

113TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 2413

To improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and  
for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 2, 2014

Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. REED, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. KAINE, Mr. WALSH, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. STABENOW) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To improve the provision of medical services and benefits  
to veterans, 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
5 “Restoring Veterans Trust Act of 2014”.

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for  
7 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.

Subtitle A—Improvement of Access to Care by Strengthening Management, Technology, and Metrics

- Sec. 101. Implementation of upgraded Department of Veterans Affairs electronic scheduling system for appointments for receipt of health care from the Department.
- Sec. 102. Independent assessment of the scheduling process for medical appointments for care from Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 103. Modification of liability for breach of period of obligated service under Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program for primary care physicians.
- Sec. 104. Program of education at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences with specialization in primary care.
- Sec. 105. Treatment of staffing shortage and biannual report on staffing of medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 106. Clinic management training program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 107. Inclusion of Department of Veterans Affairs facilities in National Health Service Corps Scholarship and loan repayment programs.
- Sec. 108. Improvement of access by veterans to health care from non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers.
- Sec. 109. Extension of and report on joint incentives program of Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense.
- Sec. 110. Transfer of authority for payments for hospital care, medical services, and other health care from non-Department providers to the Chief Business Office of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department.
- Sec. 110A. Contracting for hospital care, medical services, and other health care.
- Sec. 110B. Enhancement of collaboration between Department of Veterans Affairs and Indian Health Service.
- Sec. 110C. Enhancement of collaboration between Department of Veterans Affairs and Native Hawaiian health care systems.
- Sec. 110D. Improvement of access of veterans to mobile vet centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 110E. Commission on Access to Care.
- Sec. 110F. Removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance.
- Sec. 110G. Authorization of emergency appropriations.

Subtitle B—Expansion and Improvements of Benefits Generally

- Sec. 111. Further extension of period of eligibility for health care for veterans of combat service during certain periods of hostilities and war.
- Sec. 112. Expansion of assistance and support services for caregivers of veterans.
- Sec. 113. Improved access to appropriate immunizations for veterans.
- Sec. 114. Expansion of provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans.
- Sec. 115. 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. 116. Expansion of emergency treatment reimbursement for certain veterans.

- Sec. 117. Extension of sunset date regarding transportation of individuals to and from facilities of Department of Veterans Affairs and requirement of report.
- Sec. 118. Extension and modification of pilot program on assisted living services for veterans with traumatic brain injury.
- Sec. 119. Reauthorization and modification of pilot program of enhanced contract care authority for health care needs of veterans.

#### Subtitle C—Health Care Administration

- Sec. 121. Extension of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professional Scholarship Program.
- Sec. 122. Expansion of availability of prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.
- Sec. 123. Limitation on expansion of dialysis pilot program.
- Sec. 124. Requirement for Department of Veterans Affairs policy on reporting cases of infectious diseases at facilities of the Department.
- Sec. 125. Independent assessment of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 126. Requirements in connection with next update of current strategic plan for Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 127. Report on provision of telemedicine services.
- Sec. 128. Designation of Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

#### Subtitle D—Complementary and Alternative Medicine

- Sec. 131. Expansion of research and education on and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine to veterans.
- Sec. 132. Program on integration of complementary and alternative medicine within Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.
- Sec. 133. 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. 134. Program on use of wellness programs as complementary approach to mental health care for veterans and family members of veterans.

#### Subtitle E—Mental Health Care

- Sec. 141. Inclusion of mental health professionals in the education and training program for health personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 142. Report on provision of mental health services for families of certain veterans at facilities of the Department.
- Sec. 143. Annual report on community mental health partnership pilot program.

#### Subtitle F—Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement

- Sec. 151. Restorative dental services for veterans.
- Sec. 152. Pilot program on expansion of furnishing of dental care to all enrolled veterans.
- Sec. 153. Program on education to promote dental health in veterans.
- Sec. 154. Authorization of appropriations.

Subtitle G—Health Care Related to Sexual Trauma

- Sec. 161. Expansion of eligibility for sexual trauma counseling and treatment to veterans on inactive duty training.
- Sec. 162. Provision of counseling and treatment for sexual trauma by the Department of Veterans Affairs to members of the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 163. Department of Veterans Affairs screening mechanism to detect incidents of domestic abuse.
- Sec. 164. Reports on military sexual trauma and domestic abuse.

Subtitle H—Reproductive Treatment and Services

- Sec. 171. Clarification that fertility counseling and treatment are medical services which the Secretary may furnish to veterans like other medical services.
- Sec. 172. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans.
- Sec. 173. Adoption assistance for severely wounded veterans.
- Sec. 174. Regulations on furnishing of fertility counseling and treatment and adoption assistance by Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 175. Coordination between Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense on furnishing of fertility counseling and treatment.
- Sec. 176. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research.
- Sec. 177. Annual report on provision of fertility counseling and treatment furnished by Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 178. Program on assistance for child care for certain veterans.
- Sec. 179. Counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.

Subtitle I—Major Medical Facility Leases

- Sec. 181. Authorization of major medical facility leases.
- Sec. 182. Budgetary treatment of Department of Veterans Affairs major medical facilities leases.

TITLE II—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS

- Sec. 201. Extension of initial period for increased dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses with children.
- Sec. 202. Eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation, educational assistance, and housing loans for surviving spouses who remarry after age 55.
- Sec. 203. Extension of marriage delimiting date for surviving spouses of Persian Gulf War veterans to qualify for death pension.
- Sec. 204. Making effective date provision consistent with provision for benefits eligibility of a veteran's child based upon termination of remarriage by annulment.
- Sec. 205. Expansion of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship.
- Sec. 206. Expansion of Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program.
- Sec. 207. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.
- Sec. 208. Program on assisted living for children of Vietnam veterans and certain Korea service veterans born with spina bifida.
- Sec. 209. 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. 210. Program evaluation on survivors' and dependents' educational assistance authorities.

#### TITLE III—EDUCATION MATTERS

Sec. 301. 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. 302. 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. 303. Prohibitions relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Sec. 304. Review of utilization of educational assistance to pursue programs of training on the job and participating employers.

Sec. 305. Report on debt management and collection.

Sec. 306. Restoration of prior reporting fee multipliers.

#### TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS

##### Subtitle A—Training and Other Services for Veterans Seeking Employment

Sec. 401. Extension of authority of Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide rehabilitation and vocational benefits to members of Armed Forces with severe injuries or illnesses.

##### Subtitle B—Employment of Veterans and Recognition of Veteran Status With Respect to Employment Related Matters

Sec. 411. Employment of veterans with the Federal Government.

Sec. 412. State recognition of military experience of veterans in issuing licenses and credentials to veterans.

Sec. 413. Report on discrimination against members of reserve components of Armed Forces and veterans in civilian labor market.

##### Subtitle C—Improving Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services

Sec. 421. Suspension, termination, or debarment of contractors for repeated violations of employment or reemployment rights of members of uniformed services.

##### Subtitle D—Small Business Matters

Sec. 431. Expansion of contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs to include conditionally owned small business concerns 100 percent owned by veterans.

Sec. 432. 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. 433. Treatment of businesses after deaths of servicemember-owners for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences.

Sec. 434. Special rule for treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs of small business concerns licensed in community property States.

- Sec. 435. Report on assistance for veterans in obtaining training on purchasing and operating a franchise.

TITLE V—ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
IMPROVEMENTS

- Sec. 501. Administration of Veterans Integrated Service Networks.  
 Sec. 502. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.  
 Sec. 503. Commission on Capital Planning for Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities.  
 Sec. 504. Advance appropriations for certain accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs.  
 Sec. 505. Public access to Department of Veterans Affairs research and data sharing between Departments.  
 Sec. 506. Assessment by Comptroller General of the United States of information made available by Veterans Benefits Administration.  
 Sec. 507. Comptroller general report on advisory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE VI—IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR  
COMPENSATION

Subtitle A—Claims Based on Military Sexual Trauma

- Sec. 601. Medical examination and opinion for disability compensation claims based on military sexual trauma.  
 Sec. 602. Case representative officers for military sexual trauma support.  
 Sec. 603. Report on standard of proof for service-connection of mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma.  
 Sec. 604. Reports on claims for disabilities incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

Subtitle B—Claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

- Sec. 611. Program on treatment of certain applications for dependency and indemnity compensation as fully developed claims.  
 Sec. 612. Report by Secretary of Veterans Affairs on improving timeliness and accuracy of administration of claims for dependency and indemnity compensation and pension for surviving spouses and children.

Subtitle C—Agency of Original Jurisdiction

- Sec. 621. Working group to improve employee work credit and work management systems of Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.  
 Sec. 622. Task force on retention and training of Department of Veterans Affairs claims processors and adjudicators.  
 Sec. 623. Reports on requests by the Department of Veterans Affairs for records of other Federal agencies.  
 Sec. 624. Recognition of representatives of Indian tribes in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.  
 Sec. 625. Program on participation of local and tribal governments in improving quality of claims for disability compensation submitted to Department of Veterans Affairs.

- Sec. 626. Department of Veterans Affairs notice of average times for processing compensation claims.
- Sec. 627. Quarterly reports on progress of Department of Veterans Affairs in eliminating backlog of claims for compensation that have not been adjudicated.
- Sec. 628. Reports on use of existing authorities to expedite benefits decisions.
- Sec. 629. Reports on Department disability medical examinations and prevention of unnecessary medical examinations.

Subtitle D—Board of Veterans' Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

- Sec. 631. Determination of manner of appearance for hearings before Board of Veterans' Appeals.

TITLE VII—OUTREACH MATTERS

- Sec. 701. Program to increase coordination of outreach efforts between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Federal, State, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations.
- Sec. 702. Cooperative agreements between Secretary of Veterans Affairs and States on outreach activities.
- Sec. 703. Advisory committee on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 704. Advisory boards on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs relating to health care.
- Sec. 705. Modification of requirement for periodic reports to Congress on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 706. Budget transparency for outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE VIII—ENHANCEMENT OF RIGHTS UNDER  
SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT

- Sec. 801. Modification of period determining which actions are covered under stay of proceedings and adjustment of obligation protections concerning mortgages and trust deeds of members of uniformed services.
- Sec. 802. Protections for members of uniformed services regarding professional licenses.
- Sec. 803. Prohibition on denial of credit because of eligibility for protection.
- Sec. 804. Interest rate limitation on debt entered into during military service to consolidate or refinance student loans incurred before military service.
- Sec. 805. Termination of residential leases after assignment or relocation to quarters of United States or housing facility under jurisdiction of uniformed service.
- Sec. 806. Protection of surviving spouse with respect to mortgage foreclosure.
- Sec. 807. Improved protection of members of uniformed services against default judgments.
- Sec. 808. Clarification regarding application of enforcement authority of Attorney General and private right of action under Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.
- Sec. 809. Clerical amendments.

TITLE IX—OTHER MATTERS

- Sec. 901. Repeal of certain reductions made by Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.
- Sec. 902. Consideration by Secretary of Veterans Affairs of resources disposed of for less than fair market value by individuals applying for pension.
- Sec. 903. Extension of reduced pension for certain veterans covered by medicaid plans for services furnished by nursing facilities.
- Sec. 904. Conditions on award of per diem payments by Secretary of Veterans Affairs for provision of housing or services to homeless veterans.
- Sec. 905. Exception to certain recapture requirements and treatment of contracts and grants with State homes with respect to care for homeless veterans.
- Sec. 906. Extended period for scheduling of medical exams for veterans receiving temporary disability ratings for severe mental disorders.
- Sec. 907. Authority to issue Veterans ID Cards.
- Sec. 908. Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 909. Extension of authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to obtain information from Secretary of the Treasury and Commissioner of Social Security for income verification purposes.
- Sec. 910. Extension of authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to issue and guarantee certain loans.
- Sec. 911. Eligibility for interment in national cemeteries for certain naturalized individuals.
- Sec. 912. Canadian Forces Base Gagetown independent study and registry.
- Sec. 913. Review of determination of certain service in Philippines during World War II.
- Sec. 914. Review of determination of certain service of merchant mariners during World War II.
- Sec. 915. Report on practices of the Department of Veterans Affairs to adequately provide services to veterans with hearing loss.
- Sec. 916. Report on joint programs of Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense with respect to hearing loss of members of the Armed Forces and veterans.
- Sec. 917. Designation of American World War II Cities.

**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  
 4 of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provi-  
 5 sion, the reference shall be considered to be made to a  
 6 section or other provision of title 38, United States Code.

1           **TITLE I—HEALTH CARE**  
2                   **MATTERS**  
3 **Subtitle A—Improvement of Access**  
4 **to Care by Strengthening Man-**  
5 **agement, Technology, and**  
6 **Metrics**

7 **SEC. 101. IMPLEMENTATION OF UPGRADED DEPARTMENT**  
8                   **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ELECTRONIC SCHED-**  
9                   **ULING SYSTEM FOR APPOINTMENTS FOR RE-**  
10                  **CEIPT OF HEALTH CARE FROM THE DEPART-**  
11                  **MENT.**

12           (a) IMPLEMENTATION.—

13               (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than March 31,  
14           2016, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall fully  
15           implement an upgraded and centralized electronic  
16           scheduling system described in subsection (b) for ap-  
17           pointments by eligible individuals for health care  
18           from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

19               (2) AGILE SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT METH-  
20           ODOLOGIES.—In implementing the upgraded elec-  
21           tronic scheduling system required by paragraph (1),  
22           the Secretary shall use agile software development  
23           methodologies to fully implement portions of such  
24           system every 180 days beginning on the date on  
25           which the Secretary begins the implementation of

1 such system, or enters into a contract for the imple-  
2 mentation of such system, and ending on the date  
3 on which such system is fully implemented.

4 (b) ELECTRONIC SCHEDULING SYSTEM.—The up-  
5 graded electronic scheduling system described in this sub-  
6 section shall include mechanisms to achieve the following:

7 (1) An efficient and effective graphical user  
8 interface with a calendar view for use by employees  
9 of the Department in scheduling appointments that  
10 enables error-free scheduling of the health care re-  
11 sources of the Department.

12 (2) A capability to assist employees of the De-  
13 partment to easily and consistently implement poli-  
14 cies of the Department with respect to scheduling of  
15 appointments, including with respect to priority for  
16 appointments for certain eligible individuals.

17 (3) A capability for employees of the Depart-  
18 ment to sort and view through a unified interface  
19 the availability for each health care provider of the  
20 Department or other health care resource of the De-  
21 partment.

22 (4) A capability for employees of the Depart-  
23 ment to sort and view appointments for and appoint-  
24 ment requests made by a particular eligible indi-  
25 vidual.

1           (5) A capability for seamless coordination of  
2           appointments for primary care, specialty care, con-  
3           sultations, or any other health care matter among  
4           facilities of the Department.

5           (6) A capability for eligible individuals to access  
6           the system remotely and schedule appointments di-  
7           rectly through the system.

8           (7) An electronic timestamp of each activity  
9           made by an eligible individual or on behalf of such  
10          individual with respect to an appointment or the  
11          scheduling of an appointment that shall be kept in  
12          the medical record of such individual.

13          (8) A seamless connection to the Computerized  
14          Patient Record System of the Department so that  
15          employees of the Department, when scheduling an  
16          appointment for an eligible individual, have access to  
17          recommendations from the health care provider of  
18          such individual with respect to when such individual  
19          should receive an appointment.

20          (9) A capability to provide automated reminders  
21          to eligible individuals on upcoming appointments  
22          through various electronic and voice media.

23          (10) A capability to provide automated remind-  
24          ers to employees of the Department when an eligible

1 individual who is on the wait-list for an appointment  
2 becomes eligible to schedule an appointment.

3 (11) A dashboard capability to support efforts  
4 to track the following metrics in aggregate and by  
5 medical facility with respect to health care provided  
6 to eligible individuals under the laws administered  
7 by the Secretary:

8 (A) The number of days into the future  
9 that the schedules of health care providers are  
10 available to schedule an appointment.

11 (B) The number of providers available to  
12 see patients each day.

13 (C) The number of support personnel  
14 working each day.

15 (D) The types of appointments available.

16 (E) The rate at which patients fail to ap-  
17 pear for appointments.

18 (F) The number of appointments canceled  
19 by a patient on a daily basis.

20 (G) The number of appointments canceled  
21 by a health care provider on a daily basis.

22 (H) The number of patients on the wait  
23 list at any given time.

24 (I) The number of appointments scheduled  
25 on a daily basis.

1           (J) The number of appointments available  
2           to be scheduled on a daily basis.

3           (K) The number of patients seen on a  
4           daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

5           (L) Wait-times for an appointment with a  
6           health care provider of the Department.

7           (M) Wait-times for an appointment with a  
8           non-Department health care provider.

9           (N) Wait-times for a referral to a specialist  
10          or consult.

11          (12) A capability to provide data on the capac-  
12          ity of medical facilities of the Department for pur-  
13          poses of determining the resources needed by the  
14          Department to provide health care to eligible individ-  
15          uals.

16          (13) Any other capabilities as specified by the  
17          Secretary for purposes of this section.

18          (c) PLAN.—

19           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after  
20          the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary  
21          shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
22          of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
23          fairs of the House of Representatives a plan for im-  
24          plementing the upgraded electronic scheduling sys-  
25          tem required by subsection (a).

1           (2) ELEMENTS.—The plan required by para-  
2 graph (1) shall include the following:

3           (A) A description of the priorities of the  
4 Secretary for implementing the requirements of  
5 the system under subsection (b).

6           (B) A detailed description of the manner  
7 in which the Secretary will fully implement such  
8 system, including deadlines for completing each  
9 such requirement.

10          (3) UPDATE.—Not later than 90 days after the  
11 submittal of the plan required by paragraph (1), and  
12 not less frequently than every 90 days thereafter  
13 until such system is fully implemented, the Secretary  
14 shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
15 of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
16 fairs of the House of Representatives an update on  
17 the status of the implementation of such plan.

18          (d) USE OF AMOUNTS.—The Secretary may use  
19 amounts available to the Department of Veterans Affairs  
20 for the appropriations account under the heading “MED-  
21 ICAL SERVICES” in implementing and carrying out the up-  
22 graded electronic scheduling system required by sub-  
23 section (a).

24          (e) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this sec-  
25 tion, the term “eligible individual” means an individual

1 eligible for hospital, nursing home, domiciliary, medical  
2 care, or other health care under the laws administered by  
3 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

4 **SEC. 102. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHED-**  
5 **ULING PROCESS FOR MEDICAL APPOINT-**  
6 **MENTS FOR CARE FROM DEPARTMENT OF**  
7 **VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

8 (a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—

9 (1) CONTRACT.—Not later than 30 days after  
10 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary  
11 of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract with  
12 an independent third party to assess the process at  
13 each medical facility of the Department of Veterans  
14 Affairs for scheduling appointments for veterans to  
15 receive hospital care, medical services, or other  
16 health care from the Department.

