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with*  
5        *the Secretary of Defense, ensure that individuals who*  
6        *are being separated from the active military, naval,*  
7        *or air service are provided appropriate information*  
8        *about programs, requirements, and procedures for ap-*  
9        *plying for benefits based on military sexual trauma*  
10       *and the availability of case representative officers*  
11       *under subsection (a).*

12           (e) *INFORMATION ON TRAINING FOR AGENTS AND REP-*  
13 *RESENTATIVES OF INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED CASE REP-*  
14 *RESENTATIVE OFFICER.—The Secretary shall make avail-*  
15 *able to the authorized agent or attorney of an individual*  
16 *assigned a case representative under subsection (a), or to*  
17 *the otherwise accredited representative of the individual,*  
18 *any relevant materials used to train such case representa-*  
19 *tive officer for the duties of such position.*

20           (f) *ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS CON-*  
21 *SIDERATION OF MECHANISMS TO ENHANCE COORDINATION*  
22 *BETWEEN VBA AND VHA ON BENEFITS FOR MILITARY*  
23 *SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The Advisory Committee on Women*  
24 *Veterans established under section 542 of title 38, United*  
25 *States Code, shall undertake actions to identify mechanisms*

1 *to enhance coordination between the Veterans Benefits Ad-*  
2 *ministration and the Veterans Health Administration in*  
3 *the provision of benefits based on military sexual trauma,*  
4 *including the identification of barriers to the appropriate*  
5 *provision of benefits for military sexual trauma by such*  
6 *Administrations and of means of eliminating or reducing*  
7 *such barriers.*

8       (g) *ANNUAL REPORTS.*—*Not less frequently than an-*  
9 *nually, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the*  
10 *Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-*  
11 *mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives*  
12 *a report setting forth the following:*

13           (1) *A certification whether or not the case rep-*  
14 *resentative officers assigned under subsection (a) dur-*  
15 *ing the preceding year met the requirements specified*  
16 *in subsection (c).*

17           (2) *A description of the current training the Sec-*  
18 *retary provides to employees of the Veterans Benefits*  
19 *Administration on claims for benefits based on mili-*  
20 *tary sexual trauma, including the frequency, length,*  
21 *and content of such training.*

22           (3) *A description of current policies and proce-*  
23 *dures on the training the Secretary provides to case*  
24 *representative officers, including the current position*  
25 *descriptions for case representative officers.*

1           (4) *A description of current efforts to coordinate*  
2 *activities and assistance provided to individuals who*  
3 *seek care or benefits for military sexual trauma be-*  
4 *tween the Veterans Health Administration and Vet-*  
5 *erans Benefits Administration, including the efforts of*  
6 *the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans under*  
7 *subsection (f).*

8           (h) *SUNSET.—*

9           (1) *IN GENERAL.—No case representative officer*  
10 *may be assigned under subsection (a) after December*  
11 *31, 2018.*

12           (2) *CONTINUATION OF DUTIES AFTER SUNSET*  
13 *DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall not be construed to pro-*  
14 *hibit any case representative officer assigned to an in-*  
15 *dividual before the date specified in that paragraph*  
16 *from performing duties pursuant to this section after*  
17 *that date with respect to a claim for which that case*  
18 *representative officer was assigned to such individual*  
19 *before that date.*

20           (i) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

21           (1) *ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—*  
22 *The term “active military, naval, or air service” has*  
23 *the meaning given that term in section 101 of title*  
24 *38, United States Code.*

1           (2) *MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.*—*The term*  
2           *“military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning*  
3           *specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section,*  
4           *and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so speci-*  
5           *fied).*

6 **SEC. 503. REPORT ON STANDARD OF PROOF FOR SERVICE-**  
7                           **CONNECTION OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDI-**  
8                           **TIONS RELATED TO MILITARY SEXUAL TRAU-**  
9                           **MA.**

10           (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 90 days after the*  
11           *date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans*  
12           *Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs*  
13           *of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of*  
14           *the House of Representatives a report on the current stand-*  
15           *ard of proof for service-connection under chapter 11 of title*  
16           *38, United States Code, for covered mental health conditions*  
17           *based on military sexual trauma.*

18           (b) *RECOMMENDATIONS.*—*The Secretary shall include*  
19           *in the report under subsection (a) any recommendations the*  
20           *Secretary considers appropriate to improve the adjudica-*  
21           *tion of claims for compensation based on military sexual*  
22           *trauma, including—*

23                   (1) *recommendations for an appropriate stand-*  
24                   *ard of proof for such claims if the Secretary considers*  
25                   *such recommendations advisable; and*

1           (2) *recommendations for legislative action, if*  
2           *necessary, to carry out such improvement.*

3           (c) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

4           (1) *ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—*  
5           *The term “active military, naval, or air service” has*  
6           *the meaning given that term in section 101 of title*  
7           *38, United States Code.*

8           (2) *COVERED MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.—The*  
9           *term “covered mental health condition” means post-*  
10          *traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, or*  
11          *other mental health diagnosis that the Secretary de-*  
12          *termines to be related to military sexual trauma.*

13          (3) *MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term*  
14          *“military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning*  
15          *specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section,*  
16          *and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so speci-*  
17          *fied).*

18       **SEC. 504. REPORTS ON CLAIMS FOR DISABILITIES IN-**  
19                                **CURRED OR AGGRAVATED BY MILITARY SEX-**  
20                                **UAL TRAUMA.**

21          (a) *REPORTS.—Not later than December 1, 2014, and*  
22          *each year thereafter through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans*  
23          *Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the covered*  
24          *claims submitted to the Secretary during the previous fiscal*  
25          *year.*

1       (b) *ELEMENTS.*—*Each report under subsection (a)*  
2 *shall include the following:*

3           (1) *The number of covered claims submitted to or*  
4 *considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year cov-*  
5 *ered by the report.*

6           (2) *Of the covered claims under paragraph (1),*  
7 *the number and percentage of such claims—*

8               (A) *submitted by each gender;*

9               (B) *that were approved, including the num-*  
10 *ber and percentage of such approved claims sub-*  
11 *mitted by each gender; and*

12               (C) *that were denied, including the number*  
13 *and percentage of such denied claims submitted*  
14 *by each gender.*

15           (3) *Of the covered claims under paragraph (1)*  
16 *that were approved, the number and percentage, listed*  
17 *by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating per-*  
18 *centage of disability.*

19           (4) *Of the covered claims under paragraph (1)*  
20 *that were denied—*

21               (A) *the three most common reasons given by*  
22 *the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of title*  
23 *38, United States Code, for such denials; and*

1           (B) the number of denials that were based  
2           on the failure of a veteran to report for a med-  
3           ical examination.

4           (5) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1)  
5           that were resubmitted to the Secretary after denial in  
6           a previous adjudication—

7           (A) the number of such claims submitted to  
8           or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal  
9           year covered by the report;

10          (B) the number and percentage of such  
11          claims—

12           (i) submitted by each gender;

13           (ii) that were approved, including the  
14           number and percentage of such approved  
15           claims submitted by each gender; and

16           (iii) that were denied, including the  
17           number and percentage of such denied  
18           claims submitted by each gender;

19          (C) the number and percentage, listed by  
20          each gender, of claims assigned to each rating  
21          percentage of disability; and

22          (D) of such claims that were again de-  
23          nied—

24           (i) the three most common reasons  
25           given by the Secretary under section

1                   5104(b)(1) of such title for such denials;

2                   and

3                   (ii) the number of denials that were  
4                   based on the failure of a veteran to report  
5                   for a medical examination.

6                   (6) The number of covered claims that, as of the  
7                   end of the fiscal year covered by the report, are pend-  
8                   ing and, separately, the number of such claims on ap-  
9                   peal.

10                  (7) For the fiscal year covered by the report, the  
11                  average number of days that covered claims take to  
12                  complete beginning on the date on which the claim is  
13                  submitted.

14                  (c) *DEFINITIONS.*—*In this section:*

15                  (1) *ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.*—  
16                  The term “active military, naval, or air service” has  
17                  the meaning given that term in section 101 of title  
18                  38, *United States Code*.

19                  (2) *COVERED CLAIMS.*—The term “covered  
20                  claims” means claims for disability compensation  
21                  submitted to the Secretary based on post traumatic  
22                  stress disorder alleged to have been incurred or aggra-  
23                  vated by military sexual trauma.

24                  (3) *MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.*—The term  
25                  “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning

1       *specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section,*  
 2       *and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so speci-*  
 3       *fied).*

4       ***Subtitle B—Agency of Original***  
 5       ***Jurisdiction***

6       ***SEC. 511. WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE WORK***  
 7                   ***CREDIT AND WORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS***  
 8                   ***OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION IN***  
 9                   ***AN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT.***

10       *(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after*  
 11       *the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-*  
 12       *erans Affairs shall establish a working group to assess and*  
 13       *develop recommendations for the improvement of the em-*  
 14       *ployee work credit and work management systems of the*  
 15       *Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environ-*  
 16       *ment.*

17       *(b) COMPOSITION.—The working group shall be com-*  
 18       *posed of the following:*

19               *(1) The Secretary or the Secretary’s designee.*

20               *(2) Individuals selected by the Secretary from*  
 21       *among employees of the Department of Veterans Af-*  
 22       *airs who handle claims for compensation and pen-*  
 23       *sion benefits and are recommended to the Secretary*  
 24       *by a labor organization for purposes of this section,*

1 *including at least one of each of the following individ-*  
2 *uals:*

3 *(A) A veterans service representative.*

4 *(B) A rating veterans service representative.*

5 *(C) A decision review officer.*

6 *(3) Not fewer than three individuals selected by*  
7 *the Secretary to represent different organizations rec-*  
8 *ognized by the Secretary for the representation of vet-*  
9 *erans under section 5902 of title 38, United States*  
10 *Code.*

11 *(4) Individuals selected by the Secretary—*

12 *(A) that are not employees of the Depart-*  
13 *ment; and*

14 *(B) that are experts in work credit and*  
15 *work management systems.*

16 *(c) DUTIES.—The duties of the working group are to*  
17 *assess and develop recommendations for the following:*

18 *(1) The improvement of the employee work credit*  
19 *and work management systems of the Veterans Bene-*  
20 *fits Administration in an electronic environment.*

21 *(2) A scientific, data based methodology to be*  
22 *used in revising the employee work credit system of*  
23 *the Department to improve the quality and quantity*  
24 *of work produced by employees of the Department.*

1           (3) *The improvement of the resource allocation*  
2           *model of the Veterans Benefits Administration, with*  
3           *a focus on the processing of claims in an electronic*  
4           *environment.*

5           (4) *A schedule by which the revisions referred to*  
6           *in paragraph (2) will be implemented by the Depart-*  
7           *ment.*

8           (d) *REVIEW AND INCORPORATION OF FINDINGS FROM*  
9           *PRIOR STUDY.—In carrying out its duties under subsection*  
10          *(c), the working group shall review the findings and conclu-*  
11          *sions of previous studies of the employee work credit and*  
12          *work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Admin-*  
13          *istration.*

14          (e) *ROLE OF THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall*  
15          *consider the recommendations of the working group and im-*  
16          *plement such recommendations as the Secretary determines*  
17          *appropriate.*

18          (f) *REPORTS.—*

19                 (1) *INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 180 days*  
20                 *after the date of the establishment of the working*  
21                 *group, the working group shall submit to Congress a*  
22                 *report on the progress of the working group.*

23                 (2) *FINAL REPORT.—Not later than one year*  
24                 *after the date of the establishment of the working*  
25                 *group, the Secretary shall submit to Congress the*

1        *methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the*  
2        *schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Sec-*  
3        *retary has decided to implement pursuant to sub-*  
4        *section (e).*

5        *(g) IMPLEMENTATION OF METHODOLOGY AND SCHED-*  
6        *ULE.—After submitting the report under subsection (f), the*  
7        *Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to*  
8        *apply the methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and*  
9        *the schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Secretary*  
10       *has decided to implement pursuant to subsection (e).*

11       **SEC. 512. TASK FORCE ON RETENTION AND TRAINING OF**  
12                                **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLAIMS**  
13                                **PROCESSORS AND ADJUDICATORS.**

14        *(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
15        *fairs shall establish a task force to assess retention and*  
16        *training of claims processors and adjudicators that are em-*  
17        *ployed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and other de-*  
18        *partments and agencies of the Federal Government.*

19        *(b) COMPOSITION.—The task force shall be composed*  
20        *of the following:*

21                *(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs or designee.*

22                *(2) The Director of the Office of Personnel Man-*  
23        *agement or designee.*

24                *(3) The Commissioner of Social Security or des-*  
25        *ignee.*

1           (4) *An individual selected by the Secretary of*  
2 *Veterans Affairs who represents an organization rec-*  
3 *ognized by the Secretary for the representation of vet-*  
4 *erans under section 5902 of title 38, United States*  
5 *Code.*

6           (5) *Such other individuals selected by the Sec-*  
7 *retary who represent such other organizations and in-*  
8 *stitutions as the Secretary considers appropriate.*

9           (c) *DURATION.*—*The task force established under sub-*  
10 *section (a) shall terminate not later than two years after*  
11 *the date on which the task force is established under such*  
12 *subsection.*

