

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5524

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct annual surveys of veterans on experiences with medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 2019

Mr. RICE of South Carolina introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct annual surveys of veterans on experiences with medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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 “Survey Our
5 Servicemembers Act” or the “SOS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SURVEY OF VETERAN EXPERIENCES WITH DEPART-**
2 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL**
3 **CARE.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
5 shall seek to enter into a contract with a non-government
6 entity with significant experience conducting scientifically
7 verifiable surveys and research to conduct an annual sur-
8 vey of a statistically significant sample of veterans who
9 reside in the geographic area served by each of the medical
10 facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to deter-
11 mine the nature of the experiences of such veterans in ob-
12 taining hospital care and medical services furnished by the
13 Secretary at each such medical facility. Each such survey
14 shall be conducted using scientific and verifiable methods.
15 Such contract shall provide that the non-government enti-
16 ty shall conduct such annual surveys during the five-year
17 period beginning on the date on which the Secretary en-
18 ters into the contract with the non-government entity.

19 (b) CONTENTS.—The contract entered into under
20 subsection (a) shall provide that each survey conducted
21 pursuant to the contract shall be specific to a medical fa-
22 cility of the Department and shall include questions relat-
23 ing to the experiences of veterans in requesting and receiv-
24 ing appointments for hospital care and medical services
25 furnished by the Secretary at that medical facility, includ-
26 ing questions relating to, with respect to veterans who

1 have received hospital care or medical services at non-De-
2 partment facilities—

3 (1) the factors considered by the veteran with
4 respect to choosing whether to receive hospital care
5 or medical services at a facility of the Department
6 or at a non-Department facility;

7 (2) the quality of hospital care or medical serv-
8 ices the veteran has received at non-Department fa-
9 cilities; and

10 (3) the differences in the cost to the veteran of
11 receiving hospital care or medical services at non-
12 Department facilities and hospital care or medical
13 services at medical facilities of the Department.

14 (c) CONSULTATION.—The contract entered into
15 under subsection (a) shall provide that in designing and
16 conducting the surveys for each medical facility of the De-
17 partment pursuant to such contract, the non-government
18 entity shall consult with veterans service organizations.

19 (d) CERTIFICATION.—The contract entered into
20 under subsection (a) shall provide that—

21 (1) before conducting a survey pursuant to the
22 contract, the non-government entity shall submit the
23 proposed survey to the Comptroller General who
24 shall assess whether the survey is scientifically valid

1 and whether the proposed sample size of veterans to
2 be surveyed is statistically significant; and

3 (2) the non-government entity may not conduct
4 such a survey until the Comptroller General provides
5 such a certification for the survey.

6 (e) SUBMITTAL OF RESULTS AND PUBLIC AVAIL-
7 ABILITY OF INFORMATION.—Not later than 30 days after
8 the completion of the surveys conducted pursuant to a
9 contract entered into under subsection (a) for a year, the
10 Secretary shall make the results of the surveys publicly
11 available on the internet website of the Department.

12 (f) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—Subchapter I of chap-
13 ter 35 of title 44, United States Code shall not apply to
14 this section.

15 (g) DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The Sec-
16 retary shall enter into a contract under subsection (a) for
17 each medical facility of the Department by not later than
18 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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