17 (2) ELEMENTS.—In carrying out the assess-  
18 ment required by paragraph (1), the independent  
19 third party shall do the following:

20 (A) Review all training materials per-  
21 taining to scheduling of appointments at each  
22 medical facility of the Department.

23 (B) Assess whether all employees of the  
24 Department conducting tasks related to sched-

1           uling are properly trained for conducting such  
2           tasks.

3           (C) Assess whether changes in the tech-  
4           nology or system used in scheduling appoint-  
5           ments are necessary to limit access to the sys-  
6           tem to only those employees that have been  
7           properly trained in conducting such tasks.

8           (D) Assess whether health care providers  
9           of the Department are making changes to their  
10          schedules that hinder the ability of employees  
11          conducting such tasks to perform such tasks.

12          (E) Assess whether the establishment of a  
13          centralized call center throughout the Depart-  
14          ment for scheduling appointments at medical  
15          facilities of the Department would improve the  
16          process of scheduling such appointments.

17          (F) Assess whether booking templates for  
18          each medical facility or clinic of the Depart-  
19          ment would improve the process of scheduling  
20          such appointments.

21          (G) Recommend any actions to be taken by  
22          the Department to improve the process for  
23          scheduling such appointments, including the fol-  
24          lowing:

1 (i) Changes in training materials pro-  
2 vided to employees of the Department with  
3 respect to conducting tasks related to  
4 scheduling such appointments.

5 (ii) Changes in monitoring and assess-  
6 ment conducted by the Department of  
7 wait-times of veterans for such appoint-  
8 ments.

9 (iii) Changes in the system used to  
10 schedule such appointments, including  
11 changes to improve how the Department—

12 (I) measures wait-times of vet-  
13 erans for such appointments;

14 (II) monitors the availability of  
15 health care providers of the Depart-  
16 ment; and

17 (III) provides veterans the ability  
18 to schedule such appointments.

19 (iv) Such other actions as the inde-  
20 pendent third party considers appropriate.

21 (3) TIMING.—The independent third party car-  
22 rying out the assessment required by paragraph (1)  
23 shall complete such assessment not later than 180  
24 days after entering into the contract described in  
25 such paragraph.

1 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date  
 2 on which the independent third party completes the as-  
 3 sessment under this section, the Secretary shall submit to  
 4 the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the  
 5 Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Rep-  
 6 resentatives a report on the results of such assessment.

7 **SEC. 103. MODIFICATION OF LIABILITY FOR BREACH OF PE-**  
 8 **RIOD OF OBLIGATED SERVICE UNDER**  
 9 **HEALTH PROFESSIONALS EDUCATIONAL AS-**  
 10 **SISTANCE PROGRAM FOR PRIMARY CARE**  
 11 **PHYSICIANS.**

12 Section 7617 is amended—

13 (1) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “If a par-  
 14 ticipant” and inserting “Except as provided in sub-  
 15 section (d), if a participant”; and

16 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
 17 section:

18 “(d) Liability shall not arise under subsection (c) in  
 19 the case of a participant otherwise covered by that sub-  
 20 section who has pursued a course of education or training  
 21 in primary care if—

22 “(1) the participant—

23 “(A) does not obtain, or fails to maintain,  
 24 employment as a Department employee due to

1 staffing changes approved by the Under Sec-  
2 retary for Health; or

3 “(B) does not obtain, or fails to maintain,  
4 employment in a position of primary care physi-  
5 cian in the Veterans Health Administration  
6 due, as determined by the Secretary, to a num-  
7 ber of primary care physicians in the Adminis-  
8 tration that is excess to the needs of the Ad-  
9 ministration; and

10 “(2) the participant agrees to accept and main-  
11 tain employment as a primary care physician with  
12 another department or agency of the Federal Gov-  
13 ernment (with such employment to be under such  
14 terms and conditions as are jointly agreed upon by  
15 the participant, the Secretary, and the head of such  
16 department or agency, including terms and condi-  
17 tions relating to a period of obligated service as a  
18 primary care physician with such department or  
19 agency) if such employment is offered to the partici-  
20 pant by the Secretary and the head of such depart-  
21 ment or agency.”.

1 **SEC. 104. PROGRAM OF EDUCATION AT UNIFORMED SERV-**  
2 **ICES UNIVERSITY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES**  
3 **WITH SPECIALIZATION IN PRIMARY CARE.**

4 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED UNDER HEALTH PROFES-  
5 SIONALS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 76 is amended by  
7 adding after subchapter VII the following new sub-  
8 chapter:

9 “SUBCHAPTER VIII—PROGRAM OF EDUCATION  
10 AT UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF  
11 THE HEALTH SCIENCES WITH SPECIALIZA-  
12 TION IN PRIMARY CARE

13 **“§ 7691. Authority for program**

14 “As part of the Educational Assistance Program, the  
15 Secretary shall, in collaboration with the Secretary of De-  
16 fense, carry out a program to permit individuals to enroll  
17 in the Uniformed Services University of the Health  
18 Sciences under chapter 104 of title 10 to pursue a medical  
19 education with a specialization in primary care. The pro-  
20 gram shall be known as the Department of Veterans Af-  
21 fairs Primary Care Educational Assistance Program (in  
22 this chapter referred to as the ‘Primary Care Educational  
23 Assistance Program’).

1 **“§ 7692. Selection; agreement; ineligibility for certain**  
2 **other educational assistance**

3 “(a) SELECTION.—(1) Medical students at the Uni-  
4 formed Services University of the Health Sciences pursu-  
5 ant to the Primary Care Educational Assistance Program  
6 shall be selected by the Secretary, in consultation with the  
7 Secretary of Defense, in accordance with procedures es-  
8 tablished by the Secretaries for purposes of the Program.

9 “(2) The procedures referred to in paragraph (1)  
10 shall emphasize the basic requirement that students dem-  
11 onstrate a motivation and dedication to a medical career  
12 in primary care.

13 “(3) The number of medical students selected each  
14 year for first-year enrollment in the University pursuant  
15 to this subsection shall be jointly determined by the Sec-  
16 retary and the Secretary of Defense.

17 “(b) AGREEMENT.—An agreement between the Sec-  
18 retary and a participant in the Primary Care Educational  
19 Assistance Program shall (in addition to the requirements  
20 set forth in section 7604 of this title) include the following:

21 “(1) The Secretary’s agreement to cover the  
22 costs of the participant’s education and training at  
23 the Uniformed Services University of the Health  
24 Sciences under chapter 104 of title 10 as if the par-  
25 ticipant were a medical student enrolled in the Uni-  
26 versity pursuant to section 2114 of title 10.

1           “(2) The participant’s agreement to serve as a  
2           full-time employee in the Veterans Health Adminis-  
3           tration in a position as a primary care physician for  
4           a period of time (in this subchapter referred to as  
5           the ‘period of obligated service’) of one calendar year  
6           for each school year or part thereof for which the  
7           participant was a medical student at the Uniformed  
8           Services University of the Health Sciences pursuant  
9           to the Primary Care Educational Assistance Pro-  
10          gram, but for not less than one year.

11          “(c) INELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER EDUCATIONAL AS-  
12          SISTANCE.—An individual who receives education and  
13          training under the Primary Care Educational Assistance  
14          Program shall not be eligible for other assistance under  
15          this chapter in connection with such education and train-  
16          ing.

17          **“§ 7693. Obligated service**

18          “(a) IN GENERAL.—Each participant in the Primary  
19          Care Educational Assistance Program shall provide serv-  
20          ice as a full-time employee of the Department in the Vet-  
21          erans Health Administration in a primary care position  
22          for the period of obligated service provided in the agree-  
23          ment of the participant entered into for purposes of this  
24          subchapter. Such service shall be provided in a full-time

1 primary care clinical practice in an assignment or location  
2 determined by the Secretary.

3 “(b) SERVICE COMMENCEMENT DATE.—(1) Not  
4 later than 60 days before a participant’s service com-  
5 mencement date, the Secretary shall notify the participant  
6 of that service commencement date. That date is the date  
7 for the beginning of the participant’s period of obligated  
8 service.

9 “(2) As soon as possible after a participant’s service  
10 commencement date, the Secretary shall—

11 “(A) in the case of a participant who is not a  
12 full-time employee in the Veterans Health Adminis-  
13 tration, appoint the participant as such an employee;  
14 and

15 “(B) in the case of a participant who is an em-  
16 ployee in the Veterans Health Administration but is  
17 not serving in a position for which the participant’s  
18 course of education or training prepared the partici-  
19 pant, assign the participant to such a position.

20 “(3) A participant’s service commencement for pur-  
21 poses of this subsection date is the date upon which the  
22 participant becomes licensed to practice medicine in a  
23 State.

24 “(c) COMMENCEMENT OF OBLIGATED SERVICE.—A  
25 participant in the Primary Care Educational Assistance

1 Program shall be considered to have begun serving the  
2 participant's period of obligated service—

3           “(1) on the date on which the participant is ap-  
4 pointed as a full-time employee in the Veterans  
5 Health Administration pursuant to subsection  
6 (b)(2)(A); or

7           “(2) if the participant is a full-time employee in  
8 the Veterans Health Administration and assigned to  
9 a position pursuant to subsection (b)(2)(B), on the  
10 date on which the participant is so assigned to such  
11 position.

12 **“§ 7694. Breach of agreement: liability**

13           “(a) LIABILITY DURING COURSE OF EDUCATION OR  
14 TRAINING.—(1) A participant in the Primary Care Edu-  
15 cational Assistance Program shall be liable to the United  
16 States for the amount which has been paid on behalf of  
17 the participant under the agreement entered into for pur-  
18 poses of this subchapter if any of the following occurs:

19           “(A) The participant fails to maintain an ac-  
20 ceptable level of academic standing in the Uniformed  
21 Services University of the Health Sciences.

22           “(B) The participant is dismissed from the  
23 Uniformed Services University of the Health  
24 Sciences for disciplinary reasons.

1           “(C) The participant voluntarily terminates the  
2           course of medical education and training in the Uni-  
3           formed Services University of the Health Sciences  
4           before the completion of such course of education  
5           and training.

6           “(D) The participant fails to become licensed to  
7           practice medicine in a State during a period of time  
8           determined under regulations prescribed by the Sec-  
9           retary.

10          “(2) Liability under this subsection is in lieu of any  
11          service obligation arising under a participant’s agreement  
12          for purposes of this subchapter.

13          “(b) LIABILITY DURING PERIOD OF OBLIGATED  
14          SERVICE.—(1) Except as provided in subsection (c) and  
15          subject to paragraph (2), if a participant in the Primary  
16          Care Educational Assistance Program breaches the agree-  
17          ment entered into for purposes of this subchapter by fail-  
18          ing for any reason to complete the participant’s period of  
19          obligated service, the United States shall be entitled to re-  
20          cover from the participant an amount equal to—

21                  “(A) the total amount paid under this sub-  
22                  chapter on behalf of the participant; multiplied by

23                  “(B) a fraction—

24                          “(i) the numerator of which is—

1                   “(I) the total number of months in  
2                   the participant’s period of obligated serv-  
3                   ice; minus

4                   “(II) the number of months served by  
5                   the participant pursuant to the agreement;  
6                   and

7                   “(ii) the denominator of which is the total  
8                   number of months in the participant’s period of  
9                   obligated service.

10           “(2) Any period of internship or residency training  
11 of a participant shall not be treated as satisfying the par-  
12 ticipant’s period of obligated service for purposes of this  
13 subsection.

14           “(c) EXCEPTIONS.—Liability shall not arise under  
15 subsection (b) in the case of a participant otherwise cov-  
16 ered by that subsection if—

17                   “(1) the participant—

18                           “(A) does not obtain, or fails to maintain,  
19                           employment as a Department employee due to  
20                           staffing changes approved by the Under Sec-  
21                           retary for Health; or

22                           “(B) does not obtain, or fails to maintain,  
23                           employment in a position of primary care physi-  
24                           cian in the Veterans Health Administration  
25                           due, as determined by the Secretary, to a num-

1           ber of primary care physicians in the Adminis-  
2           tration that is excess to the needs of the Ad-  
3           ministration; and

4           “(2) the participant agrees to accept and main-  
5           tain employment as a primary care physician with  
6           another department or agency of the Federal Gov-  
7           ernment (with such employment to be under such  
8           terms and conditions as are jointly agreed upon by  
9           the participant, the Secretary, and the head of such  
10          department or agency, including terms and condi-  
11          tions relating to a period of obligated service as a  
12          primary care physician with such department or  
13          agency) if such employment is offered to the partici-  
14          pant by the Secretary and the head of such depart-  
15          ment or agency.

16   **“§ 7695. Funding**

17          “(a) IN GENERAL.—Amounts for the Primary Care  
18          Educational Assistance Program shall be derived from  
19          amounts available to the Secretary for the Veterans  
20          Health Administration.

21          “(b) TRANSFER.—(1) The Secretary shall transfer to  
22          the Secretary of Defense amounts required by the Sec-  
23          retary of Defense to carry out the Primary Care Edu-  
24          cational Assistance Program.

1       “(2) Amounts transferred to the Secretary of Defense  
 2 pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be credited to the appro-  
 3 priation or account providing funding for the Uniformed  
 4 Services University of the Health Sciences. Amounts so  
 5 credited shall be merged with amounts in the appropria-  
 6 tion or account to which credited and shall be available,  
 7 subject to the terms and conditions applicable to such ap-  
 8 propriation or account, for the Uniformed Services Uni-  
 9 versity of the Health Sciences.”.

10           (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
 11 tions at the beginning of chapter 76 is amended by  
 12 adding after the item relating to section 7684 the  
 13 following:

“SUBCHAPTER VIII—PROGRAM OF EDUCATION AT UNIFORMED SERVICES UNI-  
 VERSITY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES WITH SPECIALIZATION IN PRIMARY  
 CARE

“7691. Authority for program.

“7692. Selection; agreement; ineligibility for certain other educational assist-  
 ance.

“7693. Obligated service.

“7694. Breach of agreement: liability.

“7695. Funding.”.

14           (b) INCLUSION OF PROGRAM IN HEALTH PROFES-  
 15 SIONALS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—Section  
 16 7601(a) is amended—

17           (1) in paragraph (4), by striking “; and” and  
 18 inserting a semicolon;

19           (2) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at  
 20 the end and inserting “; and”; and

1           (3) by adding at the end the following new  
2 paragraph:

3           “(6) the enrollment of individuals in the Uni-  
4 formed Services University of the Health Sciences  
5 for specialization in primary care provided for in  
6 subchapter VIII of this chapter.”.

7 (c) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

8           (1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a)(1) of section  
9 7603 is amended in the matter preceding subpara-  
10 graph (A) by striking “, or VI” and inserting “, VI,  
11 or VIII”.

12           (2) NO PRIORITY FOR APPLICATIONS.—Sub-  
13 section (d) of such section is amended—

14           (A) by striking “In selecting” and insert-  
15 ing “(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2),  
16 in selecting”; and

17           (B) by adding at the end the following new  
18 paragraph:

19           “(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to  
20 applicants for participation in the Program of Education  
21 at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences  
22 With Specialization in Primary Care pursuant to sub-  
23 chapter VIII of this chapter.”.

1 (d) AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS.—Section 7604 is  
2 amended by striking “, or VI” each place it appears and  
3 inserting “, VI, or VIII”.

4 **SEC. 105. TREATMENT OF STAFFING SHORTAGE AND BIAN-**  
5 **NUAL REPORT ON STAFFING OF MEDICAL FA-**  
6 **CILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
7 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

8 (a) STAFFING SHORTAGE.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
10 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not  
11 later than September 30 each year thereafter, the  
12 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall determine, and  
13 publish in the Federal Register, the five occupations  
14 of health care providers of the Department of Vet-  
15 erans Affairs for which there is the largest staffing  
16 shortage throughout the Department.

17 (2) RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT.—Not-  
18 withstanding sections 3304 and 3309 through 3318  
19 of title 5, United States Code, the Secretary may,  
20 upon a determination by the Secretary under para-  
21 graph (1) or a modification to such determination  
22 under paragraph (2), that there is a staffing short-  
23 age throughout the Department with respect to a  
24 particular occupation of health care provider, recruit  
25 and directly appoint highly qualified health care pro-

1       viders to a position to serve as a health care pro-  
2       vider in that particular occupation for the Depart-  
3       ment.

4               (3) PRIORITY IN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS EDU-  
5       CATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO CERTAIN PRO-  
6       VIDERS.—Section 7612(b)(5) is amended—

7               (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking  
8       “and” at the end;

9               (B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as  
10       subparagraph (C); and

11              (C) by inserting after subparagraph (A)  
12       the following new subparagraph (B):

13              “(B) shall give priority to applicants pursuing  
14       a course of education or training towards a career  
15       in an occupation for which the Secretary has, in the  
16       most current determination published in the Federal  
17       Register pursuant to section 105(a)(1) of the Re-  
18       storing Veterans Trust Act of 2014, determined that  
19       there is one of the largest staffing shortage through-  
20       out the Department with respect to such occupation;  
21       and”.

22       (b) REPORTS.—

23              (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
24       after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not  
25       later than December 31 of each even numbered year

1 thereafter until 2024, the Secretary of Veterans Af-  
2 fairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
3 fairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans'  
4 Affairs of the House of Representatives a report as-  
5 sessing the staffing of each medical facility of the  
6 Department of Veterans Affairs.

7 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under  
8 paragraph (1) shall include the following:

9 (A) The results of a system-wide assess-  
10 ment of all medical facilities of the Department  
11 to ensure the following:

12 (i) Appropriate staffing levels for  
13 health care providers to meet the goals of  
14 the Secretary for timely access to care for  
15 veterans.

16 (ii) Appropriate staffing levels for  
17 support personnel, including clerks.

18 (iii) Appropriate sizes for clinical pan-  
19 els.

20 (iv) Appropriate numbers of full-time  
21 staff, or full-time equivalent, dedicated to  
22 direct care of patients.

23 (v) Appropriate physical plant space  
24 to meet the capacity needs of the Depart-  
25 ment in that area.

1 (vi) Such other factors as the Sec-  
2 retary considers necessary.

3 (B) A plan for addressing any issues iden-  
4 tified in the assessment described in subpara-  
5 graph (A), including a timeline for addressing  
6 such issues.