13          (d) *DUTIES.*—*The duties of the task force are as fol-*  
14 *lows:*

15           (1) *To identify key skills required by claims*  
16 *processors and adjudicators to perform the duties of*  
17 *claims processors and adjudicators in the various*  
18 *claims processing and adjudication positions through-*  
19 *out the Federal Government.*

20           (2) *To identify reasons for employee attrition*  
21 *from claims processing positions.*

22           (3) *To coordinate with educational institutions*  
23 *to develop training and programs of education for*  
24 *members of the Armed Forces to prepare such mem-*

1        *bers for employment in claims processing and adju-*  
2        *ication positions in the Federal Government.*

3            *(4) To identify and coordinate offices of the De-*  
4        *partment of Defense and the Department of Veterans*  
5        *Affairs located throughout the United States to pro-*  
6        *vide information about, and promotion of, available*  
7        *claims processing positions to members of the Armed*  
8        *Forces transitioning to civilian life and to veterans*  
9        *with disabilities.*

10           *(5) To establish performance measures to evalu-*  
11        *ate the effectiveness of the task force.*

12           *(6) Not later than one year after the date of the*  
13        *establishment of the task force, to develop a Govern-*  
14        *ment-wide strategic and operational plan for pro-*  
15        *moting employment of veterans in claims processing*  
16        *positions in the Federal Government.*

17           *(7) To establish performance measures to assess*  
18        *the plan developed under paragraph (6), to assess the*  
19        *implementation of such plan, and to revise such plan*  
20        *as the task force considers appropriate.*

21        *(e) REPORTS.—*

22           *(1) SUBMITTAL OF PLAN.—Not later than one*  
23        *year after the date of the establishment of the task*  
24        *force, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to*

1       Congress a report on the plan developed by the task  
2       force under subsection (d)(6).

3               (2) *ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION.*—Not  
4       later than 120 days after the termination of the task  
5       force, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report  
6       that assesses the implementation of the plan developed  
7       by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

8       **SEC. 513. REPORTS ON REQUESTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF**  
9                       **VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR RECORDS OF OTHER**  
10                      **FEDERAL AGENCIES.**

11       (a) *REPORTS REQUIRED.*—Not later than 180 days  
12       after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180  
13       days thereafter through the date that is 910 days after the  
14       date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans  
15       Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
16       of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of  
17       the House of Representatives a report on the attempts of  
18       the Department of Veterans Affairs to obtain records nec-  
19       essary to adjudicate claims for benefits from another de-  
20       partment or agency of the Federal Government during the  
21       180-day period ending on the date of such report.

22       (b) *ELEMENTS.*—

23               (1) *IN GENERAL.*—Each report shall set forth the  
24       following:

1           (A) *For the period covered by such report,*  
2           *the following:*

3                   (i) *The total number of requests made*  
4                   *by the Department.*

5                   (ii) *The types of records requested.*

6                   (iii) *The number of requests made be-*  
7                   *fore the receipt of each record.*

8                   (iv) *The amount of time between the*  
9                   *initial request for each record and the re-*  
10                   *ceipt of each record.*

11                   (v) *The number of occurrences of the*  
12                   *receipt of a record after the adjudication of*  
13                   *the claim for which the record was sought.*

14                   (vi) *A description of the efforts of the*  
15                   *Secretary to expedite the delivery of records*  
16                   *to the Department from other departments*  
17                   *and agencies of the Federal Government.*

18           (B) *Such recommendations for legislative or*  
19           *administrative action as the Secretary considers*  
20           *appropriate in light of such report.*

21           (2) *PRESENTATION.—The information in a re-*  
22           *port under clause (i) through (v) of paragraph (1)(A)*  
23           *shall be set forth separately for each department and*  
24           *agency of the Federal Government covered by such re-*  
25           *port.*

1 **SEC. 514. RECOGNITION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIAN**  
2 **TRIBES IN THE PREPARATION, PRESEN-**  
3 **TATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CLAIMS**  
4 **UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SEC-**  
5 **RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 *Section 5902(a)(1) is amended by inserting “, includ-*  
7 *ing Indian tribes (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-*  
8 *Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C.*  
9 *450b))” after “as the Secretary may approve”.*

10 **SEC. 515. PROGRAM ON PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AND**  
11 **TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN IMPROVING QUAL-**  
12 **ITY OF CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSA-**  
13 **TION SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
14 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

15 *(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans*  
16 *Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility*  
17 *and advisability of entering into memoranda of under-*  
18 *standing with local governments and tribal organizations—*

19 *(1) to improve the quality of claims submitted to*  
20 *the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 of*  
21 *title 38, United States Code, and pension under chap-*  
22 *ter 15 of such title; and*

23 *(2) to provide assistance to veterans who may be*  
24 *eligible for such compensation or pension in submit-*  
25 *ting such claims.*

1           (b) *MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING TRIBAL OR-*  
2 *GANIZATIONS.*—*In carrying out the program required by*  
3 *subsection (a), the Secretary shall enter into, or maintain*  
4 *existing, memoranda of understanding with at least—*

5                   (1) *two tribal organizations; and*

6                   (2) *10 State or local governments.*

7           (c) *DURATION.*—*The program shall be carried out dur-*  
8 *ing the two-year period beginning on the date of the com-*  
9 *mencement of the program.*

10          (d) *REPORT.*—

11                   (1) *INITIAL REPORT.*—*Not later than one year*  
12 *after the date of the commencement of the program,*  
13 *the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-*  
14 *erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on*  
15 *Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-*  
16 *port that includes the following:*

17                           (A) *A description of the implementation*  
18 *and operation of the program, including a de-*  
19 *scription of outreach conducted by the Secretary*  
20 *to tribal organizations and State and local gov-*  
21 *ernments.*

22                           (B) *An evaluation of the program, includ-*  
23 *ing the total number of memoranda of under-*  
24 *standing entered into or maintained by the Sec-*  
25 *retary.*

1           (2) *FINAL REPORT.*—Not later than 180 days  
2 after the termination of the program, the Secretary  
3 shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of  
4 the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of  
5 the House of Representatives a report that includes  
6 the following:

7           (A) A description of the implementation  
8 and operation of the program, including a de-  
9 scription of outreach conducted by the Secretary  
10 to tribal organizations and State and local gov-  
11 ernments.

12           (B) An evaluation of the program, includ-  
13 ing the total number of memoranda of under-  
14 standing entered into or maintained by the Sec-  
15 retary.

16           (C) The findings and conclusions of the Sec-  
17 retary with respect to the program.

18           (D) Such recommendations for continuation  
19 or expansion of the program as the Secretary  
20 considers appropriate.

21           (e) *TRIBAL ORGANIZATION DEFINED.*—In this section,  
22 the term “tribal organization” has the meaning given that  
23 term in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code.

1 **SEC. 516. QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF DEPART-**  
2 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN ELIMI-**  
3 **NATING BACKLOG OF CLAIMS FOR COM-**  
4 **PENSATION THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ADJU-**  
5 **DICATED.**

6 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 90 days after the  
7 date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently  
8 than quarterly thereafter through calendar year 2015, the  
9 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee  
10 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on  
11 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report  
12 on the backlog of claims filed with the Department of Vet-  
13 erans Affairs for compensation that have not been adju-  
14 dicated by the Department.

15 (b) *CONTENTS.*—Each report submitted under sub-  
16 section (a) shall include the following:

17 (1) For each month through calendar year 2015,  
18 a projection of the following:

19 (A) *The number of claims completed.*

20 (B) *The number of claims received.*

21 (C) *The number of claims on backlog at the*  
22 *end of the month.*

23 (D) *The number of claims pending at the*  
24 *end of the month.*

25 (E) *The number of appeals pending at the*  
26 *end of the month.*

1           (F) A description of the status of the imple-  
2           mentation of initiatives carried out by the Sec-  
3           retary to address the backlog, including the ex-  
4           pected impact of those initiatives on accuracy  
5           and timeliness of adjudication of claims.

6           (2) For each quarter through calendar year  
7           2015, a projection of the average accuracy of dis-  
8           ability determinations for compensation claims that  
9           require a disability rating (or disability decision).

10          (3) For each month during the most recently  
11          completed quarter, the following:

12                 (A) The number of claims completed.

13                 (B) The number of claims received.

14                 (C) The number of claims on backlog at the  
15                 end of the month.

16                 (D) The number of claims pending at the  
17                 end of the month.

18                 (E) The number of appeals pending at the  
19                 end of the month.

20                 (F) A description of the status of the imple-  
21                 mentation of initiatives carried out by the Sec-  
22                 retary to address the backlog, including the im-  
23                 pact of those initiatives on accuracy and timeli-  
24                 ness of adjudication of claims.

1           (G) *An assessment of the accuracy of dis-*  
2 *ability determinations for compensation claims*  
3 *that require a disability rating (or disability de-*  
4 *cision).*

5           (4) *For the most recently completed quarter—*

6           (A) *the number of cases physically received*  
7 *at the Board of Veterans' Appeals and docketed;*

8           (B) *the number of cases pending at the*  
9 *Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the*  
10 *quarter;*

11           (C) *the number of cases physically at the*  
12 *Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the*  
13 *quarter;*

14           (D) *the number of notices of disagreement*  
15 *and appeals filed to the agency of original juris-*  
16 *isdiction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of title*  
17 *38, United States Code; and*

18           (E) *the number of decisions made by the*  
19 *Board of Veterans' Appeals and the percentage of*  
20 *such decisions that were allowed, remanded, de-*  
21 *nied, or otherwise disposed of.*

22           (c) *AVAILABILITY TO PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall*  
23 *make each report submitted under subsection (a) available*  
24 *to the public.*

1       (d) *ON BACKLOG AND PENDING DEFINED.*—*In this*  
 2 *section, the terms “on backlog” and “pending”, with respect*  
 3 *to a claim for compensation received by the Secretary, shall*  
 4 *have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes*  
 5 *of this section.*

6 **SEC. 517. REPORTS ON USE OF EXISTING AUTHORITIES TO**  
 7 **EXPEDITE BENEFITS DECISIONS.**

8       (a) *REPORT ON CURRENT USE OF TEMPORARY, IN-*  
 9 *TERMEDIATE, AND PROVISIONAL RATING DECISIONS.*—

10           (1) *REPORT REQUIRED.*—*Not later than 180*  
 11 *days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the*  
 12 *Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Com-*  
 13 *mittee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the*  
 14 *Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Rep-*  
 15 *resentatives a report on the use of temporary, inter-*  
 16 *mediate, and provisional rating decisions to expedite*  
 17 *the benefits decisions of the Department of Veterans*  
 18 *Affairs.*

19           (2) *REPORT ELEMENTS.*—*The report required by*  
 20 *paragraph (1) shall include the following:*

21                   (A) *With respect to temporary and inter-*  
 22 *mediate rating decisions, the following:*

23                           (i) *The number of temporary and in-*  
 24 *termediate rating decisions issued by the*

1            *Department during each of fiscal years*  
2            *2011, 2012, and 2013.*

3            *(ii) A description of any reasons or ob-*  
4            *stacles that prevent use of existing authori-*  
5            *ties to issue temporary or intermediate rat-*  
6            *ing decisions.*

7            *(iii) A description of the Quick Pay*  
8            *Disability initiative, including the ration-*  
9            *ale for not expanding the initiative beyond*  
10           *pilot program status.*

11           *(B) With respect to provisional rating deci-*  
12           *sions, the following:*

13           *(i) The number of provisional rating*  
14           *decisions issued by the Department during*  
15           *the oldest claims first initiative.*

16           *(ii) Of the provisional rating decisions*  
17           *issued during the oldest claims first initia-*  
18           *tive—*

19           *(I) the number of such decisions*  
20           *that involved a claim granted;*

21           *(II) the number of such decisions*  
22           *that involved a claim denied; and*

23           *(III) the number of such decisions*  
24           *that involved a claim granted in part*  
25           *or a claim denied in part.*

1           (iii) *A statement of the most common*  
2           *reasons claims were not granted earlier*  
3           *under the oldest claims first initiative when*  
4           *there was sufficient evidence to render an*  
5           *award of benefits in the provisional rating*  
6           *decision.*

7           (iv) *The average number of days to*  
8           *issue a provisional rating decision under*  
9           *the oldest claims first initiative.*

10          (v) *Of the total number of decisions*  
11          *that were completed under the oldest claims*  
12          *first initiative—*

13                (I) *the number that were Category*  
14                *1 claims and received a final rating*  
15                *decision; and*

16                (II) *the number that were Cat-*  
17                *egory 2 claims and received a provi-*  
18                *sional rating decision.*

19          (vi) *The number of rating decisions*  
20          *issued during the oldest claims first imita-*  
21          *tive that involved a brokered claim, set forth*  
22          *by number of such claims by Regional Of-*  
23          *fice of the Department, including—*

24                (I) *the number of brokered claims*  
25                *received by each Regional Office; and*

1                   (II) *the number of brokered claims*  
2                   *issued by each Regional Office.*

3                   (vii) *The number of provisional rating*  
4                   *decisions issued during the oldest claims*  
5                   *first initiative with respect to which the vet-*  
6                   *eran requested that the provisional decision*  
7                   *become final in order to appeal.*

8                   (viii) *The number of provisional rating*  
9                   *decisions issued during the oldest claims*  
10                  *first initiative with respect to which the vet-*  
11                  *eran requested an appeal after the expira-*  
12                  *tion of the 1-year period beginning on the*  
13                  *date of notification of the provisional rating*  
14                  *decision.*

15                  (ix) *An assessment of the accuracy of*  
16                  *provisional rating decisions issued during*  
17                  *the oldest claims first initiative, set forth by*  
18                  *Category 1 claims and Category 2 claims.*

19                  (C) *Such other matters as the Secretary*  
20                  *considers appropriate for purposes of the report.*

21                  (3) *SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION.—If the Sec-*  
22                  *retary continues to obtain information on rating de-*  
23                  *isions under clauses (vii) and (viii) of paragraph*  
24                  *(2)(B) after the date of the submittal of the report re-*  
25                  *quired by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit*

1       to the committees of Congress referred to in para-  
2       graph (1) a report on such information that supple-  
3       ments the information on such clauses in the report  
4       under paragraph (1) when the Secretary completes  
5       accumulation of such information.