7 (C) A list of the current wait times and  
8 workload levels for the following clinics in each  
9 medical facility:

10 (i) Mental health.

11 (ii) Primary care.

12 (iii) Gastroenterology.

13 (iv) Women's health.

14 (v) Such other clinics as the Secretary  
15 considers appropriate.

16 (D) A description of the results of the de-  
17 termination of the Secretary under paragraph  
18 (1) of subsection (a) and a plan to use direct  
19 appointment authority under paragraph (2) of  
20 such subsection to fill staffing shortages, in-  
21 cluding recommendations for improving the  
22 speed at which the credentialing and privileging  
23 process can be conducted.

1 (E) The current staffing models of the De-  
2 partment for the following clinics, including rec-  
3 ommendations for changes to such models:

4 (i) Mental health.

5 (ii) Primary care.

6 (iii) Gastroenterology.

7 (iv) Women's health.

8 (v) Such other clinics as the Secretary  
9 considers appropriate.

10 (F) A detailed analysis of succession plan-  
11 ning at medical facilities of the Department, in-  
12 cluding the following:

13 (i) The number of positions in medical  
14 facilities throughout the Department that  
15 are not filled by a permanent employee.

16 (ii) The length of time each such posi-  
17 tion described in clause (i) remained va-  
18 cant or filled by a temporary or acting em-  
19 ployee.

20 (iii) A description of any barriers to  
21 filling the positions described in clause (i).

22 (iv) A plan for filling any positions  
23 that are vacant or filled by a temporary or  
24 acting employee for more than 180 days.

1 (v) A plan for handling emergency cir-  
2 cumstances, such administrative leave or  
3 sudden medical leave for senior officials.

4 (G) The number of health care providers  
5 who have been removed from their position or  
6 have retired, by provider type, during the two-  
7 year period preceding the submittal of the re-  
8 port.

9 (H) Of the health care providers specified  
10 in subparagraph (G) that have been removed  
11 from their position, the following:

12 (i) The number of such health care  
13 providers who were reassigned to another  
14 position in the Department.

15 (ii) The number of such health care  
16 providers who left the Department.

17 **SEC. 106. CLINIC MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM OF**  
18 **THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the  
20 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
21 erans Affairs shall implement a clinic management train-  
22 ing program to provide in-person, standardized education  
23 on health care management to all managers of, and health  
24 care providers at, medical facilities of the Department of  
25 Veterans Affairs.

1 (b) ELEMENTS.—The clinic management training  
2 program required by subsection (a) shall include the fol-  
3 lowing:

4 (1) Training on how to manage the schedules of  
5 health care providers of the Department, including  
6 the following:

7 (A) Maintaining such schedules in a man-  
8 ner that allows appointments to be booked at  
9 least eight weeks in advance.

10 (B) Proper planning procedures for vaca-  
11 tion, leave, and graduate medical education  
12 training schedules.

13 (2) Training on the appropriate number of ap-  
14 pointments that a health care provider should con-  
15 duct on a daily basis, based on specialty.

16 (3) Training on how to determine whether there  
17 are enough available appointment slots to manage  
18 demand for different appointment types and mecha-  
19 nisms for alerting management of insufficient slots.

20 (4) Training on how to properly use the data  
21 produced by the scheduling dashboard required by  
22 section 101(b)(11) of this Act to meet demand for  
23 health care, including the following:

1 (A) Training on determining the next  
2 available appointment for each health care pro-  
3 vider at the medical facility.

4 (B) Training on determining the number  
5 of health care providers needed to meet demand  
6 for health care at the medical facility.

7 (C) Training on determining the number  
8 of exam rooms needed to meet demand for such  
9 health care in an efficient manner.

10 (5) Training on how to properly use the ap-  
11 pointment scheduling system of the Department, in-  
12 cluding any new scheduling system implemented by  
13 the Department.

14 (6) Training on how to optimize the use of  
15 technology, including the following:

16 (A) Telemedicine.

17 (B) Electronic mail.

18 (C) Text messaging.

19 (D) Such other technologies as specified by  
20 the Secretary.

21 (7) Training on how to properly use physical  
22 plant space at medical facilities of the Department  
23 to ensure efficient flow and privacy for patients and  
24 staff.

1 **SEC. 107. INCLUSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
2 **FAIRS FACILITIES IN NATIONAL HEALTH**  
3 **SERVICE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN**  
4 **REPAYMENT PROGRAMS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and  
6 Human Services shall use the funds transferred under  
7 subsection (e) to award scholarship and loan repayment  
8 contracts under sections 338A and 338B of the Public  
9 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l, 254l–1) to eligible  
10 individuals who agree to a period of obligated service  
11 under section 338A(f)(1) or 338B(f)(1) of such Act, as  
12 applicable, at a health facility of the Department of Vet-  
13 erans Affairs.

14 (b) HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS.—  
15 For purposes of selecting individuals eligible for the schol-  
16 arships and loan repayment contracts under subsection  
17 (a), all health facilities of the Department of Veterans Af-  
18 fairs shall be deemed health professional shortage areas,  
19 as defined in section 332 of the Public Health Service Act  
20 (42 U.S.C. 254e).

21 (c) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Health and  
22 Human Services shall ensure that a minimum of 5 schol-  
23 arships or loan repayment contracts are awarded to indi-  
24 viduals who agree to a period of obligated service at Vet-  
25 erans Affairs facilities in each State.

1           (d) APPLICABILITY OF NHSC PROGRAM REQUIRE-  
2 MENTS.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, the  
3 terms of the National Health Service Corps Scholarship  
4 Program and the National Health Service Corps Loan Re-  
5 payment Program shall apply to participants awarded a  
6 grant or loan repayment contract under subsection (a) in  
7 the same manner that such terms apply to participants  
8 awarded a grant or loan repayment contract under section  
9 338A or 338B of the Public Health Service Act.

10           (e) INCLUSION OF GERIATRICIANS.—For purposes of  
11 awarding scholarships and loan repayments contracts to  
12 eligible individuals who agree to a period of obligated serv-  
13 ice at a health facility of the Department of Veterans Af-  
14 fairs pursuant to this section, in sections 338A and 338B  
15 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l, 254l-  
16 1), the term “primary health services” shall include geri-  
17 atries.

18           (f) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
19 shall transfer \$20,000,000 from accounts of the Veterans  
20 Health Administration to the Secretary of Health and  
21 Human Services to award scholarships and loan repay-  
22 ment contracts, as described in subsection (a). All funds  
23 so transferred shall be used exclusively for the purposes  
24 described in such subsection.

1 **SEC. 108. IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS BY VETERANS TO**  
2 **HEALTH CARE FROM NON-DEPARTMENT OF**  
3 **VETERANS AFFAIRS PROVIDERS.**

4 (a) IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
6 Affairs shall ensure timely access of all veterans to  
7 the hospital care, medical services, and other health  
8 care for which such veterans are eligible under the  
9 laws administered by the Secretary through the en-  
10 hanced use of authorities specified in paragraph (2)  
11 on the provision of such care and services through  
12 non-Department of Veterans Affairs providers (com-  
13 monly referred to as “non-Department of Veterans  
14 Affairs medical care”).

15 (2) AUTHORITIES ON PROVISION OF CARE  
16 THROUGH NON-DEPARTMENT PROVIDERS.—The au-  
17 thorities specified in this paragraph are the fol-  
18 lowing:

19 (A) Section 1703 of title 38, United States  
20 Code, relating to contracts for the provision of  
21 hospital care and medical services through non-  
22 Department facilities.

23 (B) Section 1725 of such title, relating to  
24 reimbursement of certain veterans for the rea-  
25 sonable value of emergency treatment at non-  
26 Department facilities.

1 (C) Section 1728 of such title, relating to  
2 reimbursement of certain veterans for cus-  
3 tomary and usual charges of emergency treat-  
4 ment from sources other than the Department.

5 (D) Section 1786 of such title, relating to  
6 health care services furnished to newborn chil-  
7 dren of women veterans who are receiving ma-  
8 ternity care furnished by the Department at a  
9 non-Department facility.

10 (E) Any other authority under the laws ad-  
11 ministered by the Secretary to provide hospital  
12 care, medical services, or other health care from  
13 a non-Department provider, including the fol-  
14 lowing:

15 (i) A Federally-qualified health center  
16 (as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the  
17 Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.  
18 1396d(l)(2)(B))).

19 (ii) The Department of Defense.

20 (iii) The Indian Health Service.

21 (3) REQUIREMENTS.—In ensuring timely access  
22 of all veterans to the care and services described in  
23 paragraph (1) through the enhanced use of authori-  
24 ties specified in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall  
25 require the following:

1           (A) That each veteran who has not re-  
2           ceived hospital care, medical services, or other  
3           health care from the Department and is seeking  
4           an appointment for primary care under the laws  
5           administered by the Secretary receive an ap-  
6           pointment for primary care at a time consistent  
7           with timeliness measures established by the  
8           Secretary for purposes of providing primary  
9           care to all veterans.

10          (B) That the determination whether to  
11          refer a veteran for specialty care through a  
12          non-Department provider shall take into ac-  
13          count the urgency and acuity of such veteran's  
14          need for such care, including—

15               (i) the severity of the condition of  
16               such veteran requiring specialty care; and

17               (ii) the wait-time for an appointment  
18               with a specialist with respect to such con-  
19               dition at the nearest medical facility of the  
20               Department with the capacity to provide  
21               such care.

22          (C) That the determination whether a vet-  
23          eran shall receive hospital care, medical serv-  
24          ices, or other health care from the Department  
25          through facilities of the Department or through

1 non-Department providers pursuant to the au-  
2 thorities specified in paragraph (2) shall take  
3 into account, in the manner specified by the  
4 Secretary, the following:

5 (i) The distance the veteran would be  
6 required to travel to receive care or serv-  
7 ices through a non-Department provider  
8 compared to the distance the veteran  
9 would be required to travel to receive care  
10 or services from a medical facility of the  
11 Department.

12 (ii) Any factors that might limit the  
13 ability of the veteran to travel, including  
14 age, access to transportation, and infir-  
15 mity.

16 (iii) The wait-time for the provision of  
17 care or services through a non-Department  
18 provider compared to the wait-time for the  
19 provision of care or services from a medical  
20 facility of the Department.

21 (D) That the Department maximize the  
22 use of hospital care, medical services, and other  
23 health care available to the Department  
24 through non-Department providers, including

1 providers available to provide such care and  
2 services as follows:

3 (i) Pursuant to contracts under the  
4 Patient-Centered Community Care Pro-  
5 gram of the Department.

6 (ii) Pursuant to contracts between a  
7 facility or facilities of the Department and  
8 a local facility or provider.

9 (iii) Pursuant to contracts with Fed-  
10 erally-qualified health centers (as defined  
11 in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Se-  
12 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))),  
13 the Department of Defense, or the Indian  
14 Health Service.

15 (iv) On a fee-for-service basis.

16 (b) MEDICAL RECORDS.—In providing hospital care,  
17 medical services, and other health care to veterans  
18 through non-Department providers pursuant to the au-  
19 thorities specified in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall en-  
20 sure that any such provider submits to the Department  
21 any medical record related to the care and services pro-  
22 vided to a veteran by that provider for inclusion in the  
23 electronic medical record of such veteran maintained by  
24 the Department upon the completion of the provision of  
25 such care and services to such veteran.

1 (c) REPORTS.—

2 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 45 days  
3 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
4 retary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'  
5 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Vet-  
6 erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-  
7 port on the implementation of the requirements  
8 under subsections (a) and (b), including a plan to  
9 enforce the proper implementation of such require-  
10 ments systematically throughout the Department.

11 (2) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90  
12 days after the submittal of the report required by  
13 paragraph (1), and every 90 days thereafter for one  
14 year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee  
15 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-  
16 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-  
17 resentatives a report that includes the following:

18 (A) The progress of the Secretary in car-  
19 rying out the plan under paragraph (1) to en-  
20 force the proper implementation of the require-  
21 ments under subsections (a) and (b) systemati-  
22 cally throughout the Department.

23 (B) The impact of the implementation of  
24 such requirements on wait-times for veterans to

1 receive hospital care, medical services, and  
2 other health care, disaggregated by—

- 3 (i) new patients;
- 4 (ii) existing patients;
- 5 (iii) primary care; and
- 6 (iv) specialty care.

7 (C) Any recommendations for changes or  
8 improvements to such requirements.

9 (D) Any requests for additional funding  
10 necessary to carry out such requirements.

11 **SEC. 109. EXTENSION OF AND REPORT ON JOINT INCEN-**  
12 **TIVES PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
13 **ERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DE-**  
14 **FENSE.**

15 (a) EXTENSION.—Section 8111(d)(3) is amended by  
16 striking “September 30, 2015” and inserting “September  
17 30, 2020”.

18 (b) REPORTS.—

19 (1) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF REC-  
20 OMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the  
21 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of  
22 Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall  
23 jointly submit to Congress a report on the imple-  
24 mentation by the Department of Veterans Affairs  
25 and the Department of Defense of the findings and

1 recommendations of the Comptroller General of the  
2 United States in the September 2012 report entitled  
3 “VA and DoD Health Care: Department-Level Ac-  
4 tions Needed to Assess Collaboration Performance,  
5 Address Barriers, and Identify Opportunities”  
6 (GAO–12–992).

7 (2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year  
9 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the  
10 Comptroller General of the United States shall  
11 submit to Congress a report assessing and pro-  
12 viding recommendations for improvement to the  
13 program to identify, provide incentives to, im-  
14 plement, fund, and evaluate creative coordina-  
15 tion and sharing initiatives between the Depart-  
16 ment of Veterans Affairs and the Department  
17 of Defense required under section 8111(d) of  
18 such title.

19 (B) ELEMENTS.—The report required by  
20 subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

21 (i) An assessment of the extent to  
22 which the program described in subpara-  
23 graph (A) has accomplished the goal of  
24 such program to improve the access to,  
25 and quality and cost effectiveness of, the

1 health care provided by the Veterans  
2 Health Administration and the Military  
3 Health System to the beneficiaries of both  
4 the Department of Veterans Affairs and  
5 the Department of Defense.

6 (ii) An assessment of whether admin-  
7 istration of such program through the  
8 Health Executive Committee of the De-  
9 partment of Veterans Affairs-Department  
10 of Defense Joint Executive Committee es-  
11 tablished under section 320 of such title  
12 provides sufficient leadership attention and  
13 oversight to ensure maximum benefits to  
14 the Department of Veterans Affairs and  
15 the Department of Defense through col-  
16 laborative efforts.

17 (iii) An assessment of whether addi-  
18 tional authorities to jointly construct,  
19 lease, or acquire facilities would facilitate  
20 additional collaborative efforts under such  
21 program.

22 (iv) An assessment of whether the  
23 funding for such program is sufficient to  
24 ensure consistent identification of potential  
25 opportunities for collaboration and over-

1           sight of existing collaborations to ensure a  
2           meaningful partnership between the De-  
3           partment of Veterans Affairs and the De-  
4           partment of Defense and remove any bar-  
5           riers to integration or collaboration.

6           (v) An assessment of whether existing  
7           processes for identifying opportunities for  
8           collaboration are sufficient to ensure max-  
9           imum collaboration between the Veterans  
10          Health Administration and the Military  
11          Health System.

12          (vi) Such legislative or administrative  
13          recommendations for improvement to such  
14          program as the Comptroller General con-  
15          siders appropriate to enhance the use of  
16          such program to increase access to health  
17          care.

18 **SEC. 110. TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY FOR PAYMENTS FOR**  
19 **HOSPITAL CARE, MEDICAL SERVICES, AND**  
20 **OTHER HEALTH CARE FROM NON-DEPART-**  
21 **MENT PROVIDERS TO THE CHIEF BUSINESS**  
22 **OFFICE OF THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINIS-**  
23 **TRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

24          (a) TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—Effective on October 1,  
2           2014, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall trans-  
3           fer the authority to pay for hospital care, medical  
4           services, and other health care through non-Depart-  
5           ment providers to the Chief Business Office of the  
6           Veterans Health Administration of the Department  
7           of Veterans Affairs from the Veterans Integrated  
8           Service Networks and medical centers of the Depart-  
9           ment of Veterans Affairs.

10           (2) MANNER OF CARE.—The Chief Business  
11           Office shall work in consultation with the Office of  
12           Clinical Operations and Management of the Depart-  
13           ment of Veterans Affairs to ensure that care and  
14           services described in paragraph (1) is provided in a  
15           manner that is clinically appropriate and effective.

16           (3) NO DELAY IN PAYMENT.—The transfer of  
17           authority under paragraph (1) shall be carried out  
18           in a manner that does not delay or impede any pay-  
19           ment by the Department for hospital care, medical  
20           services, or other health care provided through a  
21           non-Department provider under the laws adminis-  
22           tered by the Secretary.

23           (b) BUDGETARY EFFECT.—The Secretary shall, for  
24           each fiscal year that begins after the date of the enact-  
25           ment of this Act—



1           (1) IN GENERAL.—In providing hospital care,  
2           medical services, and other health care under the  
3           laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Af-  
4           fairs through the use of contracts, the Secretary  
5           shall prioritize the use of contracts or agreements  
6           with Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs),  
7           medical facilities receiving funding from the Indian  
8           Health Service, and the Department of Defense.

9           (2) PLAN ON INCREASED USE OF CON-  
10          TRACTS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall,  
11          in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the  
12          Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the  
13          Director of the Indian Health Service, develop a  
14          plan to increase the use of contracts described in  
15          paragraph (1) to improve the ability of the Depart-  
16          ment of Veterans Affairs to provide hospital care,  
17          medical services, and other health care to veterans.

18          (3) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after  
19          the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary  
20          of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a re-  
21          port on the plan required by paragraph (2).

22          (b) BEST PRACTICES.—The Secretary shall modify  
23          the guidance of the Department of Veterans Affairs on  
24          contracts for hospital care, medical services, and other  
25          health care in order to provide for the incorporation into

1 such contracts of standardized requirements for best prac-  
2 tices under such contracts, including the following:

3 (1) Requirements that contracts provide the  
4 Department on a regular basis information on  
5 scheduling and appearance for appointments for hos-  
6 pital care, medical services, and other health care on  
7 per-patient basis.

8 (2) Such other best practices requirements as  
9 the Secretary considers appropriate.

10 (c) **FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DE-**  
11 **FINED.**—In this section the term “Federally Qualified  
12 Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center  
13 as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security  
14 Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B)).

15 **SEC. 110B. ENHANCEMENT OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN**  
16 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND**  
17 **INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE.**

18 (a) **OUTREACH TO TRIBAL-RUN MEDICAL FACILI-**  
19 **TIES.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in con-  
20 sultation with the Director of the Indian Health Service,  
21 conduct outreach to each medical facility operated by an  
22 Indian tribe or tribal organization through a contract or  
23 compact with the Indian Health Service under the Indian  
24 Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25  
25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.) to raise awareness of the ability of

1 such facilities, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations to  
2 enter into agreements with the Department of Veterans  
3 Affairs under which the Secretary reimburses such facili-  
4 ties, Indian tribes, or tribal organizations, as the case may  
5 be, for health care provided to veterans eligible for health  
6 care at such facilities.

7 (b) METRICS FOR MEMORANDUM OF UNDER-  
8 STANDING PERFORMANCE.—The Secretary of Veterans  
9 Affairs shall implement performance metrics for assessing  
10 the performance by the Department of Veterans Affairs  
11 and the Indian Health Service under the memorandum of  
12 understanding entitled “Memorandum of Understanding  
13 between the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the  
14 Indian Health Service (IHS)” in increasing access to  
15 health care, improving quality and coordination of health  
16 care, promoting effective patient-centered collaboration  
17 and partnerships between the Department and the Serv-  
18 ice, and ensuring health-promotion and disease-prevention  
19 services are appropriately funded and available for bene-  
20 ficiaries under both health care systems.

21 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date  
22 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans  
23 Affairs and the Director of the Indian Health Service shall  
24 jointly submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and  
25 advisability of the following:

1           (1) Entering into agreements for the reimburse-  
2           ment by the Secretary of the costs of direct care  
3           services provided through organizations receiving  
4           amounts pursuant to grants made or contracts en-  
5           tered into under section 503 of the Indian Health  
6           Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1653) to veterans  
7           who are otherwise eligible to receive health care from  
8           such organizations.

9           (2) Including the reimbursement of the costs of  
10          direct care services provided to veterans who are not  
11          Indians in agreements between the Department and  
12          the following:

13                   (A) The Indian Health Service.

14                   (B) An Indian tribe or tribal organization  
15                   operating a medical facility through a contract  
16                   or compact with the Indian Health Service  
17                   under the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-  
18                   cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

19                   (C) A medical facility of the Indian Health  
20                   Service.

21          (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22                   (1) INDIAN.—The terms “Indian” and “Indian  
23                   tribe” have the meanings given those terms in sec-  
24                   tion 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act  
25                   (25 U.S.C. 1603).

1           (2) MEDICAL FACILITY OF THE INDIAN  
 2 HEALTH SERVICE.—The term “medical facility of  
 3 the Indian Health Service” includes a facility oper-  
 4 ated by an Indian tribe or tribal organization  
 5 through a contract or compact with the Indian  
 6 Health Service under the Indian Self-Determination  
 7 and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et  
 8 seq.).

9           (3) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “tribal  
 10 organization” has the meaning given the term in  
 11 section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-  
 12 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

13 **SEC. 110C. ENHANCEMENT OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN**  
 14 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND**  
 15 **NATIVE HAWAIIAN HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS.**

16           (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
 17 shall, in consultation with Papa Ola Lokahi and such  
 18 other organizations involved in the delivery of health care  
 19 to Native Hawaiians as the Secretary considers appro-  
 20 priate, enter into contracts or agreements with Native Ha-  
 21 waiian health care systems that are in receipt of funds  
 22 from the Secretary of Health and Human Services pursu-  
 23 ant to grants awarded or contracts entered into under sec-  
 24 tion 6(a) of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improve-  
 25 ment Act (42 U.S.C. 11705(a)) for the reimbursement of

1 direct care services provided to eligible veterans as speci-  
2 fied in such contracts or agreements.

3 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “Native  
4 Hawaiian”, “Native Hawaiian health care system”, and  
5 “Papa Ola Lokahi” have the meanings given those terms  
6 in section 12 of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Im-  
7 provement Act (42 U.S.C. 11711).

8 **SEC. 110D. IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS OF VETERANS TO**  
9 **MOBILE VET CENTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT**  
10 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

11 (a) IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
13 Affairs shall improve the access of veterans to tele-  
14 medicine and other health care through the use of  
15 mobile vet centers of the Department of Veterans  
16 Affairs by providing standardized requirements for  
17 the operation of such centers.

18 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The standardized re-  
19 quirements required by paragraph (1) shall include  
20 the following:

21 (A) The number of days each mobile vet  
22 center of the Department is expected to travel  
23 per year.

24 (B) The number of locations each center is  
25 expected to visit per year.

1           (C) The number of appointments each cen-  
2           ter is expected to conduct per year.

3           (D) The method and timing of notifica-  
4           tions given by each center to individuals in the  
5           area to which such center is traveling, including  
6           notifications informing veterans of the avail-  
7           ability to schedule appointments at the center.

8           (3) USE OF TELEMEDICINE.—The Secretary  
9           shall ensure that each mobile vet center of the De-  
10          partment has the capability to provide telemedicine  
11          services.

12          (b) REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the date  
13          of the enactment of this Act, and not later than September  
14          30 each year thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
15          shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
16          Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
17          House of Representatives a report on the following:

18               (1) The use of mobile vet centers to provide  
19               telemedicine services to veterans during the year  
20               preceding the submittal of the report, including the  
21               following:

22                       (A) The number of days each mobile vet  
23                       center was open to provide such services.

24                       (B) The number of days each mobile vet  
25                       center traveled to a location other than the

1           headquarters of the mobile vet center to provide  
2           such services.

3           (C) The number of appointments each cen-  
4           ter conducted to provide such services on aver-  
5           age per month and in total during such year.

6           (2) An analysis of the effectiveness of using mo-  
7           bile vet centers to provide health care services to vet-  
8           erans through the use of telemedicine.

9           (3) Any recommendations for an increase in the  
10          number of mobile vet centers of the Department.

11          (4) Any recommendations for an increase in the  
12          telemedicine capabilities of each mobile vet center.

13          (5) The feasibility and advisability of using  
14          temporary health care providers, including locum  
15          tenens, to provide direct health care services to vet-  
16          erans at mobile vet centers.

17          (6) Such other recommendations on improve-  
18          ment of the use of mobile vet centers by the Depart-  
19          ment as the Secretary considers appropriate.

20 **SEC. 110E. COMMISSION ON ACCESS TO CARE.**

21 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.—

22          (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established the  
23          Commission on Access to Care (in this section re-  
24          ferred to as the “Commission”) to examine the ac-  
25          cess of veterans to health care from the Department

1 of Veterans Affairs and strategically examine how  
2 best to organize the Veterans Health Administra-  
3 tion, locate health care resources, and deliver health  
4 care to veterans during the next 10 to 20 years.

5 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—

6 (A) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission  
7 shall be composed of 10 voting members who  
8 are appointed by the President as follows:

9 (i) At least two members who rep-  
10 resent an organization recognized by the  
11 Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the rep-  
12 resentation of veterans under section 5902  
13 of title 38, United States Code.

14 (ii) At least one member from among  
15 persons who are experts concerning a pub-  
16 lic or private hospital system.

17 (iii) At least one member from among  
18 persons who are familiar with government  
19 health care systems, including those sys-  
20 tems of the Department of Defense, the  
21 Indian Health Service, and Federally-quali-  
22 fied health centers (as defined in section  
23 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act  
24 (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))).

1 (iv) At least two members from  
2 among persons who are familiar with the  
3 Veterans Health Administration.

4 (B) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—In addition  
5 to members appointed under subparagraph (A),  
6 the Commission shall be composed of 10 non-  
7 voting members who are appointed by the  
8 President as follows:

9 (i) At least two members who rep-  
10 resent an organization recognized by the  
11 Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the rep-  
12 resentation of veterans under section 5902  
13 of title 38, United States Code.

14 (ii) At least one member from among  
15 persons who are experts in a public or pri-  
16 vate hospital system.

17 (iii) At least one member from among  
18 persons who are familiar with government  
19 health care systems, including those sys-  
20 tems of the Department of Defense, the  
21 Indian Health Service, and Federally-quali-  
22 fied health centers (as defined in section  
23 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act  
24 (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))).

1 (iv) At least two members from  
2 among persons who are familiar with the  
3 Veterans Health Administration.

4 (C) DATE.—The appointments of members  
5 of the Commission shall be made not later than  
6 60 days after the date of the enactment of this  
7 Act.

8 (3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—  
9 Members shall be appointed for the life of the Com-  
10 mission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not  
11 affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same  
12 manner as the original appointment.

13 (4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 15 days  
14 after the date on which seven voting members of the  
15 Commission have been appointed, the Commission  
16 shall hold its first meeting.

17 (5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at  
18 the call of the Chairperson.

19 (6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of  
20 the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a  
21 lesser number of members may hold hearings.

22 (7) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—  
23 The Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice  
24 Chairperson from among its members.

25 (b) DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—

1           (1) EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT.—The Com-  
2 mission shall undertake a comprehensive evaluation  
3 and assessment of access to health care at the De-  
4 partment of Veterans Affairs.

5           (2) MATTERS EVALUATED AND ASSESSED.—  
6 The matters evaluated and assessed by the Commis-  
7 sion shall include the following:

8                   (A) The appropriateness of current stand-  
9 ards of the Department of Veterans Affairs  
10 concerning access to health care.

11                   (B) The measurement of such standards.

12                   (C) The appropriateness of performance  
13 standards and incentives in relation to stand-  
14 ards described in subparagraph (A).

15                   (D) Staffing levels throughout the Vet-  
16 erans Health Administration and whether they  
17 are sufficient to meet current demand for  
18 health care from the Administration.

19           (3) REPORTS.—The Commission shall submit  
20 to the President, through the Secretary of Veterans  
21 Affairs, reports as follows:

22                   (A) Not later than 90 days after the date  
23 of the initial meeting of the Commission, an in-  
24 terim report on—

1 (i) the findings of the Commission  
2 with respect to the evaluation and assess-  
3 ment required by this subsection; and

4 (ii) such recommendations as the  
5 Commission may have for legislative or ad-  
6 ministrative action to improve access to  
7 health care through the Veterans Health  
8 Administration.

9 (B) Not later than 180 days after the date  
10 of the initial meeting of the Commission, a final  
11 report on—

12 (i) the findings of the Commission  
13 with respect to the evaluation and assess-  
14 ment required by this subsection; and

15 (ii) such recommendations as the  
16 Commission may have for legislative or ad-  
17 ministrative action to improve access to  
18 health care through the Veterans Health  
19 Administration.

20 (c) POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.—

21 (1) HEARINGS.—The Commission may hold  
22 such hearings, sit and act at such times and places,  
23 take such testimony, and receive such evidence as  
24 the Commission considers advisable to carry out this  
25 section.

1           (2) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

2           The Commission may secure directly from any Fed-  
3           eral department or agency such information as the  
4           Commission considers necessary to carry out this  
5           section. Upon request of the Chairperson of the  
6           Commission, the head of such department or agency  
7           shall furnish such information to the Commission.

8           (d) COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.—

9           (1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Each mem-  
10          ber of the Commission who is not an officer or em-  
11          ployee of the Federal Government shall be com-  
12          pensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of  
13          the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV  
14          of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title  
15          5, United States Code, for each day (including travel  
16          time) during which such member is engaged in the  
17          performance of the duties of the Commission. All  
18          members of the Commission who are officers or em-  
19          ployees of the United States shall serve without com-  
20          pensation in addition to that received for their serv-  
21          ices as officers or employees of the United States.

22          (2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the  
23          Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, includ-  
24          ing per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates author-  
25          ized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of

1 chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while  
2 away from their homes or regular places of business  
3 in the performance of services for the Commission.

4 (3) STAFF.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the  
6 Commission may, without regard to the civil  
7 service laws and regulations, appoint and termi-  
8 nate an executive director and such other addi-  
9 tional personnel as may be necessary to enable  
10 the Commission to perform its duties. The em-  
11 ployment of an executive director shall be sub-  
12 ject to confirmation by the Commission.

13 (B) COMPENSATION.—The Chairperson of  
14 the Commission may fix the compensation of  
15 the executive director and other personnel with-  
16 out regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of  
17 chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relat-  
18 ing to classification of positions and General  
19 Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay  
20 for the executive director and other personnel  
21 may not exceed the rate payable for level V of  
22 the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of  
23 such title.

24 (4) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—

25 Any Federal Government employee may be detailed

1 to the Commission without reimbursement, and such  
2 detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil  
3 service status or privilege.

4 (5) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTER-  
5 MITTENT SERVICES.—The Chairperson of the Com-  
6 mission may procure temporary and intermittent  
7 services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United  
8 States Code, at rates for individuals which do not  
9 exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of  
10 basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive  
11 Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

12 (e) TERMINATION OF THE COMMISSION.—The Com-  
13 mission shall terminate 30 days after the date on which  
14 the Commission submits its report under subsection  
15 (b)(3)(B).

16 (f) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
17 shall make available to the Commission from amounts ap-  
18 propriated or otherwise made available to the Secretary  
19 such amounts as the Secretary and the Chairperson of the  
20 Commission jointly consider appropriate for the Commis-  
21 sion to perform its duties under this section.

22 (g) EXECUTIVE ACTION.—

23 (1) ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS.—The  
24 President shall require the Secretary of Veterans Af-  
25 fairs and such other heads of relevant Federal de-

1       partments and agencies to implement each rec-  
2       ommendation set forth in a report submitted under  
3       subsection (b)(3) that the President—

4               (A) considers feasible and advisable; and

5               (B) determines can be implemented with-  
6       out further legislative action.

7       (2) REPORTS.—Not later than 60 days after  
8       the date on which the President receives a report  
9       under subsection (b)(3), the President shall submit  
10      to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate  
11      and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
12      House of Representatives and such other committees  
13      of Congress as the President considers appropriate  
14      a report setting forth the following:

15              (A) An assessment of the feasibility and  
16              advisability of each recommendation contained  
17              in the report received by the President.

18              (B) For each recommendation assessed as  
19              feasible and advisable under subparagraph (A)  
20              the following:

21                      (i) Whether such recommendation re-  
22                      quires legislative action.

23                      (ii) If such recommendation requires  
24                      legislative action, a recommendation con-  
25                      cerning such legislative action.

1 (iii) A description of any administra-  
 2 tive action already taken to carry out such  
 3 recommendation.

4 (iv) A description of any administra-  
 5 tive action the President intends to be  
 6 taken to carry out such recommendation  
 7 and by whom.

8 **SEC. 110F. REMOVAL OF SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE EM-**  
 9 **PLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
 10 **ERANS AFFAIRS FOR PERFORMANCE.**

11 (a) REMOVAL OR TRANSFER.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 is amended by  
 13 adding at the end the following new section:

14 **“§ 713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on**  
 15 **performance**

16 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may remove any  
 17 individual from the Senior Executive Service if the Sec-  
 18 retary determines the performance of the individual war-  
 19 rants such removal. If the Secretary so removes such an  
 20 individual, the Secretary may—

21 “(1) remove the individual from the civil service  
 22 (as defined in section 2101 of title 5); or

23 “(2) transfer the individual to a General Sched-  
 24 ule position at any grade of the General Schedule for

1       which the individual is qualified and that the Sec-  
2       retary determines is appropriate.

3       “(b) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days  
4       after removing or transferring an individual from the Sen-  
5       ior Executive Service under paragraph (1), the Secretary  
6       shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of  
7       the Senate and House of Representatives notice in writing  
8       of such removal or transfer and the reason for such re-  
9       moval or transfer.

10       “(c) APPEAL OF REMOVAL OR TRANSFER.—Any re-  
11       moval or transfer under subsection (a) may be appealed  
12       to the Merit Systems Protection Board under section 7701  
13       of title 5 not later than 7 days after such removal or trans-  
14       fer.

15       “(d) EXPEDITED REVIEW BY MERIT SYSTEMS PRO-  
16       TECTION BOARD.—(1) The Merit Systems Protection  
17       Board shall expedite any appeal under section 7701 of  
18       title 5 of a removal or transfer under subsection (a) and,  
19       in any such case, shall issue a decision not later than 21  
20       days after the date of the appeal.

21       “(2) In any case in which the Merit Systems Protec-  
22       tion Board determines that it cannot issue a decision in  
23       accordance with the 21-day requirement under paragraph  
24       (1), the Merit Systems Protection Board shall submit to  
25       Congress a report that explains the reason why the Merit

1 Systems Protection Board is unable to issue a decision in  
2 accordance with such requirement in such case.

3 “(3) There is authorized to be appropriated such  
4 sums as may be necessary for the Merit Systems Protec-  
5 tion Board to expedite appeals under paragraph (1).

6 “(4) The Merit Systems Protection Board may not  
7 stay any personnel action taken under this section.”.

8 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
9 tions at the beginning of such chapter is amended  
10 by adding at the end the following new item:

“713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on performance.”.

11 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF EXPEDITED REVIEW PROC-  
12 ESS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after  
14 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Merit Sys-  
15 tems Protection Board shall establish and put into  
16 effect a process to conduct expedited reviews in ac-  
17 cordance with section 713(d) of title 38, United  
18 States Code.

19 (2) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN REGULA-  
20 TIONS.—Section 1201.22 of title 5, Code of Federal  
21 Regulations, as in effect on the day before the date  
22 of the enactment of this Act, shall not apply to expe-  
23 dited reviews carried out under section 713(d) of  
24 title 38, United States Code.

1           (3) REPORT BY MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION  
2 BOARD.—Not later than 30 days after the date of  
3 the enactment of this Act, the Merit Systems Pro-  
4 tection Board shall submit to Congress a report on  
5 the actions the Board plans to take to conduct expe-  
6 dited reviews under section 713(d) of title 38,  
7 United States Code, as added by subsection (a).  
8 Such report shall include a description of the re-  
9 sources the Board determines will be necessary to  
10 conduct such reviews and a description of whether  
11 any resources will be necessary to conduct such re-  
12 views that were not available to the Board on the  
13 day before the date of the enactment of this Act.

14           (c) TEMPORARY EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN LIM-  
15 ITATION ON INITIATION OF REMOVAL FROM SENIOR EX-  
16 ECUTIVE SERVICE.—During the 120-day period beginning  
17 on the date of the enactment of this Act, an action to re-  
18 move an individual from the Senior Executive Service at  
19 the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to section  
20 713 of title 38, United States Code, as added by sub-  
21 section (a), or section 7543 of title 5, United States Code,  
22 may be initiated, notwithstanding section 3592(b) of title  
23 5, United States Code, or any other provision of law.

24           (d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or sec-  
25 tion 713 of title 38, United States Code, as added by sub-

1 section (a), shall be construed to apply to an appeal of  
2 a removal, transfer, or other personnel action that was  
3 pending before the date of the enactment of this Act.