6       (b) *PLAN FOR INCREASE IN USE OF TEMPORARY OR*  
7       *INTERMEDIATE RATING DECISIONS.*—

8               (1) *REPORT ON PLAN REQUIRED.*—Not later  
9       than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this  
10       Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on  
11       Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on  
12       Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-  
13       port setting forth a plan to increase the use of tem-  
14       porary or intermediate rating decisions to expedite  
15       benefit decisions of the Department when the record  
16       contains sufficient evidence to grant any claim at  
17       issue, including service connection.

18               (2) *PLAN ELEMENTS.*—The plan required under  
19       paragraph (1) shall include the following:

20                       (A) *Mechanisms to overcome obstacles to the*  
21                       *use of temporary or intermediate rating deci-*  
22                       *sions, including mechanisms (such as upgrades)*  
23                       *to assure the ability of the Veterans Benefits*  
24                       *Management System to facilitate the issuance of*  
25                       *temporary or intermediate rating decisions.*

1           (B) Mechanisms to ensure that appropriate  
2 claimant populations, such as claimants who file  
3 complex or multi-issue disability compensation  
4 claims, benefit from the availability of tem-  
5 porary or intermediate rating decisions.

6           (C) Mechanisms to provide for the use of  
7 temporary or intermediate rating decisions, in-  
8 cluding mechanisms to resolve whether a request  
9 by a claimant or claimant representative should  
10 trigger use of a temporary or intermediate rat-  
11 ing decision depending on the circumstances of  
12 the claimant.

13           (D) Mechanisms to prevent the use of tem-  
14 porary or intermediate rating decisions in lieu  
15 of a final rating decision when a final rating de-  
16 cision could be made with little or no additional  
17 claim development.

18           (E) Such recommendations for legislative or  
19 administrative action as the Secretary considers  
20 appropriate to increase the use of temporary or  
21 intermediate rating decisions to expedite benefit  
22 decisions of the Department.

1 **SEC. 518. REPORTS ON DEPARTMENT DISABILITY MEDICAL**  
2 **EXAMINATIONS AND PREVENTION OF UNNEC-**  
3 **ESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.**

4 (a) *REPORT ON DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS*  
5 *FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.*—

6 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 180 days after*  
7 *the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of*  
8 *Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on*  
9 *Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on*  
10 *Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-*  
11 *port on the furnishing of general medical and spe-*  
12 *cialty medical examinations by the Department of*  
13 *Veterans Affairs for purposes of adjudicating claims*  
14 *for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.*

15 (2) *CONTENTS.*—*The report submitted under*  
16 *paragraph (1) shall include the following:*

17 (A) *The number of general medical exami-*  
18 *nations furnished by the Department during the*  
19 *period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for pur-*  
20 *poses of adjudicating claims for benefits under*  
21 *laws administered by the Secretary.*

22 (B) *The number of general medical exami-*  
23 *nations furnished by the Department during the*  
24 *period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for pur-*  
25 *poses of adjudicating a claim in which a com-*  
26 *prehensive joint examination was conducted, but*

1           *for which no disability relating to a joint, bone,*  
2           *or muscle had been asserted as an issue in the*  
3           *claim.*

4           *(C) The number of specialty medical exami-*  
5           *nations furnished by the Department during the*  
6           *period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for pur-*  
7           *poses of adjudicating a claim.*

8           *(D) The number of specialty medical exami-*  
9           *nations furnished by the Department during the*  
10          *period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for pur-*  
11          *poses of adjudicating a claim in which one or*  
12          *more joint examinations were conducted.*

13          *(E) A summary with citations to any med-*  
14          *ical and scientific studies that provide a basis*  
15          *for determining that three repetitions is adequate*  
16          *to determine the effect of repetitive use on func-*  
17          *tional impairments.*

18          *(F) The names of all examination reports,*  
19          *including general medical examinations and*  
20          *Disability Benefits Questionnaires, used for eval-*  
21          *uation of compensation and pension disability*  
22          *claims which require measurement of repeated*  
23          *ranges of motion testing and the number of ex-*  
24          *aminations requiring such measurements which*  
25          *were conducted in fiscal year 2012.*

1           (G) *The average amount of time taken by*  
2 *an individual conducting a medical examination*  
3 *to perform the three repetitions of movement of*  
4 *each joint.*

5           (H) *A discussion of whether there are more*  
6 *efficient and effective scientifically reliable meth-*  
7 *ods of testing for functional loss on repetitive use*  
8 *of an extremity other than the three time repeti-*  
9 *tion currently used by the Department.*

10           (I) *Recommendations as to the continuation*  
11 *of the practice of measuring functional impair-*  
12 *ment by using three repetitions of movement of*  
13 *each joint during the examination as a criteria*  
14 *for evaluating the effect of repetitive motion on*  
15 *functional impairment with supporting ration-*  
16 *ale.*

17           (b) *REPORT AND PLAN TO PREVENT THE ORDERING*  
18 *OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.—*

19           (1) *IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after*  
20 *the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary*  
21 *shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of*  
22 *the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of*  
23 *the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of*  
24 *the Secretary in reducing the necessity for in-person*  
25 *disability examinations and other efforts to comply*

1 *with the provisions of section 5125 of title 38, United*  
2 *States Code.*

3 (2) *CONTENTS.—The report required by para-*  
4 *graph (1) shall include the following:*

5 (A) *Criteria used by the Secretary to deter-*  
6 *mine if a claim is eligible for the Acceptable*  
7 *Clinical Evidence initiative.*

8 (B) *The number of claims determined to be*  
9 *eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence ini-*  
10 *tiative during the period beginning on the date*  
11 *of the initiation of the initiative and ending on*  
12 *the date of the enactment of this Act,*  
13 *disaggregated—*

14 (i) *by fiscal year; and*

15 (ii) *by claims determined eligible based*  
16 *in whole or in part on medical evidence*  
17 *provided by a private health care provider.*

18 (C) *The total number of claims determined*  
19 *to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence*  
20 *initiative that required an employee of the De-*  
21 *partment to supplement the evidence with infor-*  
22 *mation obtained during a telephone interview*  
23 *with a claimant or health care provider.*

24 (D) *Information on any other initiatives or*  
25 *efforts, including disability benefits question-*

1            *naires, of the Department to further encourage*  
2            *the use of medical evidence provided by a private*  
3            *health care provider and reliance upon reports of*  
4            *a medical examination administered by a pri-*  
5            *vate physician if the report is sufficiently com-*  
6            *plete to be adequate for the purposes of adjudi-*  
7            *cating a claim.*

8            *(E) A plan—*

9                    *(i) to measure, track, and prevent the*  
10                   *ordering of unnecessary medical examina-*  
11                   *tions when the provision by a claimant of*  
12                   *a medical examination administered by a*  
13                   *private physician in support of a claim for*  
14                   *benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of title 38,*  
15                   *United States Code, is adequate for the pur-*  
16                   *pose of making a decision on that claim;*  
17                   *and*

18                   *(ii) that includes the actions the Sec-*  
19                   *retary will take to eliminate any request by*  
20                   *the Department for a medical examination*  
21                   *in the case of a claim for benefits under*  
22                   *chapter 11 or 15 of such title in support of*  
23                   *which a claimant submits medical evidence*  
24                   *or a medical opinion provided by a private*  
25                   *health care provider that is competent, cred-*

1           ible, probative, and otherwise adequate for  
 2           purposes of making a decision on that  
 3           claim.

4    **Subtitle C—Board of Veterans’ Ap-**  
 5       **peals and Court of Appeals for**  
 6       **Veterans Claims**

7    **SEC. 521. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MISFILED DOCUMENTS**  
 8                   **AS A NOTICE OF APPEAL TO THE COURT OF**  
 9                   **APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS.**

10       Section 7266 is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
 11       lowing new subsection:

12       “(e)(1) If a person adversely affected by a final deci-  
 13       sion of the Board, who has not filed a notice of appeal with  
 14       the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims  
 15       under subsection (a), misfiles a document with the Board  
 16       or the agency of original jurisdiction referred to in section  
 17       7105(b)(1) of this title that expresses disagreement with  
 18       such decision and a clear intent to seek review of such deci-  
 19       sion by the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans  
 20       Claims, not later than 120 days after the date of such deci-  
 21       sion, such document shall be treated as timely filed under  
 22       subsection (a).

23       “(2) The treatment of misfiled documents under para-  
 24       graph (1) does not limit equitable relief that may be other-  
 25       wise available to a person described in that paragraph.”.

1 **SEC. 522. MODIFICATION OF FILING PERIOD FOR NOTICE**  
2 **OF DISAGREEMENT TO INITIATE APPELLATE**  
3 **REVIEW OF DECISIONS OF DEPARTMENT OF**  
4 **VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) *FILING OF NOTICE OF DISAGREEMENT BY CLAIM-*  
6 *ANTS.—*

7 (1) *IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section*  
8 *7105(b) is amended—*

9 (A) *by striking “one year” and inserting*  
10 *“180 days” in the first sentence; and*

11 (B) *by striking “one-year” and inserting*  
12 *“180-day” in the third sentence.*

13 (2) *ELECTRONIC FILING.—Such paragraph is*  
14 *further amended by inserting “or transmitted by elec-*  
15 *tronic means” after “postmarked”.*

16 (3) *GOOD CAUSE EXCEPTION FOR UNTIMELY FIL-*  
17 *ING OF NOTICES OF DISAGREEMENT.—Such section*  
18 *7105(b) is amended by adding at the end the fol-*  
19 *lowing new paragraph:*

20 *“(3) A notice of disagreement not filed within the time*  
21 *prescribed by paragraph (1) shall be treated by the Sec-*  
22 *retary as timely filed if—*

23 *“(A) the Secretary determines that the claimant,*  
24 *legal guardian, or other accredited representative, at-*  
25 *torney, or authorized agent filing the notice had good*  
26 *cause for the lack of filing within such time; and*

1           “(B) the notice of disagreement is filed not later  
2           than 186 days after the expiration of the period pre-  
3           scribed by paragraph (1).”.

4           (b) *APPLICATION BY DEPARTMENT FOR REVIEW ON*  
5 *APPEAL.*—Section 7106 is amended in the first sentence by  
6 striking “one-year period described in section 7105” and  
7 inserting “period described in section 7105(b)(1)”.

8           (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by this  
9 section shall apply with respect to claims for benefits under  
10 laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs filed  
11 with the Secretary after the date of the enactment of this  
12 Act.

13 **SEC. 523. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE**  
14 **FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VET-**  
15 **ERANS’ APPEALS.**

16           (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 7107 is amended—

17               (1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “in sub-  
18               section (f)” and inserting “in subsection (g)”;

19               (2) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection  
20               (g); and

21               (3) by striking subsections (d) and (e) and in-  
22               serting the following new subsections:

23               “(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a hear-  
24               ing before the Board shall be conducted through picture and  
25               voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in such

1 *a manner that the appellant is not present in the same loca-*  
2 *tion as the members of the Board during the hearing.*

3       “(2)(A) *A hearing before the Board shall be conducted*  
4 *in person upon the request of an appellant.*

5       “(B) *In the absence of a request under subparagraph*  
6 *(A), a hearing before the Board may also be conducted in*  
7 *person as the Board considers appropriate.*

8       “(e)(1) *In a case in which a hearing before the Board*  
9 *is to be held as described in subsection (d)(1), the Secretary*  
10 *shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the Board*  
11 *or other components of the Department to enable an appel-*  
12 *lant located at an appropriate facility within the area*  
13 *served by a regional office to participate as so described.*

14       “(2) *Any hearing conducted as described in subsection*  
15 *(d)(1) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall*  
16 *be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.*

17       “(f)(1) *In a case in which a hearing before the Board*  
18 *is to be held as described in subsection (d)(2), the appellant*  
19 *may request that the hearing be held at the principal loca-*  
20 *tion of the Board or at a facility of the Department located*  
21 *within the area served by a regional office of the Depart-*  
22 *ment.*

23       “(2) *A hearing to be held within an area served by*  
24 *a regional office of the Department shall (except as provided*  
25 *in paragraph (3)) be scheduled to be held in accordance*

1 *with the place of the case on the docket under subsection*  
2 *(a) relative to other cases on the docket for which hearings*  
3 *are scheduled to be held within that area.*

4       “(3) *A hearing to be held within an area served by*  
5 *a regional office of the Department may, for cause shown,*  
6 *be advanced on motion for an earlier hearing. Any such*  
7 *motion shall set forth succinctly the grounds upon which*  
8 *the motion is based. Such a motion may be granted only—*

9               “(A) *if the case involves interpretation of law of*  
10       *general application affecting other claims;*

11               “(B) *if the appellant is seriously ill or is under*  
12       *severe financial hardship; or*

13               “(C) *for other sufficient cause shown.*”.