4 **SEC. 110G. AUTHORIZATION OF EMERGENCY APPROPRIA-**  
5 **TIONS.**

6 There is authorized to be appropriated for the De-  
7 partment of Veterans Affairs such sums as may be nec-  
8 essary to carry out sections 103 through 110C of this Act.

9 **Subtitle B—Expansion and Im-**  
10 **provements of Benefits Gen-**  
11 **erally**

12 **SEC. 111. FURTHER EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY**  
13 **FOR HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS OF COM-**  
14 **BAT SERVICE DURING CERTAIN PERIODS OF**  
15 **HOSTILITIES AND WAR.**

16 Section 1710(e)(3) is amended—

17 (1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “the date  
18 that is five years before the date of the enactment  
19 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal  
20 Year 2008, after a period of five years” and insert-  
21 ing “January 27, 2003, after a period of 10 years”;  
22 and

23 (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “more  
24 than five years” and all that follows and inserting  
25 “before January 28, 2003, and who did not enroll

1 in the patient enrollment system under section 1705  
2 of this title before January 28, 2008, after January  
3 27, 2018.”.

4 **SEC. 112. EXPANSION OF ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT SERV-**  
5 **ICES FOR CAREGIVERS OF VETERANS.**

6 (a) **EXPANSION OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS.**—Sub-  
7 section (a)(2)(B) of section 1720G is amended—

8 (1) by striking “service on or after September  
9 11, 2001; and” and inserting “service—

10 “(i) on or after September 11, 2001; or

11 “(ii) that—

12 “(I) is rated as 50 percent or more  
13 disabling on the schedule of rating for dis-  
14 abilities of the Department; and

15 “(II) requires the maximum amount  
16 and degree of personal care services al-  
17 lowed under that schedule.”.

18 (b) **SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER PROGRAM**  
19 **OF GENERAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERVICES.**—Sub-  
20 section (b)(3)(A) of such section is amended—

21 (1) in clause (i)—

22 (A) by redesignating subclauses (II) and  
23 (III) as subclauses (III) and (IV), respectively;  
24 and

1 (B) by inserting after subclause (I) the fol-  
2 lowing new subclause (II):

3 “(II) for caregivers undergoing edu-  
4 cational sessions pursuant to subclause (I),  
5 payment of necessary travel, lodging, and  
6 per diem expenses incurred by such care-  
7 givers in undergoing such educational ses-  
8 sions in such amounts as the Secretary  
9 shall prescribe for purposes of this sub-  
10 clause;”;

11 (2) by striking clause (iii) and inserting the fol-  
12 lowing new clause:

13 “(iii) Respite care of not less than 30 days  
14 annually that is medically and age-appropriate,  
15 including in-home care and 24-hour per day  
16 care of the veteran commensurate with the care  
17 provided by the caregiver to permit extended  
18 respite.”;

19 (3) by redesignating clause (iv) as clause (v);  
20 and

21 (4) by inserting after clause (iii) the following  
22 new clause (iv):

23 “(iv) Such mental health services as the  
24 Secretary considers appropriate.”.

1 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
2 this section shall take effect on October 1, 2015.

3 **SEC. 113. IMPROVED ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZA-**  
4 **TIONS FOR VETERANS.**

5 (a) INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNI-  
6 ZATIONS AS MEDICAL SERVICES.—

7 (1) COVERED BENEFIT.—Subparagraph (F) of  
8 section 1701(9) is amended to read as follows:

9 “(F) immunizations against infectious dis-  
10 eases, including each immunization on the rec-  
11 ommended adult immunization schedule at the  
12 time such immunization is indicated on that  
13 schedule;”.

14 (2) RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION  
15 SCHEDULE DEFINED.—Section 1701 is amended by  
16 adding after paragraph (9) the following new para-  
17 graph:

18 “(10) The term ‘recommended adult immuniza-  
19 tion schedule’ means the schedule established (and  
20 periodically reviewed and, as appropriate, revised) by  
21 the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices  
22 established by the Secretary of Health and Human  
23 Services and delegated to the Centers for Disease  
24 Control and Prevention.”.

1 (b) INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNI-  
2 ZATIONS IN ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 1704(1)(A) is  
3 amended—

4 (1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

5 (2) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the  
6 end and inserting “; and”; and

7 (3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following  
8 new clause:

9 “(iii) to provide veterans each immu-  
10 nization on the recommended adult immu-  
11 nization schedule at the time such immuni-  
12 zation is indicated on that schedule.”.

13 (c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years  
15 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
16 retary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Com-  
17 mittee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the  
18 Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of  
19 Representatives a report on the development and im-  
20 plementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs  
21 of quality measures and metrics, including targets  
22 for compliance, to ensure that veterans receiving  
23 medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United  
24 States Code, receive each immunization on the rec-

1       ommended adult immunization schedule at the time  
2       such immunization is indicated on that schedule.

3           (2) RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION  
4       SCHEDULE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term  
5       “recommended adult immunization schedule” has  
6       the meaning given that term in section 1701(10) of  
7       title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection  
8       (a)(2).

9           (3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This subsection shall  
10      take effect on the date that is one year after the  
11      date of the enactment of this Act.

12 **SEC. 114. EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC**  
13                                   **CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.**

14       (a) PROGRAM FOR PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC  
15      CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.—Section 204(c) of  
16      the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Pro-  
17      grams Enhancement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–135;  
18      115 Stat. 2459; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended—

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

21           (2) by adding at the end the following new  
22      paragraph:

23      “(2) The program shall be carried out at not fewer  
24      than two medical centers or clinics in each Veterans Inte-  
25      grated Service Network by not later than one year after

1 the effective date specified in section 114(c) of the Restor-  
2 ing Veterans Trust Act of 2014, and at not fewer than  
3 50 percent of all medical centers in each Veterans Inte-  
4 grated Service Network by not later than two years after  
5 such effective date.”.

6 (b) EXPANDED CHIROPRACTOR SERVICES AVAIL-  
7 ABLE TO VETERANS.—

8 (1) MEDICAL SERVICES.—Paragraph (6) of sec-  
9 tion 1701 is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
10 lowing new subparagraph:

11 “(H) Chiropractic services.”.

12 (2) REHABILITATIVE SERVICES.—Paragraph  
13 (8) of such section is amended by inserting “chiro-  
14 practic,” after “counseling,”.

15 (3) PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.—Para-  
16 graph (9) of such section is amended—

17 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (F)  
18 through (K) as subparagraphs (G) through (L),  
19 respectively; and

20 (B) by inserting after subparagraph (E)  
21 the following new subparagraph (F):

22 “(F) periodic and preventive chiropractic  
23 examinations and services;”.

24 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section and the amend-  
25 ments made by this section shall take effect on the date

1 that is one year after the date of the enactment of this  
2 Act.

3 **SEC. 115. MODIFICATION OF COMMENCEMENT DATE OF PE-**  
4 **RIOD OF SERVICE AT CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH**  
5 **CAROLINA, FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR HOSPITAL**  
6 **CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN CONNEC-**  
7 **TION WITH EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINATED**  
8 **WATER.**

9 (a) MODIFICATION.—Section 1710(e)(1)(F) is  
10 amended by striking “January 1, 1957,” and inserting  
11 “August 1, 1953 (or such earlier date for the commence-  
12 ment of exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune  
13 as the Secretary, in consultation with the Agency for Toxic  
14 Substances and Disease Registry, shall specify),”.

15 (b) PUBLICATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-  
16 fairs shall publish in the Federal Register a notice of any  
17 earlier date for the commencement of exposure to contami-  
18 nated water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for pur-  
19 poses of section 1710(e)(1)(F) of title 38, United States  
20 Code, as amended by subsection (a).

21 **SEC. 116. EXPANSION OF EMERGENCY TREATMENT REIM-**  
22 **BURSEMENT FOR CERTAIN VETERANS.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1725(b)(2)(B) is amend-  
24 ed—

25 (1) by inserting “(i)” after “(B)”;



1           “(2) For each of fiscal years 2015 and 2016,  
2           \$4,000,000.”.

3           (c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date  
4 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit  
5 to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and  
6 the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Rep-  
7 resentatives a report on—

8           (1) the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the  
9           transportation services required by section 111A(a)  
10          of title 38, United States Code;

11          (2) the utilization of those services by covered  
12          veterans; and

13          (3) the feasibility and advisability of the con-  
14          tinuation of the provision of such services after Sep-  
15          tember 30, 2015.

16 **SEC. 118. EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF PILOT PRO-**  
17 **GRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING SERVICES FOR**  
18 **VETERANS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.**

19          (a) EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.—Subsection (a) of  
20 section 1705 of the National Defense Authorization Act  
21 for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110–181; 38 U.S.C.  
22 1710C note) is amended by striking “a five-year” and in-  
23 serting “an eight-year”.

24          (b) MODIFICATION OF LOCATIONS.—Subsection (b)  
25 of such section is amended—

1           (1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as para-  
2 graph (3); and

3           (2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the  
4 following new paragraphs:

5           “(1) IN GENERAL.—The pilot program shall be  
6 carried out at locations selected by the Secretary for  
7 purposes of the pilot program.

8           “(2) LOCATED IN SAME REGION AS  
9 POLYTRAUMA CENTERS.—Of the locations selected  
10 under paragraph (1), at least one location shall be  
11 in each health care region of the Veterans Health  
12 Administration of the Department of Veterans Af-  
13 fairs that contains a polytrauma center of the De-  
14 partment of Veterans Affairs.”.

15       (c) MODIFICATION OF REPORT REQUIREMENTS.—  
16 Subsection (e) of such section is amended to read as fol-  
17 lows:

18       “(e) REPORTS.—

19           “(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—

20               “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two  
21 years after the date of the enactment of the Re-  
22 storing Veterans Trust Act of 2014, and not  
23 later than September 30 each year thereafter  
24 until 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the  
25 Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate

1 and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
2 House of Representatives a report on the pilot  
3 program.

4 “(B) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted  
5 under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-  
6 lowing:

7 “(i) The number of individuals that  
8 participated in the pilot program during  
9 the year preceding the submission of the  
10 report.

11 “(ii) The number of individuals that  
12 successfully completed the pilot program  
13 during the year preceding the submission  
14 of the report.

15 “(iii) The degree to which pilot pro-  
16 gram participants and family members of  
17 pilot program participants were satisfied  
18 with the pilot program.

19 “(iv) The interim findings and conclu-  
20 sions of the Secretary with respect to the  
21 success of the pilot program and rec-  
22 ommendations for improvement.

23 “(2) FINAL REPORT.—

24 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60  
25 days after the completion of the pilot 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  
4 Representatives a final report on the pilot pro-  
5 gram.

6 “(B) ELEMENTS.—The final report re-  
7 quired by subparagraph (A) shall include the  
8 following:

9 “(i) A description of the pilot pro-  
10 gram.

11 “(ii) An assessment of the utility of  
12 the activities under the pilot program in  
13 enhancing the rehabilitation, quality of life,  
14 and community reintegration of veterans  
15 with traumatic brain injury, including com-  
16 plex mild traumatic brain injury.

17 “(iii) Such recommendations as the  
18 Secretary considers appropriate regarding  
19 improving the pilot program.”.

20 (d) MODIFICATION OF DEFINITIONS.—

21 (1) COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESI-  
22 DENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE SERVICES.—Such  
23 section is further amended—

24 (A) in the section heading, by striking

25 “**ASSISTED LIVING**” and inserting “**COMMU-**

1           **COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESIDENTIAL**  
 2           **REHABILITATIVE CARE”;**

3           (B) in subsection (e), in the subsection  
 4           heading, by striking “ASSISTED LIVING” and  
 5           inserting “COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY  
 6           RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE”;

7           (C) by striking “assisted living” each place  
 8           it appears, and inserting “community-based  
 9           brain injury rehabilitative care”; and

10          (D) in subsection (f)(1), by striking “and  
 11          personal care” and inserting “rehabilitation,  
 12          and personal care”.

13          (2) **ELIGIBLE VETERAN.**—Subsection (f)(3) of  
 14          such section is amended—

15               (A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “;  
 16               and” and inserting a semicolon;

17               (B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the  
 18               period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

19               (C) by adding at the end the following new  
 20               subparagraph:

21                       “(E) has a traumatic brain injury that is  
 22                       classified as complex-mild to severe.”.

23          (e) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is  
 24          authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Vet-  
 25          erans Affairs for fiscal year 2015 \$46,000,000 to carry

1 out the pilot program under section 1705 of the National  
2 Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public  
3 Law 110–181; 38 U.S.C. 1710C note), as amended by this  
4 section. The amount so authorized to be appropriated shall  
5 be available for obligation for the three-year period begin-  
6 ning on the date that is one year after the date of the  
7 enactment of this Act.

8 (f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
9 this section shall take effect on October 1, 2014.

10 **SEC. 119. REAUTHORIZATION AND MODIFICATION OF**  
11 **PILOT PROGRAM OF ENHANCED CONTRACT**  
12 **CARE AUTHORITY FOR HEALTH CARE NEEDS**  
13 **OF VETERANS.**

14 Section 403 of the Veterans’ Mental Health and  
15 Other Care Improvements Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–  
16 387; 38 U.S.C. 1703 note) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (a)—

18 (A) in paragraph (2), by striking “120  
19 days after the date of the enactment of this  
20 Act” and inserting “90 days after the date of  
21 the enactment of the Restoring Veterans Trust  
22 Act of 2014”; and

23 (B) by amending paragraph (4) to read as  
24 follows:

1           “(4) PROGRAM LOCATIONS.—The Secretary  
2 shall carry out the pilot program at locations in the  
3 following Veterans Integrated Service Networks (and  
4 such other locations as the Secretary considers ap-  
5 propriate):

6           “(A) Veterans Integrated Service Network

7           1.

8           “(B) Veterans Integrated Service Network

9           6.

10          “(C) Veterans Integrated Service Network

11          15.

12          “(D) Veterans Integrated Service Network

13          18.

14          “(E) Veterans Integrated Service Network

15          19.”;

16          (2) by amending subsection (b) to read as fol-  
17 lows:

18          “(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of the  
19 pilot program under this section, a covered veteran is any  
20 rural or highly rural veteran who—

21           “(1) is—

22           “(A) enrolled in the system of patient en-  
23 rollment established under section 1705(a) of  
24 title 38, United States Code;

1           “(B) eligible for health care under the laws  
2 administered by the Secretary and enrolls in  
3 such system of patient enrollment not later  
4 than 30 days after the veteran begins receiving  
5 covered health services under the pilot program;  
6 or

7           “(C) eligible for health care under section  
8 1710(e)(3) of such title; and  
9 “(2) resides in a location that is—

10           “(A) more than 60 minutes driving dis-  
11 tance from the nearest Department health care  
12 facility providing primary care services, if the  
13 veteran is seeking such services;

14           “(B) more than 120 minutes driving dis-  
15 tance from the nearest Department health care  
16 facility providing acute hospital care, if the vet-  
17 eran is seeking such care; or

18           “(C) more than 240 minutes driving dis-  
19 tance from the nearest Department health care  
20 facility providing tertiary care, if the veteran is  
21 seeking such care.”;

22           (3) by redesignating subsection (h) as sub-  
23 section (j);

24           (4) by inserting after subsection (g) the fol-  
25 lowing new subsections:

1       “(h) APPOINTMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot pro-  
 2 gram under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that  
 3 medical appointments for veterans occur during the 30-  
 4 day period beginning on the date that is 15 days after  
 5 the date on which the appointment is requested.

6       “(i) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall ensure that a  
 7 veteran eligible for the pilot program under this section  
 8 is informed of such program.”; and

9               (5) in paragraph (2)(B) of subsection (j), as re-  
 10 designated by paragraph (3) of this section, by strik-  
 11 ing the semicolon at the end and inserting “; and”.

## 12               **Subtitle C—Health Care**

### 13               **Administration**

#### 14   **SEC. 121. EXTENSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**

#### 15               **FAIRS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOLAR-**

#### 16               **SHIP PROGRAM.**

17       Section 7619 is amended by striking “December 31,  
 18 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2019”.

#### 19   **SEC. 122. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC**

#### 20               **AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.**

21       (a) ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF ADVANCED  
 22 DEGREE PROGRAMS TO EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF PRO-  
 23 VISION OF CARE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall  
 24 work with institutions of higher education to develop part-  
 25 nerships for the establishment or expansion of programs

1 of advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order  
2 to improve and enhance the availability of high quality  
3 prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

4 (b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date  
5 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit  
6 to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and  
7 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-  
8 resentatives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out  
9 subsection (a). The Secretary shall develop the plan in  
10 consultation with veterans service organizations, institu-  
11 tions of higher education with accredited degree programs  
12 in prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the  
13 prosthetics and orthotics field.

14 (c) FUNDING.—

15 (1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

16 There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for  
17 fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Af-  
18 fairs, \$10,000,000 to carry out this section.

19 (2) AVAILABILITY.—The amount authorized to  
20 be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain avail-  
21 able for expenditure until September 30, 2017.

22 **SEC. 123. LIMITATION ON EXPANSION OF DIALYSIS PILOT**  
23 **PROGRAM.**

24 (a) LIMITATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
25 shall not expand the dialysis pilot program to, or expand

1 the capacity to provide additional dialysis care at, any fa-  
2 cility owned or leased by the Department that is not an  
3 initial facility until after the date that—

4 (1) the Secretary has implemented the dialysis  
5 pilot program at each initial facility for a period of  
6 not less than two years;

7 (2) an independent analysis of the dialysis pilot  
8 program has been conducted at each initial facility,  
9 including a consideration and comparison of factors  
10 including—

11 (A) the ability of veterans to access care  
12 under the dialysis pilot program;

13 (B) the quality of care provided under the  
14 dialysis pilot program; and

15 (C) the satisfaction of veterans who have  
16 received treatment under the dialysis pilot pro-  
17 gram; and

18 (3) the report required by subsection (b) has  
19 been submitted.

20 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date  
21 of the completion of the independent analysis required by  
22 subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall submit to Congress  
23 a report that—

24 (1) includes the results of that independent  
25 analysis; and

1           (2) addresses any recommendations with re-  
2           spect to the dialysis pilot program provided in a re-  
3           port prepared by the Government Accountability Of-  
4           fice.

5           (c) UTILIZATION OF EXISTING DIALYSIS RE-  
6           SOURCES.—In order to increase the access of veterans to  
7           dialysis care and decrease the travel time of such veterans  
8           to receive such care, the Secretary shall fully utilize exist-  
9           ing dialysis resources of the Department, including any  
10          community dialysis provider with which the Department  
11          has entered into a contract or agreement for the provision  
12          of such care.