14       (b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by sub-*  
15 *section (a) shall apply with respect to cases received by the*  
16 *Board of Veterans’ Appeals pursuant to notices of disagree-*  
17 *ment submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this*  
18 *Act.*

1     **TITLE VI—OUTREACH MATTERS**

2     **SEC. 601. PROGRAM TO INCREASE COORDINATION OF OUT-**  
3             **REACH EFFORTS BETWEEN THE DEPART-**  
4             **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL,**  
5             **STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND NON-**  
6             **PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.**

7             *(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans*  
8     *Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility*  
9     *and advisability of using State and local government agen-*  
10    *cies and nonprofit organizations—*

11             *(1) to increase awareness of veterans regarding*  
12    *benefits and services for veterans; and*

13             *(2) to improve coordination of outreach activities*  
14    *regarding such benefits and services between the Sec-*  
15    *retary and Federal, State, and local government and*  
16    *nonprofit providers of health care and benefit services*  
17    *for veterans.*

18             *(b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pro-*  
19    *gram for a two-year period.*

20             *(c) GRANTS.—*

21             *(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out*  
22    *the program through the competitive award of grants*  
23    *to State and local government agencies and nonprofit*  
24    *organizations—*

1           (A) to increase the awareness of veterans re-  
2           garding benefits and services for veterans; and

3           (B) to improve coordination of outreach ac-  
4           tivities regarding such benefits and services be-  
5           tween the Secretary and Federal, State, and  
6           local government and nonprofit providers of  
7           health care and benefit services for veterans.

8           (2) APPLICATION.—

9           (A) IN GENERAL.—A State or local govern-  
10          ment agency or nonprofit organization seeking a  
11          grant under the program shall submit to the Sec-  
12          retary an application therefor in such form and  
13          in such manner as the Secretary considers ap-  
14          propriate.

15          (B) ELEMENTS.—Each application sub-  
16          mitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the  
17          following:

18               (i) A description of the consultations,  
19               if any, with the Department of Veterans Af-  
20               fairs in the development of any proposal  
21               under the application.

22               (ii) A description of the project for  
23               which the applicant is seeking a grant  
24               under the program, including a plan to co-  
25               ordinate under the program, to the greatest

1           *extent possible, the outreach activities of*  
2           *Federal, State, and local government agen-*  
3           *cies that provide health care, benefits, and*  
4           *services for veterans and nonprofit organi-*  
5           *zations that provide such care, benefits, and*  
6           *services to enhance the awareness and avail-*  
7           *ability of such care, benefits, and services.*

8           *(iii) An agreement to report to the Sec-*  
9           *retary standardized data and other per-*  
10          *formance measures necessary for the Sec-*  
11          *retary to evaluate the program and to fa-*  
12          *cilitate evaluation of projects for which*  
13          *grants are awarded under the program.*

14          *(iv) Such other information as the Sec-*  
15          *retary may require.*

16          (3) *CONSIDERATIONS.—*

17            (A) *IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants*  
18            *under the program to carry out projects, the Sec-*  
19            *retary shall consider—*

20            *(i) where the projects will be carried*  
21            *out and which populations are targeted;*  
22            *and*

23            *(ii) the likelihood that each potential*  
24            *grantee will successfully carry out the grant*  
25            *proposal.*

1                   (B) *CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING LOCATION*  
2                   *AND TARGET POPULATION.*—*In taking the mat-*  
3                   *ters specified in subparagraph (A)(ii) into con-*  
4                   *sideration, the Secretary shall consider in par-*  
5                   *ticular the advisability of awarding grants for*  
6                   *projects—*

7                   (i) *carried out in areas with popu-*  
8                   *lations that have a high proportion of vet-*  
9                   *eran representation;*

10                  (ii) *carried out in a variety of geo-*  
11                  *graphic areas, including urban, rural, and*  
12                  *highly rural areas; and*

13                  (iii) *that target a variety of veteran*  
14                  *populations, including racial and ethnic*  
15                  *minorities, low-income populations, and*  
16                  *older populations.*

17                  (4) *USE OF FUNDS.*—*The Secretary shall estab-*  
18                  *lish appropriate uses of grant amounts received under*  
19                  *the program.*

20                  (5) *OVERSIGHT OF USE OF FUNDS.*—*The Sec-*  
21                  *retary shall establish appropriate mechanisms for*  
22                  *oversight of the use of grant amounts received under*  
23                  *the program, including the evidence grantees must*  
24                  *submit to demonstrate use of grant amounts and pro-*

1        *cedures for the recovery of grant amounts that were*  
2        *improperly used.*

3            (6) *LIMITATION.*—*In a fiscal year, not more*  
4        *than 20 percent of all grant amounts awarded in that*  
5        *fiscal year may be awarded to a single State entity.*

6            (d) *STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT.*—*The Secretary*  
7        *may not make a grant to a State under subsection (c) unless*  
8        *that State agrees that, with respect to the costs to be in-*  
9        *curring by the State in carrying out the program or projects*  
10       *for which the grant was awarded, the State will make avail-*  
11       *able (directly or through donations from public or private*  
12       *entities) non-Federal contributions in an amount equal to*  
13       *50 percent of Federal funds provided under the grant.*

14           (e) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—*There is*  
15        *hereby authorized to be appropriated to carry out this sec-*  
16        *tion the following:*

17            (1) *\$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2015.*

18            (2) *\$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2016.*

19           (f) *ANNUAL REPORT.*—

20            (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 120 days after*  
21        *the completion of the first calendar year beginning*  
22        *after the date of the commencement of the program,*  
23        *and not less frequently than once every year thereafter*  
24        *for the duration of the program, the Secretary shall*  
25        *submit to Congress a report evaluating the program*

1       *and the projects supported by grants awarded under*  
2       *the program.*

3               (2) *ELEMENTS.*—*The report required by para-*  
4       *graph (1) shall include the following:*

5                       (A) *The findings and conclusions of the Sec-*  
6       *retary with respect to the program.*

7                       (B) *An assessment of the benefit to veterans*  
8       *of the program.*

9                       (C) *The performance measures used by the*  
10       *Secretary for purposes of the program and data*  
11       *showing the performance of grantees under the*  
12       *program under such measures.*

13                      (D) *The recommendations of the Secretary*  
14       *as to the feasibility and advisability of con-*  
15       *tinuing or expanding or modifying the program.*

16       (g) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section shall take effect*  
17       *on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
18       *of this Act.*

19       **SEC. 602. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SEC-**  
20                       **RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND STATES**  
21                       **ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.**

22       (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Chapter 63 is amended by insert-*  
23       *ing after section 6306 the following new section:*

1 **“§ 6306A. Cooperative agreements with States**

2       “(a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary may enter into co-*  
 3 *operative agreements and arrangements with various State*  
 4 *agencies and State departments to carry out this chapter*  
 5 *and to otherwise carry out, coordinate, improve, or enhance*  
 6 *outreach activities of the Department and the States.*”

7       “(b) *REPORT.*—*The Secretary shall include in each re-*  
 8 *port submitted under section 6308 of this title a description*  
 9 *of the agreements and arrangements entered into by the Sec-*  
 10 *retary under subsection (a).”.*”

11       “(b) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.*—*The table of sections at*  
 12 *the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after*  
 13 *the item relating to section 6306 the following new item:*  
       “6306A. *Cooperative agreements with States.*”.

14 **SEC. 603. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**  
 15                                   **OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

16       “(a) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—*Not later than 180 days after*  
 17 *the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-*  
 18 *erans Affairs shall establish an advisory committee on out-*  
 19 *reach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.*”

20       “(b) *MEMBERSHIP.*—*The advisory committee shall be*  
 21 *composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from*  
 22 *among the following:*”

23                   (1) *To the maximum extent practicable, individ-*  
 24                   *uals who are eminent in their respective fields of pub-*  
 25                   *lic relations.*”

1           (2) *Representatives of organizations with offices*  
2           *that focus on communications and distribute messages*  
3           *through major media news outlets and social media.*

4           (3) *To the maximum extent practicable, individ-*  
5           *uals with experience communicating financial results*  
6           *and business strategy for purposes of shaping a con-*  
7           *fidant brand image.*

8           (4) *To the maximum extent practicable, individ-*  
9           *uals with experience with consumer and lifestyle im-*  
10          *aging and creating publicity for a particular product*  
11          *or service.*

12          (5) *To the maximum extent practicable, veterans*  
13          *who have experience in press and public relations.*

14          (c) *DUTIES.—The advisory committee shall advise the*  
15          *Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Af-*  
16          *fairs—*

17                 (1) *to ensure that the Department of Veterans*  
18                 *Affairs is strategically and effectively—*

19                         (A) *engaging the public and Department*  
20                         *stakeholders to increase awareness nationally re-*  
21                         *garding all benefits and services furnished by the*  
22                         *Department;*

23                         (B) *explaining new or changing policies of*  
24                         *the Department;*

1           (C) *improving the image and reputation of*  
2           *the Department; and*

3           (D) *coordinating and collaborating with*  
4           *national community-based organizations, non-*  
5           *profits, and State and local government agencies;*

6           (2) *to assist the Secretary in conducting such*  
7           *other press or public relations activities relating to*  
8           *outreach activities of the Department as the Secretary*  
9           *and the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergov-*  
10          *ernmental Affairs consider appropriate; and*

11          (3) *to ensure coordination and collaboration on*  
12          *efforts within the Department for the development,*  
13          *implementation, and review of local outreach with re-*  
14          *spect to benefits that include the following:*

15               (A) *Compensation and pension benefits.*

16               (B) *Insurance benefits.*

17               (C) *Burial and memorial benefits.*

18               (D) *Education benefits.*

19               (E) *Vocational rehabilitation and employ-*  
20               *ment benefits.*

21               (F) *Readjustment counseling benefits.*

22               (G) *Loan guarantee benefits.*

23               (H) *Such other benefits as the Secretary*  
24               *considers appropriate.*

1       (d) *LOCATION OF MEETINGS.*—Each meeting of the ad-  
2       visory committee shall take place at a location that is prop-  
3       erty of the Department and shall, to the maximum extent  
4       practicable, use teleconference technology.

5       (e) *CONSULTATION.*—The Secretary shall consult with  
6       and seek the advice of the advisory committee not less fre-  
7       quently than quarterly on matters relating to the duties of  
8       the advisory committee under subsection (c).

9       (f) *REPORTS.*—

10           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—Not less frequently than once  
11       every 90 days for the first year and semiannually  
12       thereafter, the advisory committee shall submit to  
13       Congress and to the Secretary a report on outreach  
14       activities of the Department.

15           (2) *RECOMMENDATIONS.*—Each report submitted  
16       under paragraph (1) shall include such recommenda-  
17       tions for legislative and administrative action as the  
18       advisory committee considers appropriate to improve  
19       the press and public relations of the Department re-  
20       lating to outreach.

21       (g) *TERMINATION.*—The advisory committee shall ter-  
22       minate on October 1, 2015, and the requirements and au-  
23       thorities under this section shall terminate on such date.