13          (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14               (1) DIALYSIS PILOT PROGRAM.—The term “di-  
15               alysis pilot program” means the pilot demonstration  
16               program established by the Secretary in 2009 to  
17               provide dialysis care to patients at certain outpatient  
18               facilities operated by the Department of Veterans  
19               Affairs.

20               (2) INITIAL FACILITY.—The term “initial facil-  
21               ity” means one of the four outpatient facilities iden-  
22               tified by the Secretary to participate in the dialysis  
23               pilot program prior to the date of the enactment of  
24               this Act.

1 (e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
 2 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
 3 ment of this Act.

4 **SEC. 124. REQUIREMENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
 5 **AFFAIRS POLICY ON REPORTING CASES OF**  
 6 **INFECTIOUS DISEASES AT FACILITIES OF**  
 7 **THE DEPARTMENT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73 is  
 9 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

10 **“§ 7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases**

11 “(a) REPORTING.—The Secretary shall ensure that  
 12 the Department has in effect an up-to-date policy on re-  
 13 porting a notifiable infectious disease diagnosed at a facil-  
 14 ity under the jurisdiction of the Secretary in accordance  
 15 with the provisions of State and local law in effect where  
 16 such facility is located.

17 “(b) NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—For pur-  
 18 poses of this section, a notifiable infectious disease is any  
 19 infectious disease that is—

20 “(1) on the list of nationally notifiable diseases  
 21 published by the Council of State and Territorial  
 22 Epidemiologists and the Centers for Disease Control  
 23 and Prevention; or

24 “(2) covered by a provision of law of a State  
 25 that requires the reporting of infectious diseases.

1       “(c) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The Secretary  
2 shall develop performance measures to assess whether and  
3 to what degree the directors of Veterans Integrated Serv-  
4 ice Networks and Department medical centers are com-  
5 plying with the policy required by subsection (a).”.

6       (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
7 at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by inserting  
8 after the item relating to section 7330A the following new  
9 item:

“7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases.”.

10       (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
11 this section shall take effect on the date that is one year  
12 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

13 **SEC. 125. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE VETERANS**  
14 **INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS AND MED-**  
15 **ICAL CENTERS OF DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
16 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

17       (a) CONTRACT.—

18           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
19 Affairs shall seek to enter into a contract with an  
20 independent third party to perform the services cov-  
21 ered by this section.

22           (2) TIMING.—The Secretary shall seek to enter  
23 into the contract described in paragraph (1) not  
24 later than 540 days after the date of the enactment  
25 of this Act.

1 (b) INDEPENDENT STUDY.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Under a contract between  
3 the Secretary and an independent third party under  
4 this section, the third party shall carry out a  
5 study—

6 (A) to assess the organizational structures  
7 of medical centers of the Department of Vet-  
8 erans Affairs; and

9 (B) to improve succession planning among  
10 key leadership roles at Veterans Integrated  
11 Service Networks and medical centers of the  
12 Department.

13 (2) MATTERS STUDIED AND PROPOSED.—In  
14 carrying out the study, the third party shall—

15 (A) assess whether the organizational  
16 structure of the medical centers of the Depart-  
17 ment is effective for the furnishing of medical  
18 services, addressing issues that arise regarding  
19 the furnishing of medical services, and address-  
20 ing standard business operations;

21 (B) propose one organizational chart for  
22 Department medical centers with a common set  
23 of base position descriptions;

24 (C) propose a base set of medical positions  
25 that should be filled to ensure that the health

1 care provided to veterans by the Department is  
2 of good quality; and

3 (D) identify which key leadership positions  
4 at Veterans Integrated Service Networks and  
5 Department medical centers should have succes-  
6 sion plans and propose how to implement such  
7 plans.

8 (3) TIMING.—The third party shall complete  
9 the study under this section not later than 270 days  
10 after entering into the contract described in sub-  
11 section (a).

12 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date  
13 on which the third party completes the study under this  
14 section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on  
15 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Vet-  
16 erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report  
17 on the results of such study.

18 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
19 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
20 ment of this Act.

21 **SEC. 126. REQUIREMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH NEXT UP-**  
22 **DATE OF CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR OF-**  
23 **FICE OF RURAL HEALTH OF THE DEPART-**  
24 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

25 (a) REQUIREMENTS.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The first update of the Stra-  
2           tegic Plan Refresh for Fiscal Years 2012 through  
3           2014 of the Office of Rural Health of the Depart-  
4           ment of Veterans Affairs after the date of the enact-  
5           ment of this Act, whether an update or refresh of  
6           such Strategic Plan Refresh or a strategic plan to  
7           supersede such Strategic Plan Refresh, shall be pre-  
8           pared in accordance with this section.

9           (2) CONSULTATION.—The Director of the Of-  
10          fice of Rural Health shall prepare the update in con-  
11          sultation with the following:

12                 (A) The Director of the Health Care Re-  
13                 tention and Recruitment Office of the Depart-  
14                 ment.

15                 (B) The Director of the Office of Quality  
16                 and Performance of the Department.

17                 (C) The Director of the Office of Care Co-  
18                 ordination Services of the Department.

19          (b) ELEMENTS.—The update described in subsection  
20          (a) shall include, for the period covered by the update,  
21          the following:

22                 (1) Goals and objectives for the recruitment  
23                 and retention by the Veterans Health Administra-  
24                 tion of health care personnel in rural areas.

1           (2) Goals and objectives for ensuring timeliness  
2           and improving quality in the delivery of health care  
3           services by the Veterans Health Administration in  
4           rural areas through contract and fee-basis providers.

5           (3) Goals and objectives for the implementation,  
6           expansion, and enhanced use of telemedicine services  
7           by the Veterans Health Administration in rural  
8           areas, including through coordination with other ap-  
9           propriate offices of the Department.

10          (4) Goals and objectives for ensuring the full  
11          and effective use of mobile outpatient clinics by the  
12          Veterans Health Administration for the provision of  
13          health care services in rural areas, including goals  
14          and objectives for the use of such clinics on a fully  
15          mobile basis and for encouraging health care pro-  
16          viders who provide services through such clinics to  
17          do so in rural areas.

18          (5) Procedures for soliciting from each Vet-  
19          erans Health Administration facility that serves a  
20          rural area the following:

21                 (A) A statement of the clinical capacity of  
22                 such facility.

23                 (B) The procedures of such facility in the  
24                 event of a medical, surgical, or mental health

1 emergency outside the scope of the clinical ca-  
2 pacity of such facility.

3 (C) The procedures and mechanisms of  
4 such facility for the provision and coordination  
5 of health care for women veterans, including  
6 procedures and mechanisms for coordination  
7 with local hospitals and health care facilities,  
8 oversight of primary care and fee-basis care,  
9 and management of specialty care.

10 (6) Goals and objectives for the modification of  
11 the funding allocation mechanisms of the Office of  
12 Rural Health in order to ensure that the Office dis-  
13 tributes funds to components of the Department to  
14 best achieve the goals and objectives of the Office  
15 and in a timely manner.

16 (7) Goals and objectives for the coordination of,  
17 and sharing of resources with respect to, the provi-  
18 sion of health care services to veterans in rural areas  
19 between the Department of Veterans Affairs, the  
20 Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service  
21 of the Department of Health and Human Services,  
22 and other Federal agencies, as appropriate and pru-  
23 dent.

24 (8) Specific milestones for the achievement of  
25 the goals and objectives developed for the update.

1           (9) Procedures for ensuring the effective imple-  
2           mentation of the update.

3           (c) TRANSMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90  
4           days after the date of the issuance of the update described  
5           in subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall  
6           transmit the update to Congress, together with such com-  
7           ments and recommendations in connection with the update  
8           as the Secretary considers appropriate.

9           **SEC. 127. REPORT ON PROVISION OF TELEMEDICINE SERV-**  
10           **ICES.**

11           (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the  
12           date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
13           erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'  
14           Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
15           fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the fol-  
16           lowing:

17           (1) Issues that may be impeding the provision  
18           by the Department of Veterans Affairs of telemedi-  
19           cine services for veterans, including the following:

20                   (A) Statutory or regulatory restrictions.

21                   (B) Licensure or credentialing issues for  
22                   any provider practicing telemedicine with vet-  
23                   erans who live in a different State than the pro-  
24                   vider.

1 (C) Limited broadband access in rural  
2 areas.

3 (D) Limited information technology re-  
4 sources or capabilities.

5 (E) Long distances veterans must travel to  
6 access a facility or clinic with telemedicine ca-  
7 pabilities.

8 (F) Insufficient liability protection for pro-  
9 viders.

10 (G) Reimbursement issues faced by pro-  
11 viders.

12 (H) Travel limitations for providers that  
13 are unaffiliated with the Department and are  
14 participating or seeking to participate in a tele-  
15 medicine program of the Department.

16 (2) Actions taken to address the issues identi-  
17 fied in paragraph (1).

18 (3) An update on efforts by the Department to  
19 carry out the initiative of teleconsultation for the  
20 provision of remote mental health and traumatic  
21 brain injury assessments required by section 1709A  
22 of title 38, United States Code.

23 (4) An update on efforts by the Department to  
24 offer training opportunities in telemedicine to med-  
25 ical residents, as required by section 108(b) of the

1 Janey Ensminger Act (Public Law 112–154; 38  
2 U.S.C. 7406 note).

3 (5) An update on efforts by the Department to,  
4 in partnership with primary care providers, install  
5 video cameras and instruments to monitor weight,  
6 blood pressure, and other vital statistics in the  
7 homes of patients.

8 (b) **TELEMEDICINE DEFINED.**—In this section, the  
9 term “telemedicine” means the use by a health care pro-  
10 vider of telecommunications to assist in the diagnosis or  
11 treatment of a patient’s medical condition.

12 (c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect  
13 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
14 ment of this Act.

15 **SEC. 128. DESIGNATION OF CORPORAL MICHAEL J.**  
16 **CRESCENZ DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
17 **FAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.**

18 (a) **DESIGNATION.**—The medical center of the De-  
19 partment of Veterans Affairs located at 3900 Woodland  
20 Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shall after the date  
21 of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as  
22 the “Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Vet-  
23 erans Affairs Medical Center”.

24 (b) **REFERENCES.**—Any reference in any law, regula-  
25 tion, map, document, paper, or other record of the United

1 States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a)  
2 shall be considered to be a reference to the Corporal Mi-  
3 chael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical  
4 Center.

5 **Subtitle D—Complementary and**  
6 **Alternative Medicine**

7 **SEC. 131. EXPANSION OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON**  
8 **AND DELIVERY OF COMPLEMENTARY AND**  
9 **ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE TO VETERANS.**

10 (a) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN TO EXPAND RE-  
11 SEARCH, EDUCATION, AND DELIVERY.—Not later than  
12 six months after the effective date specified in subsection  
13 (f), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop a plan  
14 to expand materially and substantially the scope of re-  
15 search and education on, and delivery and integration of,  
16 complementary and alternative medicine services into the  
17 health care services provided to veterans.

18 (b) ELEMENTS.—The plan required by subsection (a)  
19 shall provide for the following:

20 (1) Research on the following:

21 (A) The comparative effectiveness of var-  
22 ious complementary and alternative medicine  
23 therapies.

24 (B) Approaches to integrating complemen-  
25 tary and alternative medicine services into other

1 health care services provided by the Depart-  
2 ment.

3 (2) Education and training for health care pro-  
4 fessionals of the Department on the following:

5 (A) Complementary and alternative medi-  
6 cine services selected by the Secretary for pur-  
7 poses of the plan.

8 (B) Appropriate uses of such services.

9 (C) Integration of such services into the  
10 delivery of health care to veterans.

11 (3) Research, education, and clinical activities  
12 on complementary and alternative medicine at cen-  
13 ters of innovation at Department medical centers.

14 (4) Identification or development of metrics and  
15 outcome measures to evaluate the provision and inte-  
16 gration of complementary and alternative medicine  
17 services into the delivery of health care to veterans.

18 (5) Integration and delivery of complementary  
19 and alternative medicine services with other health  
20 care services provided by the Department.

21 (c) CONSULTATION.—

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

1 (A) The Director of the National Center  
2 on Complementary and Alternative Medicine of  
3 the National Institutes of Health.

4 (B) The Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

5 (C) Institutions of higher education, pri-  
6 vate research institutes, and individual re-  
7 searchers with extensive experience in com-  
8plementary and alternative medicine and the in-  
9tegration of complementary and alternative  
10medicine practices into the delivery of health  
11care.

12 (D) Nationally recognized providers of  
13complementary and alternative medicine.

14 (E) Such other officials, entities, and indi-  
15viduals with expertise on complementary and al-  
16ternative medicine as the Secretary considers  
17appropriate.

18 (2) SCOPE OF CONSULTATION.—The Secretary  
19shall undertake consultation under paragraph (1) in  
20carrying out subsection (a) with respect to the fol-  
21lowing:

22 (A) To develop the plan.

23 (B) To identify specific complementary and  
24alternative medicine practices that, on the basis  
25of research findings or promising clinical inter-

1           ventions, are appropriate to include as services  
2           to veterans.

3           (C) To identify barriers to the effective  
4           provision and integration of complementary and  
5           alternative medicine services into the delivery of  
6           health care to veterans, and to identify mecha-  
7           nisms for overcoming such barriers.

8           (d) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appro-  
9           priated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary  
10          to carry out this section.

11          (e) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE  
12          DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and  
13          alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that  
14          term in regulations the Secretary shall prescribe for pur-  
15          poses of this section, which shall, to the degree practicable,  
16          be consistent with the meaning given such term by the  
17          Secretary of Health and Human Services.

18          (f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
19          on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
20          ment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 132. PROGRAM ON INTEGRATION OF COMPLEMEN-**  
2 **TARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE WITHIN**  
3 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MED-**  
4 **ICAL CENTERS.**

5 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Vet-  
6 erans Affairs shall—

7 (1) carry out, through the Office of Patient  
8 Centered Care and Cultural Transformation of the  
9 Department of Veterans Affairs, a program to as-  
10 sess the feasibility and advisability of integrating the  
11 delivery of complementary and alternative medicine  
12 services selected by the Secretary with other health  
13 care services provided by the Department for vet-  
14 erans with mental health conditions, chronic pain  
15 conditions, other chronic conditions, and such other  
16 conditions as the Secretary determines appropriate;  
17 and

18 (2) in developing the program, identify and re-  
19 solve barriers to the provision of complementary and  
20 alternative medicine services selected by the Sec-  
21 retary and the integration of those services with  
22 other health care services provided by the Depart-  
23 ment.

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

1 (c) LOCATIONS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry  
3 out the program at not fewer than 15 separate De-  
4 partment medical centers.

5 (2) POLYTRAUMA CENTERS.—Not less than two  
6 of the medical centers designated under paragraph  
7 (1) shall be located at polytrauma rehabilitation cen-  
8 ters of the Department.

9 (3) SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.—In carrying  
10 out the program, the Secretary shall select locations  
11 that include the following areas:

12 (A) Rural areas.

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

15 (C) Areas representing different geo-  
16 graphic locations, such as census tracts estab-  
17 lished by the Bureau of the Census.

18 (d) PROVISION OF SERVICES.—Under the program,  
19 the Secretary shall provide covered services to covered vet-  
20 erans by integrating complementary and alternative medi-  
21 cine services with other services provided by the Depart-  
22 ment at the medical centers designated under subsection  
23 (c)(1).

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

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

3           (2) experiences chronic pain; or

4           (3) has a chronic condition being treated by a  
5 clinician of the Department.

6 (f) COVERED SERVICES.—

7           (1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the pro-  
8 gram, covered services are services consisting of  
9 complementary and alternative medicine as selected  
10 by the Secretary.

11           (2) ADMINISTRATION OF SERVICES.—Covered  
12 services shall be administered under the program as  
13 follows:

14           (A) Covered services shall be administered  
15 by clinicians employed by the Secretary for pur-  
16 poses of this section who, to the extent prac-  
17 ticable, shall provide services consisting of com-  
18plementary and alternative medicine, including  
19 those clinicians who solely provide such services.

20           (B) Covered services shall be included as  
21 part of the Patient Aligned Care Teams initia-  
22 tive of the Office of Patient Care Services, Pri-  
23mary Care Program Office, in coordination with  
24 the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cul-  
25 tural Transformation.

1 (C) Covered services shall be made avail-  
2 able to both—

3 (i) covered veterans with mental  
4 health conditions, pain conditions, or  
5 chronic conditions described in subsection  
6 (e) who have received conventional treat-  
7 ments from the Department for such con-  
8 ditions; and

9 (ii) covered veterans with mental  
10 health conditions, pain conditions, or  
11 chronic conditions described in subsection  
12 (e) who have not received conventional  
13 treatments from the Department for such  
14 conditions.

15 (g) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation  
16 of a veteran in the program shall be at the election of  
17 the veteran and in consultation with a clinician of the De-  
18 partment.

19 (h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

20 (1) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—Not later than 90  
21 days after the date of the commencement of the pro-  
22 gram and not less frequently than once every 90  
23 days thereafter for the duration of the program, the  
24 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
25 erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on

1 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a  
2 report on the efforts of the Secretary to carry out  
3 the program, including a description of the outreach  
4 conducted by the Secretary to veterans and commu-  
5 nity organizations to inform such organizations  
6 about the program.

7 (2) FINAL REPORT.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180  
9 days after the completion of the program, the  
10 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on  
11 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-  
12 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of  
13 Representatives a report on the program.

14 (B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted  
15 under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-  
16 lowing:

17 (i) The findings and conclusions of  
18 the Secretary with respect to the program,  
19 including with respect to—

20 (I) the utilization and efficacy of  
21 the complementary and alternative  
22 medicine services established under  
23 the program;

24 (II) an assessment of the benefit  
25 of the program to covered veterans in

1           mental health diagnoses, pain man-  
2           agement, and treatment of chronic ill-  
3           ness; and

4                   (III) the comparative effective-  
5           ness of various complementary and al-  
6           ternative medicine therapies.

7                   (ii) Barriers identified under sub-  
8           section (a)(2) that were not resolved.

9                   (iii) Such recommendations for the  
10          continuation or expansion of the program  
11          as the Secretary considers appropriate.

12          (i) **COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE**  
13 **DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “complementary and  
14 alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that  
15 term in section 131(e) of this Act.

16          (j) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect  
17 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
18 ment of this Act.