1       (h) *OUTREACH DEFINED.*—*In this section, the term*  
2 *“outreach” has the meaning given the term in section 6301*  
3 *of title 38, United States Code.*

4 **SEC. 604. ADVISORY BOARDS ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF**  
5 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RELAT-**  
6 **ING TO HEALTH CARE.**

7       (a) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—

8           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*For each entity described in*  
9 *paragraph (2), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall,*  
10 *acting through the director of that entity, establish*  
11 *not later than 180 days after the effective date speci-*  
12 *fied in subsection (h) an advisory board at that entity*  
13 *on matters relating to outreach activities of the De-*  
14 *partment of Veterans Affairs at that entity.*

15           (2) *ENTITY DESCRIBED.*—*An entity described in*  
16 *this paragraph is—*

17                   (A) *a healthcare system of the Department;*

18                   or

19                   (B) *a Veterans Integrated System Network,*  
20 *if such Veterans Integrated System Network does*  
21 *not contain a healthcare system.*

22       (b) *MEMBERSHIP.*—

23           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*Each advisory board estab-*  
24 *lished under subsection (a)(1) shall be, to the max-*

1 *imum extent practicable, composed of individuals se-*  
2 *lected by the Secretary from among the following:*

3 (A) *Individuals who are eminent in their*  
4 *respective fields of public relations.*

5 (B) *Representatives of organizations with*  
6 *offices that focus on communications and dis-*  
7 *tribute messages through major media news out-*  
8 *lets and social media.*

9 (C) *Individuals with experience commu-*  
10 *nicating financial results and business strategy*  
11 *for purposes of shaping a confident brand image.*

12 (D) *Individuals with experience with con-*  
13 *sumer and lifestyle imaging and creating pub-*  
14 *licity for a particular product or service.*

15 (E) *Employees of the Department who are*  
16 *involved in press and public relations strategy*  
17 *for an entity described in subsection (a)(2).*

18 (F) *To the maximum extent practicable,*  
19 *veterans who have experience in press and public*  
20 *relations.*

21 (2) *VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participa-*  
22 *tion of an individual selected under paragraph (1)*  
23 *shall be at the election of the individual.*

24 (c) *DUTIES.—Each advisory board established under*  
25 *subsection (a)(1) at an entity described in subsection (a)(2)*

1 *shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and Inter-*  
2 *governmental Affairs—*

3 *(1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans*  
4 *Affairs is strategically and effectively—*

5 *(A) engaging the public and Department*  
6 *stakeholders to increase awareness nationally re-*  
7 *garding benefits and services furnished by the*  
8 *Department;*

9 *(B) explaining new or changing policies of*  
10 *the Department;*

11 *(C) improving the image and reputation of*  
12 *the Department;*

13 *(D) coordinating and collaborating with*  
14 *national community-based organizations, non-*  
15 *profits, and State and local government agencies;*  
16 *and*

17 *(E) coordinating and collaborating on ef-*  
18 *forts within the Department for the development,*  
19 *implementation, and review of local outreach*  
20 *with respect to benefits that include—*

21 *(i) compensation and pension benefits;*

22 *(ii) insurance benefits;*

23 *(iii) burial and memorial benefits;*

24 *(iv) education benefits;*

1                   (v) vocational rehabilitation and em-  
2                   ployment benefits;

3                   (vi) readjustment counseling benefits;

4                   (vii) loan guarantee benefits; and

5                   (viii) such other benefits as the Sec-  
6                   retary considers appropriate; and

7                   (2) to assist the director of that entity in con-  
8                   ducting such other press or public relations activities  
9                   relating to outreach activities of the Department as  
10                  that advisory board considers appropriate.

11               (d) *MEETING LOCATION.*—

12                   (1) *IN GENERAL.*—If teleconference technology is  
13                   not used, meetings of each advisory board established  
14                   under subsection (a)(1) shall be held at a location  
15                   that is property of the Department.

16                   (2) *TELECONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY.*—Each ad-  
17                   visory board shall use, to the maximum extent prac-  
18                   ticable, teleconference technology.

19               (e) *CONSULTATION.*—Each director of an entity de-  
20               scribed in subsection (a)(2) shall consult with and seek the  
21               advice of the advisory board established at such entity not  
22               less frequently than once every two months on matters relat-  
23               ing to the duties of the advisory board under subsection (c).

24               (f) *ANNUAL REPORTS.*—Not less frequently than each  
25               year, each advisory board established under subsection

1 (a)(1) shall submit to the Secretary a report with such in-  
 2 formation as may be beneficial to the Secretary in pre-  
 3 paring the reports required by section 6308 of title 38,  
 4 United States Code.

5 (g) *TERMINATION*.—Each advisory board established  
 6 under subsection (a)(1) and the authorities and require-  
 7 ments of this section shall terminate three years after the  
 8 effective date specified in subsection (h).

9 (h) *EFFECTIVE DATE*.—This section shall take effect  
 10 on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment  
 11 of this Act.

12 **SEC. 605. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC**  
 13 **REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON OUTREACH AC-**  
 14 **TIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
 15 **FAIRS.**

16 (a) *IN GENERAL*.—Section 6308 is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “even-num-  
 18 bered”; and

19 (2) in subsection (b)—

20 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “bien-  
 21 nial”;

22 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “for leg-  
 23 islative and administrative action” after “Rec-  
 24 ommendations”; and

1           (C) by adding at the end the following new  
2           paragraph:

3           “(3) Recommendations that such administrative  
4           actions as may be taken—

5                   “(A) to maximize resources for outreach ac-  
6                   tivities of the Department; and

7                   “(B) to focus outreach efforts on activities  
8                   that are proven to be more effective.”.

9           (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

10           (1) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for section  
11           6308 is amended by striking “**Biennial**” and in-  
12           serting “**Annual**”.

13           (2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections  
14           at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by striking  
15           the item relating to section 6308 and inserting the  
16           following new item:

“6308. Annual report to Congress.”.

17           **TITLE VII—EMPLOYMENT AND**  
18                   **RELATED MATTERS**

19           **Subtitle A—Employment Matters**

20           **SEC. 701. EMPLOYMENT OF VETERANS WITH THE FEDERAL**  
21                   **GOVERNMENT.**

22           (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4214 is amended—

23                   (1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the  
24           following:

1       “(4)(A) *The requirement under this paragraph is in*  
2 *addition to the appointment of qualified covered veterans*  
3 *under the authority under paragraph (1) by the Depart-*  
4 *ment of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.*

5       “(B) *The head of each agency, in consultation with*  
6 *the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall*  
7 *develop a plan for exercising the authority specified in sub-*  
8 *paragraph (C) during the five-year period beginning on the*  
9 *date of the enactment of the Veterans Health and Benefits*  
10 *Improvement Act of 2013.*

11       “(C) *The authority specified in this subparagraph is*  
12 *the authority as follows:*

13               “(i) *The authority under paragraph (1).*

14               “(ii) *The authority available to the agency con-*  
15 *cerned under the Veterans Employment Opportunities*  
16 *Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–339) and the amend-*  
17 *ments made by that Act.*

18       “(D) *The Director of the Office of Personnel Manage-*  
19 *ment shall ensure that under the plans developed under sub-*  
20 *paragraph (B) agencies shall appoint to existing vacancies*  
21 *not fewer than 15,000 qualified covered veterans during the*  
22 *five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of*  
23 *the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013.*  
24 *For purposes of complying with this subparagraph, an ap-*  
25 *pointment pursuant to the authority referred to in subpara-*

1 *graph (C)(ii) shall not count toward the number required*  
2 *by this subparagraph unless the appointment is to a va-*  
3 *cancy in a full-time, permanent position.”;*

4           (2) *in subsection (d), in the third sentence, by*  
5 *inserting “(including, during the 5-year period begin-*  
6 *ning on the date of the enactment of the Veterans*  
7 *Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, the de-*  
8 *velopment and implementation by each agency of the*  
9 *plan required under subsection (b)(4), which shall in-*  
10 *clude information regarding the grade or pay level of*  
11 *appointments by the agency under the plan and*  
12 *whether the appointments are, or are converted to, ca-*  
13 *reer or career-conditional appointments)” after “sub-*  
14 *section (b) of this section”;* and

15           (3) *in subsection (e)—*

16           (A) *in paragraph (1)—*

17           (i) *in the matter before subparagraph*  
18 *(A), by striking “to the Congress” and in-*  
19 *serting “to the appropriate committees of*  
20 *Congress”;* and

21           (ii) *in subparagraph (A), by inserting*  
22 *“(including, during the 5-year period begin-*  
23 *ning on the date of the enactment of the*  
24 *Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement*  
25 *Act of 2013, the development and implemen-*

1            *tation by the agency of the plan required*  
2            *under subsection (b)(4), which shall include*  
3            *information regarding the grade or pay*  
4            *level of appointments by the agency under*  
5            *the plan and whether the appointments are,*  
6            *or are converted to, permanent appoint-*  
7            *ments)” before the period; and*

8            *(B) by adding at the end the following new*  
9            *paragraph:*

10          *“(3) In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate commit-*  
11 *tees of Congress’ means—*

12            *“(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the*  
13            *Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental*  
14            *Affairs of the Senate; and*

15            *“(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the*  
16            *Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of*  
17            *the House of Representatives.”.*

18          *(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date*  
19 *of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Per-*  
20 *sonnel Management shall submit to the appropriate com-*  
21 *mittees of Congress (as defined under section 4214(e)(3) of*  
22 *title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a))*  
23 *regarding the development of a plan to carry out the*  
24 *amendments made by subsection (a).*

1 **SEC. 702. STATE RECOGNITION OF MILITARY EXPERIENCE**  
2 **OF VETERANS IN ISSUING LICENSES AND**  
3 **CREDENTIALS TO VETERANS.**

4 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 4102A(c) is amended by  
5 striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following new  
6 paragraph (9):

7 “(9)(A) *As a condition of a grant or contract under*  
8 *which funds are made available to a State under subsection*  
9 *(b)(5) in order to carry out section 4103A or 4104 of this*  
10 *title, the State shall—*

11 “(i) *establish a program under which the State*  
12 *administers an examination to each veteran seeking a*  
13 *license or credential issued by the State and issues*  
14 *such license or credential to such veteran without re-*  
15 *quiring such veteran to undergo any training or ap-*  
16 *prenticeship if the veteran—*

17 “(I) *receives a satisfactory score on comple-*  
18 *tion of such examination, as determined by the*  
19 *State;*

20 “(II) *has been awarded a military occupa-*  
21 *tional specialty that is substantially equivalent*  
22 *to or exceeds the requirements of the State for the*  
23 *issuance of such license or credential;*

24 “(III) *has engaged in the active practice of*  
25 *the occupation for which the veteran is seeking*

1           *such license or credential for at least two of the*  
2           *five years preceding the date of application; and*

3           “(IV) *pays any customary or usual fees re-*  
4           *quired by the State for such license or credential;*  
5           *and*

6           “(i) *submit each year to the Secretary a report*  
7           *on the exams administered under clause (i) during*  
8           *the most recently completed 12-month period that in-*  
9           *cludes, for the period covered by the report the num-*  
10          *ber of veterans who completed an exam administered*  
11          *by the State under clause (i) and a description of the*  
12          *results of such exams, disaggregated by occupational*  
13          *field.*

14          “(B) *The Secretary may waive the requirement under*  
15          *subparagraph (A) that a State establish a program de-*  
16          *scribed in that subparagraph as a condition of a grant or*  
17          *contract if the State certifies to the Secretary that the*  
18          *State—*

19                 “(i) *takes into account previous military train-*  
20                 *ing for the purposes of issuing licenses or credentials;*

21                 “(ii) *permits veterans to completely satisfy*  
22                 *through examination any training or testing require-*  
23                 *ments for a license or credential with respect to which*  
24                 *a veteran has previously completed military training;*  
25                 *and*

1           “(iii) for any credential or license for which a  
2           veteran is unable to completely satisfy such require-  
3           ments through examination, the State substantially  
4           reduces training time required to satisfy such require-  
5           ment based on the military training received by the  
6           veteran.

7           “(C) Not less frequently than once each year, the Sec-  
8           retary shall submit to Congress and the Secretary of Defense  
9           a report summarizing the information received by the Sec-  
10          retary under subparagraph (A)(ii).”.

11          (b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—

12           (1) *EXAMS.*—Subparagraph (A) of section  
13          4102A(c)(9) of title 38, United States Code, as added  
14          by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date that is  
15          one year after the date of the enactment of this Act  
16          and shall apply with respect to grants and contracts  
17          described in such subparagraph awarded after such  
18          date.

19           (2) *REPORTS.*—Subparagraph (B) of such sec-  
20          tion 4102A(c)(9), as so added, shall take effect on the  
21          date that is one year after the date of the enactment  
22          of this Act and the Secretary of Labor shall submit  
23          the first report under such subparagraph not later  
24          than two years after the date of the enactment of this  
25          Act.

1 **SEC. 703. REPORT ON UNIFIED GOVERNMENT INTERNET**  
2 **PORTAL FOR VETERANS ON JOBS AVAILABLE**  
3 **THROUGH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.**

4 (a) *IDENTIFICATION OF INTERNET WEBSITES AND AP-*  
5 *PLICATIONS THAT CAN ASSIST VETERANS SEEKING EM-*  
6 *PLOYMENT.—*

7 (1) *IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor shall,*  
8 *in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs,*  
9 *the Secretary of Defense, and other appropriate public*  
10 *and private entities, take appropriate actions to iden-*  
11 *tify Internet websites and applications that can assist*  
12 *veterans in seeking employment.*

13 (2) *PRIORITY IN IDENTIFICATION OF CERTAIN*  
14 *WEBSITES AND APPLICATIONS.—In identifying*  
15 *websites and applications pursuant to paragraph (1),*  
16 *the Secretary shall place a particular priority on*  
17 *identifying websites and applications that do the fol-*  
18 *lowing:*

19 (A) *Match veterans seeking employment*  
20 *with available jobs based on the skills the vet-*  
21 *erans acquired as members of the Armed Forces.*

22 (B) *Permit employers to post information*  
23 *about available jobs.*

24 (b) *REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the effec-*  
25 *tive date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor*  
26 *shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the*

1 *Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House*  
2 *of Representatives a report on the actions of the Secretary*  
3 *under subsection (a). The report shall include an assessment*  
4 *of the feasibility and advisability of creating a single, uni-*  
5 *fied Internet-based employment portal for the Federal Gov-*  
6 *ernment for use by veterans regarding employment through*  
7 *the Federal Government, including the cost of creating the*  
8 *portal, the collaboration with other Federal agencies re-*  
9 *quired to create the portal, and the anticipated use of the*  
10 *portal.*

11 *(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect*  
12 *on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
13 *of this Act.*

14 **SEC. 704. INFORMATION ON DISABILITY-RELATED EMPLOY-**  
15 **MENT AND EDUCATION PROTECTIONS IN**  
16 **TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

17 *(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1144(b) of title 10, United*  
18 *States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following*  
19 *new paragraph:*

20 *“(9) Provide information about disability-related*  
21 *employment and education protections.”.*

22 *(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by sub-*  
23 *section (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after*  
24 *the date of the enactment of this Act.*

1 ***Subtitle B—Small Business Matters***

2 ***SEC. 711. EXPANSION OF CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREF-***  
 3 ***ERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-***  
 4 ***FAIRS TO INCLUDE CONDITIONALLY OWNED***  
 5 ***SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS 100 PERCENT***  
 6 ***OWNED BY VETERANS.***

7 *Section 8127(l) is amended—*

8 *(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting “uncondition-*  
 9 *ally” before “owned by” each place it appears; and*

10 *(2) by adding at the end the following new para-*  
 11 *graph:*

12 *“(3) The term ‘unconditionally owned’ includes,*  
 13 *with respect to ownership of a small business concern,*  
 14 *conditional ownership of such small business concern*  
 15 *if such business concern is 100 percent owned by one*  
 16 *or more veterans.”.*

17 ***SEC. 712. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT UNDER CON-***  
 18 ***TRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DE-***  
 19 ***PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR***  
 20 ***SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY VETERANS OF***  
 21 ***SMALL BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF DIS-***  
 22 ***ABLED VETERAN OWNERS.***

23 *(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127(h) is amended—*

1           (1) in paragraph (3), by striking “rated as” and  
2           all that follows through “disability.” and inserting a  
3           period; and

4           (2) in paragraph (2), by amending subpara-  
5           graph (C) to read as follows:

6           “(C) The date that—

7                 “(i) in the case of a surviving spouse of a  
8                 veteran with a service-connected disability rated  
9                 as 100 percent disabling or who dies as a result  
10                of a service-connected disability, is 10 years after  
11                the date of the veteran’s death; or

12               “(ii) in the case of a surviving spouse of a  
13                veteran with a service-connected disability rated  
14                as less than 100 percent disabling who does not  
15                die as a result of a service-connected disability,  
16                is three years after the date of the veteran’s  
17                death.”.

18           (b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by sub-  
19           section (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days  
20           after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply  
21           with respect to applications received pursuant to section  
22           8127(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, that are verified  
23           on or after such date.

1 **SEC. 713. TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATHS OF**  
2 **SERVICEMEMBER-OWNERS FOR PURPOSES OF**  
3 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CON-**  
4 **TRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES.**

5 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 8127 is amended—

6 (1) *by redesignating subsections (i) through (l)*  
7 *as subsections (j) through (m), respectively; and*

8 (2) *by inserting after subsection (h) the following*  
9 *new subsection (i):*

10 “(i) *TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF*  
11 *SERVICEMEMBER-OWNER.*—(1) *If a member of the Armed*  
12 *Forces owns at least 51 percent of a small business concern*  
13 *and such member is killed in line of duty in the active mili-*  
14 *tary, naval, or air service, the surviving spouse or depend-*  
15 *ent child of such member who acquires such ownership*  
16 *rights in such small business concern shall, for the period*  
17 *described in paragraph (2), be treated as if the surviving*  
18 *spouse or dependent child were a veteran with a service-*  
19 *connected disability for purposes of determining the status*  
20 *of the small business concern as a small business concern*  
21 *owned and controlled by veterans for purposes of con-*  
22 *tracting goals and preferences under this section.*

23 “(2) *The period referred to in paragraph (1) is the*  
24 *period beginning on the date on which the member of the*  
25 *Armed Forces dies and ending on the date as follows:*

1           “(A) *In the case of a surviving spouse, the ear-*  
2           *liest of the following dates:*

3                   “(i) *The date on which the surviving spouse*  
4                   *remarries.*

5                   “(ii) *The date on which the surviving*  
6                   *spouse relinquishes an ownership interest in the*  
7                   *small business concern and no longer owns at*  
8                   *least 51 percent of such small business concern.*

9                   “(iii) *The date that is ten years after the*  
10                  *date of the member’s death.*

11           “(B) *In the case of a dependent child, the earliest*  
12           *of the following dates:*

13                   “(i) *The date on which the surviving de-*  
14                   *pendent child relinquishes an ownership interest*  
15                   *in the small business concern and no longer owns*  
16                   *at least 51 percent of such small business con-*  
17                   *cern.*

18                   “(ii) *The date that is ten years after the*  
19                   *date of the member’s death.”.*

20           (b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*Subsection (i) of section 8127*  
21           *of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a),*  
22           *shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act*  
23           *and shall apply with respect to the deaths of members of*  
24           *the Armed Forces occurring on or after such date.*

1 **SEC. 714. SPECIAL RULE FOR TREATMENT UNDER CON-**  
2 **TRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DE-**  
3 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF SMALL**  
4 **BUSINESS CONCERNS LICENSED IN COMMU-**  
5 **NITY PROPERTY STATES.**

6 *Section 8127, as amended by section 713 of this Act,*  
7 *is further amended by adding at the end the following new*  
8 *subsection:*

9 *“(n) SPECIAL RULE FOR COMMUNITY PROPERTY*  
10 *STATES.—Whenever the Secretary assesses, for purposes of*  
11 *this section, the degree of ownership by an individual of*  
12 *a small business concern licensed in a community property*  
13 *State, the Secretary shall also assess what that degree of*  
14 *ownership would be if such small business concern had been*  
15 *licensed in a State other than a community property State.*  
16 *If the Secretary determines that such individual would have*  
17 *had a greater degree of ownership of the small business con-*  
18 *cern had such small business concern been licensed in a*  
19 *State other than a community property State, the Secretary*  
20 *shall treat, for purposes of this section, such small business*  
21 *concern as if it had been licensed in a State other than*  
22 *a community property State.”.*

1       **TITLE VIII—OTHER MATTERS**

2       **SEC. 801. CONSIDERATION BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS**  
 3                   **AFFAIRS OF RESOURCES DISPOSED OF FOR**  
 4                   **LESS THAN FAIR MARKET VALUE BY INDIVID-**  
 5                   **UALS APPLYING FOR PENSION.**

6       (a) *VETERANS.*—*Section 1522 is amended—*

7               (1) *in subsection (a)—*

8                   (A) *by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-*  
 9                   *retary”;* and

10                  (B) *by adding at the end the following new*  
 11                  *paragraph:*

12               “(2)(A) *If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of*  
 13               *pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or the*  
 14               *spouse of such veteran disposes of covered resources for less*  
 15               *than fair market value on or after the look-back date de-*  
 16               *scribed in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or*  
 17               *discontinue the payment of pension to such veteran under*  
 18               *section 1513 or 1521 of this title, as the case may be, for*  
 19               *months during the period beginning on the date described*  
 20               *in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months*  
 21               *calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).*

22               “(B)(i) *For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-*  
 23               *source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the*  
 24               *estate of the veteran or, if the veteran has a spouse, the cor-*  
 25               *pus of the estates of the veteran and of the veteran’s spouse,*

1 *that the Secretary considers that under all the cir-*  
2 *cumstances, if the veteran or spouse had not disposed of*  
3 *such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or*  
4 *some portion of the resource) be consumed for the veteran's*  
5 *maintenance.*

6       “(ii) *For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary*  
7 *may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary*  
8 *shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer*  
9 *of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instru-*  
10 *ment or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for*  
11 *less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the*  
12 *amount in the corpus of the estate of the veteran or, if the*  
13 *veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of the veteran*  
14 *and of the veteran's spouse, that the Secretary considers,*  
15 *under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be con-*  
16 *sumed for the veteran's maintenance.*

17       “(C)(i) *The look-back date described in this clause is*  
18 *a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause*  
19 *(ii).*

20       “(ii) *The date described in this clause is the date on*  
21 *which the veteran applies for pension under section 1513*  
22 *or 1521 of this title or, if later, the date on which the vet-*  
23 *eran (or the spouse of the veteran) disposes of covered re-*  
24 *sources for less than fair market value.*

1       “(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the  
2 first day of the first month in or after which covered re-  
3 sources were disposed of for less than fair market value and  
4 which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility  
5 under this paragraph.

6       “(E) The number of months calculated under this sub-  
7 paragraph shall be equal to—

8           “(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value  
9 of the portion of covered resources so disposed of by  
10 the veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) on or after  
11 the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i)  
12 that the Secretary determines would reasonably have  
13 been consumed for the veteran’s maintenance; divided  
14 by

15           “(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension  
16 that is payable to a veteran under section 1513 or  
17 1521 of this title, including the maximum amount of  
18 increased pension payable under such sections on ac-  
19 count of family members, but not including any  
20 amount of pension payable under such sections be-  
21 cause a veteran is in need of regular aid and attend-  
22 ance or is permanently housebound,  
23 rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest  
24 whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

25           (2) in subsection (b)—

1                   (A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-  
2                   retary”; and

3                   (B) by adding at the end the following new  
4                   paragraph:

5                   “(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of  
6 increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of  
7 section 1521 of this title on account of a child, the spouse  
8 of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered resources for  
9 less than fair market value on or after the look-back date  
10 described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny  
11 or discontinue payment of such increased pension for  
12 months during the period beginning on the date described  
13 in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months  
14 calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

15                  “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
16 source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the  
17 estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under  
18 all the circumstances, if the veteran, the spouse of the vet-  
19 eran, or the child had not disposed of such resource, it would  
20 be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the re-  
21 source) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

22                  “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
23 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary  
24 shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer  
25 of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instru-

1 *ment or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for*  
2 *less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the*  
3 *amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Sec-*  
4 *retary considers, under all the circumstances, would be rea-*  
5 *sonable to be consumed for the child's maintenance.*

6       “(C)(i) *The look-back date described in this clause is*  
7 *a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause*  
8 *(ii).*

9       “(ii) *The date described in this clause is the date on*  
10 *which the veteran applies for payment of increased pension*  
11 *under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this*  
12 *title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which*  
13 *the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes*  
14 *of covered resources for less than fair market value.*

15       “(D) *The date described in this subparagraph is the*  
16 *first day of the first month in or after which covered re-*  
17 *sources were disposed of for less than fair market value and*  
18 *which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility*  
19 *under this paragraph.*

20       “(E) *The number of months calculated under this sub-*  
21 *paragraph shall be equal to—*

22               “(i) *the total, cumulative uncompensated value*  
23 *of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of*  
24 *by the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child*  
25 *on or after the look-back date described in subpara-*

1 *graph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would rea-*  
2 *sonably have been consumed for the child's mainte-*  
3 *nance; divided by*

4 *“(ii) the maximum amount of increased monthly*  
5 *pension that is payable to a veteran under subsection*  
6 *(c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on ac-*  
7 *count of a child,*

8 *rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest*  
9 *whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;*  
10 *and*

11 *(3) by adding at the end the following new sub-*  
12 *section:*

13 *“(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue*  
14 *payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title*  
15 *or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d),*  
16 *(e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child*  
17 *by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2)*  
18 *of this section to the disposal of resources by an indi-*  
19 *vidual—*

20 *“(i) if—*

21 *“(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the*  
22 *Secretary (in accordance with regulations pro-*  
23 *mulgated by the Secretary) that all resources dis-*  
24 *posed of for less than fair market value have been*

1           *returned to the individual who disposed of the*  
2           *resources; or*

3                   “(II) *the Secretary determines, under proce-*  
4                   *dures established by the Secretary in accordance*  
5                   *with subparagraph (B), that the denial or dis-*  
6                   *continuance of payment would work an undue*  
7                   *hardship; or*

8                   “(ii) *to the extent that any portion of the re-*  
9                   *sources disposed of for less than fair market value*  
10                  *have been returned to the individual who disposed of*  
11                  *the resources.*

12                  “(B) *Undue hardship would be worked by the denial*  
13                  *or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph*  
14                  *(A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would*  
15                  *deprive the individual during the period of denial or dis-*  
16                  *continuance—*

17                         “(i) *of medical care such that the individual’s*  
18                         *life or health would be endangered;*

19                         “(ii) *of necessary food or clothing, or other neces-*  
20                         *sities of life; or*

21                         “(iii) *on such other basis as the Secretary shall*  
22                         *specify in the procedures required by subparagraph*  
23                         *(A)(i)(II).*

24                  “(C) *If payment of pension or increased pension that*  
25                  *would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the*

1 application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) is denied or dis-  
2 continued only in part by reason of the return of resources  
3 as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of the de-  
4 nial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to subpara-  
5 graph (E) of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2), as applicable, shall  
6 be recalculated to take into account such return of resources.