19 **SEC. 133. STUDIES OF BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY VET-**  
20 **ERANS IN RECEIVING, AND ADMINISTRATORS**  
21 **AND CLINICIANS IN PROVIDING, COM-**  
22 **PLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE**  
23 **SERVICES FURNISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT**  
24 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

25          (a) **STUDIES REQUIRED.**—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
2       Affairs shall conduct comprehensive studies of the  
3       barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and  
4       administrators and clinicians in providing, com-  
5       plementary and alternative medicine services fur-  
6       nished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

7           (2) STUDIES CONDUCTED.—

8           (A) VETERANS.—In conducting the study  
9       of veterans, the Secretary shall—

10           (i) survey veterans who seek or receive  
11       hospital care or medical services furnished  
12       by the Department, as well as veterans  
13       who do not seek or receive such care or  
14       services;

15           (ii) administer the survey to a rep-  
16       resentative sample of veterans from each  
17       Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

18           (iii) ensure that the sample of vet-  
19       erans surveyed is of sufficient size for the  
20       study results to be statistically significant.

21           (B) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—

22       In conducting the study of clinicians and ad-  
23       ministrators, the Secretary shall—

1 (i) survey administrators of the De-  
2 partment who are involved in the provision  
3 of health care services;

4 (ii) survey clinicians that have pro-  
5 vided complementary and alternative medi-  
6 cine services through the program estab-  
7 lished under section 132 of this Act, after  
8 those clinicians have provided those serv-  
9 ices through such program for at least 90  
10 days; and

11 (iii) administer the survey to adminis-  
12 trators under clause (i)—

13 (I) before the introduction of  
14 complementary and alternative medi-  
15 cine services through such program;  
16 and

17 (II) not earlier than 90 days  
18 after the introduction of complemen-  
19 tary and alternative medicine services  
20 through such program.

21 (b) ELEMENTS OF STUDIES.—

22 (1) VETERANS.—In conducting the study of  
23 veterans required by subsection (a), the Secretary  
24 shall study the following:

1 (A) The perceived barriers associated with  
2 obtaining complementary and alternative medi-  
3 cine services from the Department.

4 (B) The satisfaction of veterans with com-  
5 plementary and alternative medicine services in  
6 primary care.

7 (C) The degree to which veterans are  
8 aware of eligibility requirements for, and the  
9 scope of services available under, complemen-  
10 tary and alternative medicine services furnished  
11 by the Department.

12 (D) The effectiveness of outreach to vet-  
13 erans on the availability of complementary and  
14 alternative medicine for veterans.

15 (E) Such other barriers as the Secretary  
16 considers appropriate.

17 (2) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—In  
18 conducting the study of administrators and clini-  
19 cians required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall  
20 study the following:

21 (A) The extent of the integration of com-  
22 plementary and alternative medicine services  
23 within the services provided by the Department.

24 (B) The perception by administrators and  
25 clinicians of the structural and attitudinal bar-

1           riers to the delivery of high quality complemen-  
2           tary and alternative medicine services by the  
3           Department.

4           (C) Strategies that have been used to re-  
5           duce or eliminate such barriers and the results  
6           of such strategies.

7           (D) The satisfaction of administrators and  
8           clinicians regarding the integration of com-  
9           plementary and alternative medicine services  
10          within the services provided by the Department.

11          (E) The perception by administrators and  
12          clinicians of the value of specific complementary  
13          and alternative medicine services for inpatient  
14          and outpatient veteran populations.

15          (c) DISCHARGE BY CONTRACT.—The Secretary shall  
16          enter into a contract with a qualified independent entity  
17          or organization to carry out the studies required by this  
18          section.

19          (d) MANDATORY REVIEW OF DATA BY THE NA-  
20          TIONAL RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

21                (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure  
22          that the head of the National Research Advisory  
23          Council reviews the results of the studies conducted  
24          under this section.

1           (2) SUBMITTAL OF FINDINGS.—The head of the  
2           National Research Advisory Council shall submit  
3           findings with respect to the studies to the Under  
4           Secretary for Health and to other pertinent program  
5           offices within the Department with responsibilities  
6           relating to health care services for veterans.

7           (e) REPORTS.—

8           (1) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later  
9           than one year after the date of the enactment of this  
10          Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report  
11          on the status of the implementation of this section.

12          (2) REPORT ON STUDY.—

13               (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days  
14               after the date of the completion of the study,  
15               the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report  
16               on the study required by subsection (a).

17               (B) CONTENTS.—The report required by  
18               subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

19                   (i) Recommendations for such admin-  
20                   istrative and legislative proposals and ac-  
21                   tions as the Secretary considers appro-  
22                   priate.

23                   (ii) The findings of the head of the  
24                   National Research Advisory Council and of  
25                   the Under Secretary for Health.

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

5 (g) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE  
6 DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and  
7 alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that  
8 term in section 131(e) of this Act.

9 **SEC. 134. PROGRAM ON USE OF WELLNESS PROGRAMS AS**  
10 **COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH TO MENTAL**  
11 **HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS AND FAMILY**  
12 **MEMBERS OF VETERANS.**

13 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
15 Affairs shall carry out a program through the award  
16 of grants to public or private nonprofit entities to  
17 assess the feasibility and advisability of using  
18 wellness programs to complement the provision of  
19 mental health care to veterans and family members  
20 eligible for counseling under section 1712A(a)(1)(C)  
21 of title 38, United States Code.

22 (2) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The pro-  
23 gram shall be carried out so as to assess the fol-  
24 lowing:

1 (A) Means of improving coordination be-  
2 tween Federal, State, local, and community pro-  
3 viders of health care in the provision of mental  
4 health care to veterans and family members de-  
5 scribed in paragraph (1).

6 (B) Means of enhancing outreach, and co-  
7 ordination of outreach, by and among providers  
8 of health care referred to in subparagraph (A)  
9 on the mental health care services available to  
10 veterans and family members described in para-  
11 graph (1).

12 (C) Means of using wellness programs of  
13 providers of health care referred to in subpara-  
14 graph (A) as complements to the provision by  
15 the Department of Veterans Affairs of mental  
16 health care to veterans and family members de-  
17 scribed in paragraph (1).

18 (D) Whether wellness programs described  
19 in subparagraph (C) are effective in enhancing  
20 the quality of life and well-being of veterans  
21 and family members described in paragraph  
22 (1).

23 (E) Whether wellness programs described  
24 in subparagraph (C) are effective in increasing  
25 the adherence of veterans described in para-

1 graph (1) to the primary mental health services  
2 provided such veterans by the Department.

3 (F) Whether wellness programs described  
4 in subparagraph (C) have an impact on the  
5 sense of well-being of veterans described in  
6 paragraph (1) who receive primary mental  
7 health services from the Department.

8 (G) Whether wellness programs described  
9 in subparagraph (C) are effective in encour-  
10 aging veterans receiving health care from the  
11 Department to adopt a more healthy lifestyle.

12 (b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the  
13 program for a period of three years beginning on the date  
14 that is one year after the date of the enactment of this  
15 Act.

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

20 (d) GRANT PROPOSALS.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—A public or private nonprofit  
22 entity seeking the award of a grant under this sec-  
23 tion shall submit an application therefor to the Sec-  
24 retary in such form and in such manner as the Sec-  
25 retary may require.

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

4           (A) A plan to coordinate activities under  
5 the program, to the extent possible, with the  
6 Federal, State, and local providers of services  
7 for veterans to enhance the following:

8           (i) Awareness by veterans of benefits  
9 and health care services provided by the  
10 Department.

11           (ii) Outreach efforts to increase the  
12 use by veterans of services provided by the  
13 Department.

14           (iii) Educational efforts to inform vet-  
15 erans of the benefits of a healthy and ac-  
16 tive lifestyle.

17           (B) A statement of understanding from  
18 the entity submitting the application that, if se-  
19 lected, such entity will be required to report to  
20 the Secretary periodically on standardized data  
21 and other performance data necessary to evalu-  
22 ate individual outcomes and to facilitate evalua-  
23 tions among entities participating in the pro-  
24 gram.

1 (C) Other requirements that the Secretary  
2 may prescribe.

3 (e) GRANT USES.—

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

7 (2) ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND FAMILY.—In car-  
8 rying out the purposes prescribed by the Secretary  
9 in paragraph (1), a public or private nonprofit entity  
10 awarded a grant under this section shall use the  
11 award to furnish services only to individuals speci-  
12 fied in section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United  
13 States Code.

14 (f) REPORTS.—

15 (1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180  
17 days after the date of the commencement of the  
18 program, and every 180 days thereafter, the  
19 Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on  
20 the program.

21 (B) REPORT ELEMENTS.—Each report re-  
22 quired by subparagraph (A) shall include the  
23 following:

24 (i) The findings and conclusions of  
25 the Secretary with respect to the program

1           during the 180-day period preceding the  
2           report.

3                   (ii) An assessment of the benefits of  
4           the program to veterans and their family  
5           members during the 180-day period pre-  
6           ceding the report.

7           (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days  
8           after the end of the program, the Secretary shall  
9           submit to Congress a report detailing the rec-  
10          ommendations of the Secretary as to the advisability  
11          of continuing or expanding the program.

12          (g) WELLNESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term  
13          “wellness” has the meaning given that term in regulations  
14          prescribed by the Secretary.

## 15           **Subtitle E—Mental Health Care**

### 16   **SEC. 141. INCLUSION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS** 17                   **IN THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM** 18                   **FOR HEALTH PERSONNEL OF THE DEPART-** 19                   **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

20          (a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the education and  
21          training program required under section 7302(a)(1) of  
22          title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans  
23          Affairs shall include education and training of marriage  
24          and family therapists and licensed professional mental  
25          health counselors.

1 (b) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall apportion fund-  
2 ing for the education and training program equally among  
3 the professions included in the program.

4 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
5 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
6 ment of this Act.

7 **SEC. 142. REPORT ON PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH**  
8 **SERVICES FOR FAMILIES OF CERTAIN VET-**  
9 **ERANS AT FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

10 Not later than one year after the date of the enact-  
11 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall  
12 submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Sen-  
13 ate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House  
14 of Representatives a report on the feasibility and advis-  
15 ability of providing services under the program established  
16 by section 304(a) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus  
17 Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163; 38  
18 U.S.C. 1712A note) at medical facilities of the Depart-  
19 ment of Veterans Affairs.

20 **SEC. 143. ANNUAL REPORT ON COMMUNITY MENTAL**  
21 **HEALTH PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the  
23 date of the enactment of this Act and not later than Sep-  
24 tember 30 each year thereafter until the completion of the  
25 pilot program described in subsection (b), the Secretary

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

5 (b) PILOT PROGRAM DESCRIBED.—The pilot pro-  
6 gram described in this subsection is the pilot program con-  
7 ducted by the Veterans Health Administration to connect  
8 medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs  
9 with community-based mental health care providers and  
10 substance abuse treatment providers for the purpose of  
11 assisting in the treatment of veterans with mental health  
12 disorders, commonly known as the “Community Mental  
13 Health Partnership Pilot”.

14 (c) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under sub-  
15 section (a) shall include the following:

16 (1) The number of sites participating in the  
17 pilot program.

18 (2) The number of individuals participating in  
19 the pilot program at each site.

20 (3) A detailed assessment of the effectiveness  
21 of, the participation of veterans in, and the satisfac-  
22 tion of veterans with the pilot program.

23 (4) An analysis of barriers to the effectiveness  
24 of, the participation of veterans in, and the satisfac-  
25 tion of veterans with the pilot program.

1           (5) A description of the plans of the Secretary  
2           to conduct outreach and provide information to vet-  
3           erans and community mental health providers with  
4           respect to the pilot program.

5           (6) A description of any plans to expand the  
6           pilot program, including plans that focus on the  
7           unique needs of veterans located in rural areas.

8           (7) An explanation of how the care provided  
9           under the pilot program is consistent with the min-  
10          imum clinical mental health guidelines promulgated  
11          by the Veterans Health Administration, including  
12          clinical guidelines contained in the Uniform Mental  
13          Health Services Handbook of such Administration.

14       **Subtitle F—Dental Care Eligibility**  
15       **Expansion and Enhancement**

16       **SEC. 151. RESTORATIVE DENTAL SERVICES FOR VETERANS.**

17       (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1710(c) is amended—

18           (1) in the second sentence—

19               (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A)  
20               and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively; and

21               (B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and  
22               (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;  
23               (2) by inserting “(1)” after “(c)”;

24               (3) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting  
25               the following:

1 “(2) The Secretary”; and

2 (4) by adding at the end the following new  
3 paragraph:

4 “(3) In addition to the dental services, treatment,  
5 and appliances authorized to be furnished by paragraph  
6 (2), the Secretary may furnish dental services and treat-  
7 ment, and dental appliances, needed to restore functioning  
8 in a veteran that is lost as a result of any services or treat-  
9 ment furnished under this subsection.”.

10 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
11 subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one  
12 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

13 **SEC. 152. PILOT PROGRAM ON EXPANSION OF FURNISHING**  
14 **OF DENTAL CARE TO ALL ENROLLED VET-**  
15 **ERANS.**

16 (a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not  
17 later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of  
18 this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out  
19 a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability  
20 of furnishing dental care to veterans enrolled in the system  
21 of patient enrollment under section 1705 of title 38,  
22 United States Code, who are not eligible for dental serv-  
23 ices and treatment, and related dental appliances, under  
24 current authorities.

1 (b) DURATION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—The pilot pro-  
2 gram shall be carried out during the three-year period be-  
3 ginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot pro-  
4 gram.

5 (c) LOCATIONS.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry  
7 out the pilot program at not fewer than 16 locations  
8 as follows:

9 (A) Four Department of Veterans Affairs  
10 medical centers with an established dental clinic  
11 with capacity available for the furnishing of  
12 services and treatment under the pilot program.

13 (B) Four Department medical centers with  
14 a current contract for the furnishing of dental  
15 care.

16 (C) Four Community-Based Outpatient  
17 Clinics (CBOCs) with capacity available for the  
18 furnishing of services and treatment under the  
19 pilot program.

20 (D) Four facilities selected from among  
21 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)  
22 and Indian Health Service facilities with estab-  
23 lished dental clinics, of which—

24 (i) at least one facility shall be such  
25 an Indian Health Service facility; and

1                   (ii) any Indian Health Service facility  
2                   so selected shall be selected in consultation  
3                   with the Secretary of Health and Human  
4                   Services.

5                   (2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations  
6                   for the pilot program, the Secretary shall consider  
7                   the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations  
8                   in each of the following:

9                   (A) Rural areas.

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

12                  (C) Areas representing different geo-  
13                  graphic locations, such as census tracts estab-  
14                  lished by the Bureau of Census.

15                  (d) LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING  
16 VETERANS.—

17                  (1) IN GENERAL.—The total number of eligible  
18                  veterans who may participate in the pilot program  
19                  may not exceed 30,000.

20                  (2) DISTRIBUTION OF LIMITATION.—In apply-  
21                  ing the limitation in paragraph (1) to the pilot pro-  
22                  gram, the Secretary shall distribute the limitation  
23                  across and among locations selected for the pilot  
24                  program in a manner that takes appropriate account

1 of the size and need of veterans for dental services  
2 at each such location.

3 (e) SCOPE OF SERVICES.—The dental services and  
4 treatment furnished to veterans under the pilot program  
5 shall be consistent with the dental services and treatment  
6 furnished by the Secretary to veterans with service-con-  
7 nected disabilities rated 100 percent disabling under the  
8 laws administered by the Secretary.

9 (f) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation  
10 of a veteran in the pilot program shall be at the election  
11 of the veteran.

12 (g) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF SERVICES.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—The total amount the Sec-  
14 retary may expend furnishing dental services and  
15 treatment to a veteran participating in the pilot pro-  
16 gram during any one-year period may not exceed  
17 such amount as the Secretary determines appro-  
18 priate. The amount so determined may not be less  
19 than \$1,000.

20 (2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall make  
21 the determination under paragraph (1)—

22 (A) in consultation with the Director of the  
23 Indian Health Service; and

24 (B) in consultation with the Director of  
25 the Health Resources and Services Administra-

1           tion of the Department of Health and Human  
2           Services if one or more Federally Qualified  
3           Health Center is selected as a location for the  
4           pilot program under subsection (c)(1)(D).

5           (h) COPAYMENTS.—The Secretary may collect copay-  
6           ments for dental services and treatment furnished under  
7           the pilot program in accordance with authorities on the  
8           collection of copayments for medical care of veterans  
9           under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code.

10          (i) PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.—

11           (1) NOTICE TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS ON PILOT  
12           PROGRAM.—In carrying out the pilot program, the  
13           Secretary shall inform all veterans eligible to partici-  
14           pate in the pilot program of the services and treat-  
15           ment available under the pilot program.

16           (2) CONTRACTS.—In carrying out the pilot pro-  
17           gram, the Secretary may enter into contracts with  
18           appropriate entities for the provision of dental serv-  
19           ices and treatment under the pilot program. Each  
20           such contract shall specify performance standards  
21           and metrics and processes for ensuring compliance  
22           of the contractor concerned with such performance  
23           standards.

24          (j) REPORTS.—

25           (1) PRELIMINARY REPORTS.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than each of  
2 540 days and three years after the date of the  
3 commencement of the pilot program, the Sec-  
4 retary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
5 erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee  
6 on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Represent-  
7 atives a report on the pilot program.

8 (B) CONTENTS.—Each report under sub-  
9 paragraph (A) shall include the following:

10 (i) A description of the implementa-  
11 tion and operation of the pilot program.

12 (ii) The number of veterans receiving  
13 services and treatment under the pilot pro-  
14 gram, and a description of the dental serv-  
15 ices and treatment furnished to such vet-  
16 erans.

17 (iii) An analysis of the costs and bene-  
18 fits of the pilot program, including a com-  
19 parison of costs and benefits by location  
20 type.

21 (iv) An assessment of the impact of  
22 the pilot program on medical care,  
23 wellness, employability, and perceived qual-  
24 ity of life of veterans.

1 (v) The current findings and conclu-  
2 sions of the Secretary with respect to the  
3 pilot program.

4 (vi) Such recommendations for the  
5 continuation or expansion of the pilot pro-  
6 gram as the Secretary considers appro-  
7 priate.

8 (2) FINAL REPORT.—

9 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180  
10 days after the completion of the pilot program,  
11 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on  
12 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-  
13 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of  
14 Representatives a report on the pilot program.

15 (B) CONTENTS.—The report under sub-  
16 paragraph (A) shall include the following:

17 (i) The findings and conclusions of  
18 the Secretary with respect to the pilot pro-  
19 gram.