7       “(2) At the time a veteran applies for pension under  
8 section 1513 or 1521 of this title or increased pension under  
9 subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title  
10 on account of a child, and at such other times as the Sec-  
11 retary considers appropriate, the Secretary shall—

12           “(A) inform such veteran of the provisions of  
13 subsections (a)(2) and (b)(2) providing for a period  
14 of ineligibility for payment of pension under such sec-  
15 tions for individuals who make certain dispositions of  
16 resources for less than fair market value, including  
17 the exception for hardship from such period of ineligi-  
18 bility;

19           “(B) obtain from such veteran information  
20 which may be used in determining whether or not a  
21 period of ineligibility for such payments would be re-  
22 quired by reason of such subsections; and

23           “(C) provide such veteran a timely process for  
24 determining whether or not the exception for hardship  
25 shall apply to such veteran.”.

1           (b) *SURVIVING SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.*—Section  
2 1543 is amended—

3           (1) in subsection (a)—

4                   (A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as  
5 paragraph (3);

6                   (B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-  
7 lowing new paragraph (2):

8           “(2)(A) *If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for*  
9 *payment of pension under section 1541 of this title disposes*  
10 *of covered resources for less than fair market value on or*  
11 *after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i),*  
12 *the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pen-*  
13 *sion to such surviving spouse under section 1541 of this*  
14 *title for months during the period beginning on the date*  
15 *described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of*  
16 *months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).*

17           “(B)(i) *For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-*  
18 *source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the*  
19 *estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary considers*  
20 *that under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse*  
21 *had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable*  
22 *that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be con-*  
23 *sumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.*

24           “(ii) *For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary*  
25 *may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary*

1 shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer  
2 of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instru-  
3 ment or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for  
4 less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the  
5 amount in the corpus of the estate of the surviving spouse  
6 that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances,  
7 would be reasonable to be consumed for the surviving  
8 spouse's maintenance.

9       “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is  
10 a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause  
11 (ii).

12       “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
13 which the surviving spouse applies for pension under sec-  
14 tion 1541 of this title or, if later, the date on which the  
15 surviving spouse disposes of covered resources for less than  
16 fair market value.

17       “(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the  
18 first day of the first month in or after which covered re-  
19 sources were disposed of for less than fair market value and  
20 which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility  
21 under this paragraph.

22       “(E) The number of months calculated under this sub-  
23 paragraph shall be equal to—

24               “(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value  
25       of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of

1       *by the surviving spouse on or after the look-back date*  
2       *described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary*  
3       *determines would reasonably have been consumed for*  
4       *the surviving spouse's maintenance; divided by*  
5               *“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension*  
6       *that is payable to a surviving spouse under section*  
7       *1541 of this title, including the maximum amount of*  
8       *increased pension payable under such section on ac-*  
9       *count of a child, but not including any amount of*  
10       *pension payable under such section because a sur-*  
11       *living spouse is in need of regular aid and attend-*  
12       *ance or is permanently housebound,*  
13       *rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest*  
14       *whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;*

15               *(C) by adding at the end the following new*  
16               *paragraph:*

17               *“(4)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for*  
18       *payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or*  
19       *(e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child or*  
20       *the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair mar-*  
21       *ket value on or after the look-back date described in sub-*  
22       *paragraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue*  
23       *payment of such increased pension for months during the*  
24       *period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D)*

1 and equal to the number of months calculated as provided  
2 in subparagraph (E).

3       “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
4 source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the  
5 estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under  
6 all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse or the child  
7 had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable  
8 that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be con-  
9 sumed for the child’s maintenance.

10       “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
11 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary  
12 shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer  
13 of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instru-  
14 ment or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for  
15 less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the  
16 amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Sec-  
17 retary considers, under all the circumstances, would be rea-  
18 sonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

19       “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is  
20 a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause  
21 (ii).

22       “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
23 which the surviving spouse applies for payment of increased  
24 pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of  
25 this title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which

1 *the surviving spouse (or the child) disposes of covered re-*  
 2 *sources for less than fair market value.*

3       “(D) *The date described in this subparagraph is the*  
 4 *first day of the first month in or after which covered re-*  
 5 *sources were disposed of for less than fair market value and*  
 6 *which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility*  
 7 *under this paragraph.*

8       “(E) *The number of months calculated under this*  
 9 *clause shall be equal to—*

10               “(i) *the total, cumulative uncompensated value*  
 11 *of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of*  
 12 *by the surviving spouse (or the child) on or after the*  
 13 *look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that*  
 14 *the Secretary determines would reasonably have been*  
 15 *consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided by*

16               “(ii) *the maximum amount of increased monthly*  
 17 *pension that is payable to a surviving spouse under*  
 18 *subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title*  
 19 *on account of a child,*

20 *rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest*  
 21 *whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;*

22               (2) *in subsection (b)—*

23                       (A) *by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-*  
 24 *retary”;* and

1                   (B) by adding at the end the following new  
2                   paragraph:

3           “(2)(A) If a child otherwise eligible for payment of  
4 pension under section 1542 of this title or any person with  
5 whom such child is residing who is legally responsible for  
6 such child’s support disposes of covered resources for less  
7 than fair market value on or after the look-back date de-  
8 scribed in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or  
9 discontinue the payment of pension to such child under sec-  
10 tion 1542 of this title for months during the period begin-  
11 ning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal  
12 to the number of months calculated as provided in subpara-  
13 graph (E).

14           “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
15 source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the  
16 estate of the child or the corpus of the estate of any person  
17 with whom such child is residing who is legally responsible  
18 for such child’s support that the Secretary considers that  
19 under all the circumstances, if the child or person had not  
20 disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the  
21 resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for  
22 the child’s maintenance.

23           “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
24 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary  
25 shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer

1 of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instru-  
2 ment or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for  
3 less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the  
4 amount in the corpus of the estate described in clause (i)  
5 that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances,  
6 would be reasonable to be consumed for the child's mainte-  
7 nance.

8       “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is  
9 a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause  
10 (ii).

11       “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
12 which the child applies for pension under section 1542 of  
13 this title or, if later, the date on which the child (or person  
14 described in subparagraph (B)) disposes of covered resources  
15 for less than fair market value.

16       “(D) The date described in this clause is the first day  
17 of the first month in or after which covered resources were  
18 disposed of for less than fair market value and which does  
19 not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this  
20 paragraph.

21       “(E) The number of months calculated under this  
22 clause shall be equal to—

23               “(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value  
24 of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of  
25 by the child (or person described in subparagraph

1       (B)) on or after the look-back date described in sub-  
2       paragraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would  
3       reasonably have been consumed for the child's mainte-  
4       nance; divided by

5               “(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension  
6       that is payable to a child under section 1542 of this  
7       title,

8       rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest  
9       whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;  
10      and

11             (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
12      section:

13             “(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue  
14      payment of pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title  
15      or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d),  
16      or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child  
17      by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or  
18      (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of resources by an indi-  
19      vidual—

20             “(i) if—

21               “(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the  
22              Secretary (in accordance with regulations pro-  
23              mulgated by the Secretary) that all resources dis-  
24              posed of for less than fair market value have been

1           *returned to the individual who disposed of the*  
2           *resources; or*

3                   “(II) *the Secretary determines, under proce-*  
4                   *dures established by the Secretary in accordance*  
5                   *with subparagraph (B), that the denial or dis-*  
6                   *continuance of payment would work an undue*  
7                   *hardship; or*

8                   “(ii) *to the extent that any portion of the re-*  
9                   *sources disposed of for less than fair market value*  
10                  *have been returned to the individual who disposed of*  
11                  *the resources.*

12                  “(B) *Undue hardship would be worked by the denial*  
13                  *or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph*  
14                  *(A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would*  
15                  *deprive the individual during the period of denial or dis-*  
16                  *continuance—*

17                       “(i) *of medical care such that the individual’s*  
18                       *life or health would be endangered;*

19                       “(ii) *of necessary food or clothing, or other neces-*  
20                       *sities of life; or*

21                       “(iii) *on such other basis as the Secretary shall*  
22                       *specify in the procedures required by subparagraph*  
23                       *(A)(i)(II).*

24                  “(C) *If payment of pension or increased pension that*  
25                  *would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the*

1 *application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) is denied*  
2 *or discontinued only in part by reason of the return of re-*  
3 *sources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of*  
4 *the denial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to sub-*  
5 *paragraph (E) of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2), as ap-*  
6 *plicable, shall be recalculated to take into account such re-*  
7 *turn of resources.*

8       “(2) *At the time a surviving spouse or child applies*  
9 *for pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title or in-*  
10 *creased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section*  
11 *1541 of this title on account of a child, and at such other*  
12 *times as the Secretary considers appropriate, the Secretary*  
13 *shall—*

14               “(A) *inform such surviving spouse or child of the*  
15 *provisions of subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), and (b)(2), as*  
16 *applicable, providing for a period of ineligibility for*  
17 *payment of pension or increased pension under such*  
18 *sections for individuals who make certain dispositions*  
19 *of resources for less than fair market value, including*  
20 *the exception for hardship from such period of ineligi-*  
21 *bility;*

22               “(B) *obtain from such surviving spouse or child*  
23 *information which may be used in determining*  
24 *whether or not a period of ineligibility for such pay-*

1        *ments would be required by reason of such sub-*  
2        *sections; and*

3            *“(C) provide such surviving spouse or child a*  
4        *timely process for determining whether or not the ex-*  
5        *ception for hardship shall apply to such surviving*  
6        *spouse or child.”.*

7        *(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and*  
8        *(c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as added*  
9        *by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and*  
10       *(c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b),*  
11       *shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date*  
12       *of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect*  
13       *to payments of pension and increased pension applied for*  
14       *after such date and to payments of pension and increased*  
15       *pension for which eligibility is redetermined after such date,*  
16       *except that no reduction in pension shall be made under*  
17       *such subsections because of any disposal of covered resources*  
18       *made before such date.*

19       *(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—*

20            *(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 months*  
21        *after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less*  
22        *frequently than once each year thereafter through*  
23        *2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit*  
24        *to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on*  
25        *the administration of subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and*

1       (c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as  
2       added by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2),  
3       (a)(4), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1543 of such title, as  
4       added by subsection (b), during the most recent 12-  
5       month period.

6               (2) *ELEMENTS.*—Each report submitted under  
7       paragraph (1) shall include the following, for the pe-  
8       riod covered by the report:

9                       (A) *The number of individuals who applied*  
10                      *for pension under chapter 15 of such title.*

11                     (B) *The number of individuals who received*  
12                      *pension under such chapter.*

13                     (C) *The number of individuals with respect*  
14                      *to whom the Secretary denied or discontinued*  
15                      *payment of pension under the subsections re-*  
16                      *ferred to in paragraph (1).*

17                     (D) *A description of any trends identified*  
18                      *by the Secretary regarding pension payments*  
19                      *that have occurred as a result of the amendments*  
20                      *made by this section.*

21                     (E) *Such other information as the Secretary*  
22                      *considers appropriate.*

23               (3) *APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS*  
24       *DEFINED.*—In this subsection, the term “appropriate  
25       committees of Congress” means—

1           (A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and  
 2           the Select Committee on Aging of the Senate;  
 3           and

4           (B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of  
 5           the House of Representatives.

6 **SEC. 802. OFFICE OF NATIONAL VETERANS SPORTS PRO-**  
 7 **GRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS.**

8           (a) *REAUTHORIZATION AND USE OF CERTAIN*  
 9 *FUNDS.*—Subsection (d)(4) of section 322 is amended—

10           (1) by inserting “(A)” after “(4)”;

11           (2) by striking “2013” and inserting “2018”;

12           and

13           (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
 14           paragraph:

15           “(B) Any amounts appropriated or otherwise made  
 16 available to carry out this subsection that the Secretary de-  
 17 termines are unnecessary to carry out this subsection may  
 18 be used by the Secretary to carry out this section.”.

19           (b) *COOPERATION WITH ORGANIZATION.*—Subsection  
 20 (b)(4) of such section is amended by striking “shall, to the  
 21 extent feasible,” and inserting “may”.

22           (c) *SUBSTITUTION OF USOC IN RESPONSIBILITY FOR*  
 23 *UNITED STATES PARALYMPICS, INC.*—Such section is fur-  
 24 ther amended—

25           (1) in subsection (b)(4)—

1           (A) by striking “United States  
2           Paralympics, Inc.,” each place it appears and  
3           inserting “United States Olympic Committee”;  
4           and

5           (B) by striking “sporting” and inserting  
6           “paralympic”; and

7           (2) in subsection (d)(1), by striking “United  
8           States Paralympics, Inc.,” each place it appears and  
9           inserting “United States Olympic Committee”.

10 **SEC. 803. ADAPTIVE SPORTS PROGRAMS FOR DISABLED**  
11 **VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED**  
12 **FORCES THROUGH UNITED STATES OLYMPIC**  
13 **COMMITTEE.**

14           (a) *AUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM.*—Subsection (a) of  
15 *section 521A is amended to read as follows:*

16           “(a) *ADAPTIVE SPORTS PROGRAM.*—(1) *The Secretary*  
17 *may plan, develop, manage, and implement an integrated*  
18 *adaptive sports program for disabled veterans and disabled*  
19 *members of the Armed Forces.*

20           “(2) *The Secretary may award grants to the United*  
21 *States Olympic Committee to carry out paragraph (1).”.*

22           (b) *ADDITIONAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.*—Sub-  
23 *section (c)(2) of such section is amended—*

24           (1) *in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at*  
25 *the end;*

1           (2) *in subparagraph (B), by striking the period*  
2 *at the end and inserting “; and”; and*

3           (3) *by adding at the end the following new sub-*  
4 *paragraph:*

5           “(C) *a statement that includes a detailed de-*  
6 *scription of—*

7                 “(i) *the anticipated personnel, travel, and*  
8 *administrative costs that will be paid for by the*  
9 *United States Olympic Committee with funds*  
10 *provided under this section;*

11                 “(ii) *the financial controls implemented by*  
12 *the United States Olympic Committee, including*  
13 *methods to track expenditures of funds provided*  
14 *under this section;*

15                 “(iii) *the performance metrics to be used by*  
16 *the United States Olympic Committee to evalu-*  
17 *ate the effectiveness of the activities to be carried*  
18 *out with the funds provided under this section;*  
19 *and*

20                 “(iv) *the anticipated personnel, travel, and*  
21 *administrative costs that will be paid for by sub-*  
22 *grantees with funds provided under this sec-*  
23 *tion.”.*

24           (c) *FUNDING.—Subsection (g) of such section is*  
25 *amended by striking “2013” and inserting “2015”.*

1           (d) *EXCEPTION TO PROHIBITION ON COMMINGLING OF*  
 2 *FUNDS.*—*Subsection (h) of such section is amended by in-*  
 3 *serting before the period at the end the following: “, except*  
 4 *that funds appropriated to carry out this section may be*  
 5 *used by the Department to carry out subsections (a), (b),*  
 6 *and (c) of section 322 of this title”.*

7           (e) *SUBSTITUTION OF USOC IN RESPONSIBILITY FOR*  
 8 *UNITED STATES PARALYMPICS, INC.*—*Such section is fur-*  
 9 *ther amended—*

10           (1) *by striking “United States Paralympics,*  
 11 *Inc.,” each place it appears (other than in subsection*  
 12 *(d)) and inserting “United States Olympic Com-*  
 13 *mittee”; and*

14           (2) *in subsection (d)—*

15           (A) *in paragraph (1)—*

16           (i) *by striking “United States*  
 17 *Paralympics, Inc., with the assistance” and*  
 18 *inserting “United States Olympic Com-*  
 19 *mittee, with the assistance”; and*

20           (ii) *by striking “United States*  
 21 *Paralympics, Inc., has entered” and insert-*  
 22 *ing “United States Olympic Committee has*  
 23 *entered”;*

1           (B) in paragraph (4), by striking “United  
2           States Paralympics, Inc.” and inserting “United  
3           States Olympic Committee”; and

4           (C) in paragraph (5), by striking “United  
5           States Paralympics, Inc.,” and inserting  
6           “United States Olympic Committee”.

7           (f) *COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.*—Such section  
8 *is further amended—*

9           (1) by redesignating subsection (l) as subsection  
10          (m); and

11          (2) by inserting after subsection (k) the following  
12          new subsection (l):

13          “(l) *COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.*—(1) Not later  
14 *than two years after the date of the enactment of the Vet-*  
15 *erans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, the*  
16 *Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to*  
17 *Congress a report on the use of grants, if any, awarded to*  
18 *the United States Olympic Committee, under this section*  
19 *during the two-year period preceding the report.*

20          “(2) *The report required under paragraph (1) shall*  
21 *contain the following:*

22                 “(A) *An assessment of how the Department, the*  
23 *United States Olympic Committee, and subgrantees of*  
24 *the United States Olympic Committee, have provided*  
25 *adaptive sports opportunities to veterans and mem-*

1        *bers of the Armed Forces through grants awarded*  
 2        *under this section.*

3            *“(B) An assessment of how the Department over-*  
 4        *sees the use of funds provided under this section by*  
 5        *the United States Olympic Committee and sub-*  
 6        *grantees of the United States Olympic Committee.*

7            *“(C) A description of the benefit provided to vet-*  
 8        *erans and members of the Armed Forces through pro-*  
 9        *grams and activities developed through grants award-*  
 10       *ed under this section.”.*

11        *(g) EXTENSION OF SUNSET.—Subsection (m) of such*  
 12       *section, as redesignated by subsection (f) of this section, is*  
 13       *amended by striking “2013” and inserting “2015”.*

14        *(h) CONFORMING AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—*

15            *(1) SECTION HEADING AMENDMENT.—The head-*  
 16        *ing of such section is amended to read as follows:*

17        **“§ 521A. Adaptive sports programs for disabled vet-**  
 18                    **erans and members of the Armed Forces**  
 19                    **through the United States Olympic Com-**  
 20                    **mittee”.**

21            *(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections*  
 22        *at the beginning of chapter 5 is amended by striking*  
 23        *the item relating to section 521A and inserting the*  
 24        *following new item:*

*“521A. Adaptive sports programs for disabled veterans and members of the Armed  
 Forces through the United States Olympic Committee”.*

1 **SEC. 804. MAKING EFFECTIVE DATE PROVISION CON-**  
 2 **SISTENT WITH PROVISION FOR BENEFITS**  
 3 **ELIGIBILITY OF A VETERAN'S CHILD BASED**  
 4 **UPON TERMINATION OF REMARRIAGE BY AN-**  
 5 **NULMENT.**

6 *Section 5110(l) is amended by striking “, or of an*  
 7 *award or increase of benefits based on recognition of a child*  
 8 *upon termination of the child’s marriage by death or di-*  
 9 *vorce.”.*

10 **SEC. 805. EXTENDED PERIOD FOR SCHEDULING OF MED-**  
 11 **ICAL EXAMS FOR VETERANS RECEIVING TEM-**  
 12 **PORARY DISABILITY RATINGS FOR SEVERE**  
 13 **MENTAL DISORDERS.**

14 *Section 1156(a)(3) is amended by striking “six*  
 15 *months” and inserting “18 months”.*

16 **SEC. 806. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE VETERANS ID CARDS.**

17 *(a) AUTHORITY.—*

18 *(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
 19 *fairs may issue a card to a veteran that identifies the*  
 20 *veteran as a veteran and includes a photo of the vet-*  
 21 *eran and the name of the veteran.*

22 *(2) NO REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT OR RE-*  
 23 *CEIPT OF BENEFITS.—The Secretary may issue a*  
 24 *card under paragraph (1) to a veteran, whether or*  
 25 *not such veteran is—*

1           (A) enrolled in the system of annual patient  
2 enrollment established under section 1705(a) of  
3 title 38, United States Code; or

4           (B) in receipt of educational assistance,  
5 compensation, or pension under laws adminis-  
6 tered by the Secretary.

7           (3) DESIGNATION.—A card issued under para-  
8 graph (1) may be known as a “Veterans ID Card”.

9           (b) RECOGNITION OF VETERANS ID CARDS FOR RE-  
10 DUCED PRICING OF PHARMACEUTICALS, CONSUMER PROD-  
11 UCTS, AND SERVICES.—The Secretary may work with na-  
12 tional retail chains that offer reduced prices on pharma-  
13 ceuticals, consumer products, and services to veterans to en-  
14 sure that such retail chains recognize cards issued under  
15 subsection (a)(1) for purposes of offering reduced prices on  
16 pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services.

17           (c) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term “vet-  
18 eran” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of  
19 title 38, United States Code.

20           (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
21 on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment  
22 of this Act.

1 **SEC. 807. HONORING AS VETERANS CERTAIN PERSONS WHO**  
 2 **PERFORMED SERVICE IN THE RESERVE COM-**  
 3 **PONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.**

4 *Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of title*  
 5 *10, United States Code, to retired pay for nonregular serv-*  
 6 *ice or, but for age, would be entitled under such chapter*  
 7 *to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored as*  
 8 *a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason*  
 9 *of this honor.*

10 **SEC. 808. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF**  
 11 **VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ISSUE AND GUAR-**  
 12 **ANTEE CERTAIN LOANS.**

13 *Section 3729(b)(2) is amended—*

14 *(1) in subparagraph (A)—*

15 *(A) in clause (iii), by striking “October 1,*  
 16 *2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and*

17 *(B) in clause (iv), by striking “October 1,*  
 18 *2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”;*

19 *(2) in subparagraph (B)—*

20 *(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1,*  
 21 *2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and*

22 *(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1,*  
 23 *2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”;*

24 *(3) in subparagraph (C)—*

25 *(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1,*  
 26 *2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and*

1           (B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1,  
2           2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

3           (4) in subparagraph (D)—

4           (A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1,  
5           2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”; and

6           (B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1,  
7           2017” and inserting “May 1, 2018”.

8   **SEC. 809. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERV-**  
9                                   **ICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.**

10       (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary of Veterans Affairs,*  
11 *in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such mili-*  
12 *tary historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends,*  
13 *shall review the process used to determine whether a covered*  
14 *individual served in support of the Armed Forces of the*  
15 *United States during World War II in accordance with sec-*  
16 *tion 1002(d) of title X of Division A of the American Recov-*  
17 *ery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38*  
18 *U.S.C. 107 note) for purposes of determining whether such*  
19 *covered individual is eligible for payments described in such*  
20 *section.*

21       (b) *COVERED INDIVIDUALS.*—*In this section, a covered*  
22 *individual is any individual who timely submitted a claim*  
23 *for benefits under subsection (c) of section 1002 of title X*  
24 *of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment*

1 *Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) based*  
2 *on service as described in subsection (d) of that section.*

3 *(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date*  
4 *of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
5 *fairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of*  
6 *the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the*  
7 *House of Representatives a report detailing any findings,*  
8 *actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action*  
9 *with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).*

10 *(d) PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING*  
11 *CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS PURSUANT TO REVIEW.—*  
12 *If pursuant to the review conducted under subsection (a)*  
13 *the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines to establish a*  
14 *new process for the making of payments as described in that*  
15 *subsection, the process shall include mechanisms to ensure*  
16 *that individuals are not treated as covered individuals for*  
17 *purposes of such payments if such individuals engaged in*  
18 *any disqualifying conduct during service described in that*  
19 *subsection, including collaboration with the enemy or*  
20 *criminal conduct.*

21 **SEC. 810. REPORT ON LAOTIAN MILITARY SUPPORT OF**  
22 **ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES DUR-**  
23 **ING VIETNAM WAR.**

24 *(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the*  
25 *effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of*

1 *Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of De-*  
2 *fense and such agencies and individuals as the Secretary*  
3 *of Veterans Affairs considers appropriate, shall submit to*  
4 *the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—*

5           (1) *the extent to which Laotian military forces*  
6 *provided combat support to the Armed Forces of the*  
7 *United States between February 28, 1961, and May*  
8 *15, 1975;*

9           (2) *whether the current classification by the Ci-*  
10 *vilian/Military Service Review Board of the Depart-*  
11 *ment of Defense of service by individuals of Hmong*  
12 *ethnicity is appropriate; and*

13           (3) *any recommendations for legislative action.*

14           (b) *APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In*  
15 *this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress”*  
16 *means—*

17           (1) *the Committee on Armed Services and the*  
18 *Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and*

19           (2) *the Committee on Armed Services and the*  
20 *Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Rep-*  
21 *resentatives.*

22           (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect*  
23 *on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
24 *of this Act.*

1 **SEC. 811. REPORT ON ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS IN OB-**  
2 **TAINING TRAINING ON PURCHASING AND OP-**  
3 **ERATING A FRANCHISE.**

4 (a) *REPORT REQUIRED.*—Not later than one year  
5 after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Sec-  
6 retary of Labor shall, in consultation with the Secretary  
7 of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Small Business  
8 Administration, and other appropriate entities, submit to  
9 Congress a report on the assistance available to veterans  
10 to obtain training necessary to purchase and operate a  
11 franchise.

12 (b) *ELEMENTS.*—The report required by subsection (a)  
13 shall include the following:

14 (1) *A description of the assistance available for*  
15 *veterans through the Department of Labor, the De-*  
16 *partment of Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Ad-*  
17 *ministration, or any other agency of the Federal Gov-*  
18 *ernment in order to obtain training necessary to pur-*  
19 *chase or operate a franchise.*

20 (2) *Information on the number of veterans who*  
21 *have sought and obtained the training described in*  
22 *paragraph (1) during the five calendar years pre-*  
23 *ceding the report.*

24 (3) *A description of any barriers encountered by*  
25 *veterans in obtaining the training described in para-*  
26 *graph (1).*

1       (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—*This section shall take effect*  
2 *on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment*  
3 *of this Act.*

4 **SEC. 812. LIMITATION ON AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF BO-**  
5 **NUSES PAYABLE TO PERSONNEL OF THE DE-**  
6 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DURING**  
7 **FISCAL YEAR 2014.**

8       *The aggregate amount of bonuses and awards payable*  
9 *to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs under*  
10 *chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, or any other*  
11 *provision of such title, during fiscal year 2014 may not*  
12 *exceed \$368,000,000.*

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.”.

**Calendar No. 258**

113<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> Session

**S. 944**

[Report No. 113-123]

---

---

**A BILL**

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.

---

---

DECEMBER 9, 2013

Reported with an amendment and an amendment to the title