20 (ii) Such recommendations for the  
21 continuation or expansion of the pilot pro-  
22 gram as the Secretary considers appro-  
23 priate.

24 (k) FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DE-  
25 FINED.—In this section the term “Federally Qualified

1 Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center  
2 as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security  
3 Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B)).

4 (l) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
5 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
6 ment of this Act.

7 **SEC. 153. PROGRAM ON EDUCATION TO PROMOTE DENTAL**  
8 **HEALTH IN VETERANS.**

9 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
11 Affairs shall carry out a program of education to  
12 promote dental health for veterans who are enrolled  
13 in the system of patient enrollment of the Depart-  
14 ment of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title  
15 38, United States Code.

16 (2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the program  
17 shall be deemed to alter or revise the eligibility of  
18 any veteran for dental care under the laws adminis-  
19 tered by the Secretary.

20 (b) ELEMENTS.—The program required by sub-  
21 section (a) shall provide education for veterans on the fol-  
22 lowing:

23 (1) The association between dental health and  
24 overall health and well-being.

25 (2) Proper techniques for dental care.

1           (3) Signs and symptoms of commonly occurring  
2 dental conditions.

3           (4) Treatment options for commonly occurring  
4 dental issues.

5           (5) Options for obtaining access to dental care,  
6 including information on eligibility for dental care  
7 through the Department and on purchasing private  
8 dental insurance.

9           (6) Available and accessible options for obtain-  
10 ing low or no-cost dental care, including through  
11 dental schools and Federally Qualified Health Cen-  
12 ters (FQHCs).

13           (7) Such other matters relating to dental health  
14 as the Secretary considers appropriate.

15 (c) DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS.—

16           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide  
17 educational materials to veterans under the program  
18 required by subsection (a) through a variety of  
19 mechanisms, including the following:

20           (A) The availability and distribution of  
21 print materials at Department facilities (includ-  
22 ing at medical centers, clinics, Vet Centers, and  
23 readjustment counseling centers) and to pro-  
24 viders (including members of Patient Aligned  
25 Care Teams).

1           (B) The availability and distribution of  
2 materials over the Internet, including through  
3 webinars and My HealthVet.

4           (C) Presentations of information, including  
5 both small group and large group presentations.

6           (2) SELECTION OF MECHANISMS.—In selecting  
7 mechanisms for purposes of this subsection, the Sec-  
8 retary shall select mechanisms designed to maximize  
9 the number of veterans who receive education under  
10 the program.

11          (d) FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DE-  
12 FINED.—In this section the term “Federally Qualified  
13 Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center  
14 as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security  
15 Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B)).

16          (e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
17 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
18 ment of this Act.

19 **SEC. 154. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

20          There is authorized to be appropriated for the De-  
21 partment of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2015  
22 \$305,000,000 to carry out this subtitle and the amend-  
23 ments made by this subtitle. The amount so authorized  
24 to be appropriated shall be available for obligation for the

1 five-year period beginning on the date that is one year  
 2 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

3 **Subtitle G—Health Care Related to**  
 4 **Sexual Trauma**

5 **SEC. 161. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA**  
 6 **COUNSELING AND TREATMENT TO VET-**  
 7 **ERANS ON INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING.**

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

11 **SEC. 162. PROVISION OF COUNSELING AND TREATMENT**  
 12 **FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA BY THE DEPARTMENT**  
 13 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO MEMBERS OF THE**  
 14 **ARMED FORCES.**

15 (a) EXPANSION OF COVERAGE TO MEMBERS OF THE  
 16 ARMED FORCES.—Subsection (a) of section 1720D is  
 17 amended—

18 (1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as para-  
 19 graph (3);

20 (2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-  
 21 lowing new paragraph (2):

22 “(2)(A) In operating the program required by para-  
 23 graph (1), the Secretary may, in consultation with the  
 24 Secretary of Defense, provide counseling and care and  
 25 services to members of the Armed Forces (including mem-

1 bers of the National Guard and Reserves) on active duty  
 2 to overcome psychological trauma described in that para-  
 3 graph.

4 “(B) A member described in subparagraph (A) shall  
 5 not be required to obtain a referral before receiving coun-  
 6 seling and care and services under this paragraph.”; and

7 (3) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by para-  
 8 graph (1)—

9 (A) by striking “a veteran” and inserting  
 10 “an individual”; and

11 (B) by striking “that veteran” each place  
 12 it appears and inserting “that individual”.

13 (b) INFORMATION TO MEMBERS ON AVAILABILITY OF  
 14 COUNSELING AND SERVICES.—Subsection (c) of such sec-  
 15 tion is amended—

16 (1) by striking “to veterans” each place it ap-  
 17 pears; and

18 (2) in paragraph (3), by inserting “members of  
 19 the Armed Forces and” before “individuals”.

20 (c) INCLUSION OF MEMBERS IN REPORTS ON COUN-  
 21 SELING AND SERVICES.—Subsection (e) of such section  
 22 is amended—

23 (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by  
 24 striking “to veterans”;

25 (2) in paragraph (2)—

1 (A) by striking “women veterans” and in-  
2 serting “individuals”; and

3 (B) by striking “training under subsection  
4 (d).” and inserting “training under subsection  
5 (d), disaggregated by—

6 “(A) veterans;

7 “(B) members of the Armed Forces (in-  
8 cluding members of the National Guard and  
9 Reserves) on active duty; and

10 “(C) for each of subparagraphs (A) and  
11 (B)—

12 “(i) men; and

13 “(ii) women.”;

14 (3) in paragraph (4), by striking “veterans”  
15 and inserting “individuals”; and

16 (4) in paragraph (5)—

17 (A) by striking “women veterans” and in-  
18 serting “individuals”; and

19 (B) by inserting “, including specific rec-  
20 ommendations for individuals specified in sub-  
21 paragraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (2)”  
22 before the period at the end.

23 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
24 this section shall take effect on the date that is one year  
25 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 163. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SCREEN-**  
2 **ING MECHANISM TO DETECT INCIDENTS OF**  
3 **DOMESTIC ABUSE.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the  
5 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
6 erans Affairs shall develop and implement a screening  
7 mechanism to be used when a veteran seeks healthcare  
8 services from the Department of Veterans Affairs to detect  
9 if the veteran has been a victim of domestic abuse for pur-  
10 poses of improving the treatment of the veteran and as-  
11 sessing the prevalence of domestic abuse in the veteran  
12 population.

13 (b) READILY AVAILABLE SCREENING TOOLS.—In de-  
14 veloping and implementing a screening mechanism under  
15 subsection (a), the Secretary may incorporate into the  
16 screening mechanism such readily available screening tools  
17 as the Secretary considers appropriate for the screening  
18 mechanism.

19 (c) DOMESTIC ABUSE DEFINED.—In this section, the  
20 term “domestic abuse” means behavior with respect to an  
21 individual that—

22 (1) constitutes—

23 (A) a pattern of behavior resulting in phys-  
24 ical or emotional abuse, economic control, or in-  
25 terference with the personal liberty of that indi-  
26 vidual;

1 (B) a violation of Federal or State law in-  
2 volving the use, attempted use, or threatened  
3 use of force or violence against that individual;  
4 or

5 (C) a violation of a lawful order issued for  
6 the protection of that individual; and

7 (2) is committed by a person who—

8 (A) is a current or former spouse or do-  
9 mestic partner of that individual;

10 (B) shares a child in common with that in-  
11 dividual;

12 (C) is a current or former intimate partner  
13 of that individual that shares or has shared a  
14 common domicile with that individual;

15 (D) is a caregiver or family caregiver of  
16 that individual (as such terms are defined in  
17 section 1720G(d) of title 38, United States  
18 Code); or

19 (E) is in any other type of relationship  
20 with that individual that the Secretary may  
21 specify for purposes of this section.

22 **SEC. 164. REPORTS ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AND DO-**  
23 **MESTIC ABUSE.**

24 (a) REPORT ON SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY  
25 SEXUAL TRAUMA IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS

1 AFFAIRS.—Not later than 630 days after the date of the  
2 enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
3 shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
4 Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
5 House of Representatives a report on the treatment and  
6 services available from the Department of Veterans Af-  
7 fairs for male veterans who experience military sexual  
8 trauma compared to such treatment and services available  
9 to female veterans who experience military sexual trauma.

10 (b) REPORT ON DOMESTIC ABUSE AMONG VET-  
11 ERANS.—Not later than two years after the implementa-  
12 tion of the screening mechanism required by section  
13 163(a) of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and  
14 the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting  
15 through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control  
16 and Prevention, shall jointly submit to the Committee on  
17 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Vet-  
18 erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report  
19 on domestic abuse among veterans that includes the fol-  
20 lowing:

21 (1) A summary of the types, outcomes, and cir-  
22 cumstances of incidents of domestic abuse that have  
23 been reported by veterans during the two-year period  
24 preceding the submission of the report.

1           (2) A summary of the treatments available from  
2           the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans who  
3           experience domestic abuse and an assessment of the  
4           effectiveness of those treatments.

5           (3) Data and analysis on any correlation be-  
6           tween an incident of military sexual trauma or sex-  
7           ual trauma experienced after the age of 18 and do-  
8           mestic abuse.

9           (4) Any other issues that the Secretary of Vet-  
10          erans Affairs or the Director of the Centers for Dis-  
11          ease Control and Prevention determines appropriate.

12          (c) REPORTS ON TRANSITION OF MILITARY SEXUAL  
13          TRAUMA AND DOMESTIC ABUSE TREATMENT FROM DE-  
14          PARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS  
15          AFFAIRS.—Not later than 630 days after the date of the  
16          enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for five  
17          years, the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of  
18          Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section  
19          320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to  
20          the appropriate committees of Congress a report on mili-  
21          tary sexual trauma and domestic abuse that includes the  
22          following:

23                (1) The processes and procedures utilized by  
24                the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Depart-  
25                ment of Defense to facilitate transition of treatment

1 of individuals who have experienced military sexual  
2 trauma or domestic abuse from treatment provided  
3 by the Department of Defense to treatment provided  
4 by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

5 (2) A description and assessment of the collabo-  
6 ration between the Department of Veterans Affairs  
7 and the Department of Defense in assisting veterans  
8 in filing claims for disabilities related to military  
9 sexual trauma or domestic abuse, including permit-  
10 ting veterans access to information and evidence  
11 necessary to develop or support such claims.

12 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13 (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-  
14 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-  
15 gress” means—

16 (A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
17 and the Committee on Armed Services of the  
18 Senate; and

19 (B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
20 and the Committee on Armed Services of the  
21 House of Representatives.

22 (2) DOMESTIC ABUSE.—The term “domestic  
23 abuse” has the meaning given that term in section  
24 163(c) of this Act.

1           (3) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term  
2           “military sexual trauma” means psychological trauma,  
3           which in the judgment of a mental health professional  
4           employed by the Department, resulted from  
5           a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a  
6           sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred  
7           while the veteran was serving on active duty or active  
8           duty for training.

9           (4) SEXUAL HARASSMENT.—The term “sexual  
10          harassment” means repeated, unsolicited verbal or  
11          physical contact of a sexual nature which is threatening  
12          in character.

13          (5) SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “sexual trauma”  
14          shall have the meaning given that term by the  
15          Secretary of Veterans Affairs for purposes of this  
16          section.

17          (e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
18          on the date that is 270 days after the date of the enact-  
19          ment of this Act.

1                   **Subtitle H—Reproductive**  
 2                   **Treatment and Services**

3 **SEC. 171. CLARIFICATION THAT FERTILITY COUNSELING**  
 4                   **AND TREATMENT ARE MEDICAL SERVICES**  
 5                   **WHICH THE SECRETARY MAY FURNISH TO**  
 6                   **VETERANS LIKE OTHER MEDICAL SERVICES.**

7           Section 1701(6), as amended by section 114(b)(1) of  
 8 this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the fol-  
 9 lowing new subparagraph:

10                   “(I) Fertility counseling and treatment, in-  
 11                   cluding treatment using assisted reproductive  
 12                   technology.”.

13 **SEC. 172. REPRODUCTIVE TREATMENT AND CARE FOR**  
 14                   **SPOUSES AND SURROGATES OF VETERANS.**

15           (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17 is  
 16 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

17 **“§ 1788. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses**  
 18                   **and surrogates of veterans**

19           “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall furnish fer-  
 20 tility counseling and treatment, including through the use  
 21 of assisted reproductive technology, to a spouse or surro-  
 22 gate of a severely wounded, ill, or injured veteran who has  
 23 an infertility condition incurred or aggravated in line of  
 24 duty in the active military, naval, or air service and who  
 25 is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment es-

1 tablished under section 1705(a) of this title if the spouse  
2 or surrogate and the veteran apply jointly for such coun-  
3 seling and treatment through a process prescribed by the  
4 Secretary.

5 “(b) COORDINATION OF CARE FOR OTHER SPOUSES  
6 AND SURROGATES.—In the case of a spouse or surrogate  
7 of a veteran not described in subsection (a) who is seeking  
8 fertility counseling and treatment, the Secretary may co-  
9 ordinate fertility counseling and treatment for such spouse  
10 or surrogate.

11 “(c) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall  
12 be construed to require the Secretary—

13 “(1) to find or certify a surrogate for a veteran  
14 or to connect a surrogate with a veteran; or

15 “(2) to furnish maternity care to a spouse or  
16 surrogate of a veteran.

17 “(d) ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY DE-  
18 FINED.—In this section, the term ‘assisted reproductive  
19 technology’ includes in vitro fertilization and other fertility  
20 treatments in which both eggs and sperm are handled  
21 when clinically appropriate.”.

22 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
23 at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting  
24 after the item relating to section 1787 the following new  
25 item:

“1788. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans.”.

1 **SEC. 173. ADOPTION ASSISTANCE FOR SEVERELY WOUND-**  
 2 **ED VETERANS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17,  
 4 as amended by section 172(a) of this Act, is further  
 5 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

6 **“§ 1789. Adoption assistance**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may pay an  
 8 amount, not to exceed the limitation amount, to assist a  
 9 covered veteran in the adoption of one or more children.

10 “(b) COVERED VETERAN.—For purposes of this sec-  
 11 tion, a covered veteran is any severely wounded, ill, or in-  
 12 jured veteran who—

13 “(1) has an infertility condition incurred or ag-  
 14 gravated in line of duty in the active military, naval,  
 15 or air service; and

16 “(2) is enrolled in the system of annual patient  
 17 enrollment established under section 1705(a) of this  
 18 title.

19 “(c) LIMITATION AMOUNT.—For purposes of this  
 20 section, the limitation amount is the amount equal to the  
 21 lesser of—

22 “(1) the cost the Department would incur if the  
 23 Secretary were to provide a covered veteran with one  
 24 cycle of fertility treatment through the use of as-

1       sisted reproductive technology under section 1788 of  
2       this title, as determined by the Secretary; or

3               “(2) the cost the Department would incur by  
4       paying the expenses of three adoptions by covered  
5       veterans, as determined by the Secretary.

6       “(d) ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY DE-  
7       FINED.—In this section, the term ‘assisted reproductive  
8       technology’ has the meaning given that term in section  
9       1788 of this title.”.

10       (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
11       at the beginning of chapter 17, as amended by section  
12       172(b) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after  
13       the item relating to section 1788 the following new item:  
      “1789. Adoption assistance.”.

14       **SEC. 174. REGULATIONS ON FURNISHING OF FERTILITY**  
15                               **COUNSELING AND TREATMENT AND ADOPT-**  
16                               **ION ASSISTANCE BY DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
17                               **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

18       (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 540 days after the  
19       date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
20       erans Affairs shall prescribe regulations—

21               (1) on the furnishing of fertility treatment to  
22       veterans using assisted reproductive technology;

23               (2) to carry out section 1788 of title 38, United  
24       States Code, as added by section 172 of this Act;  
25       and

1           (3) to carry out section 1789 of such title, as  
2           added by section 173 of this Act.

3           (b) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provi-  
4           sion of law, during the period beginning on the date of  
5           the enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which  
6           the Secretary prescribes regulations under subsection (a),  
7           the Secretary may not furnish—

8           (1) to a veteran any fertility treatment that  
9           uses an assisted reproductive technology that the  
10          Secretary has not used in the provision of a fertility  
11          treatment to a veteran before the date of the enact-  
12          ment of this Act;

13          (2) any fertility counseling or treatment under  
14          section 1788 of such title, as added by section 172  
15          of this Act; or

16          (3) any assistance under section 1789 of such  
17          title, as added by section 173 of this Act.

18          (c) ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY DE-  
19          FINED.—In this section, the term “assisted reproductive  
20          technology” has the meaning given the term in section  
21          1788 of such title, as added by section 172 of this Act.

1 **SEC. 175. COORDINATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
2 **ERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DE-**  
3 **FENSE ON FURNISHING OF FERTILITY COUN-**  
4 **SELING AND TREATMENT.**

5 The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary  
6 of Defense shall share best practices and facilitate refer-  
7 rals, as they consider appropriate, on the furnishing of fer-  
8 tility counseling and treatment.

9 **SEC. 176. FACILITATION OF REPRODUCTION AND INFER-**  
10 **TILITY RESEARCH.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73, as  
12 amended by section 124(a) of this Act, is further amended  
13 by adding at the end the following new section:

14 **“§ 7330C. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility**  
15 **research**

16 “(a) FACILITATION OF RESEARCH REQUIRED.—The  
17 Secretary shall facilitate research conducted collabo-  
18 ratively by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of  
19 Health and Human Services to improve the ability of the  
20 Department of Veterans Affairs to meet the long-term re-  
21 productive health care needs of veterans who have a geni-  
22 tourinary service-connected disability or a condition that  
23 was incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active  
24 military, naval, or air service, such as a spinal cord injury,  
25 that affects the veterans’ ability to reproduce.

1       “(b) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The Sec-  
 2 retary shall ensure that information produced by the re-  
 3 search facilitated under this section that may be useful  
 4 for other activities of the Veterans Health Administration  
 5 is disseminated throughout the Veterans Health Adminis-  
 6 tration.”.

7       (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
 8 at the beginning of chapter 73, as amended by section  
 9 124(b) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after  
 10 the item relating to section 7330B the following new item:  
       “7330C. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research.”.

11       (c) REPORT.—Not later than three years after the  
 12 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
 13 erans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the re-  
 14 search activities conducted by the Secretary under section  
 15 7330C of title 38, United States Code, as added by sub-  
 16 section (a).

17 **SEC. 177. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROVISION OF FERTILITY**  
 18 **COUNSELING AND TREATMENT FURNISHED**  
 19 **BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

20       (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the  
 21 date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently  
 22 than annually thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Af-  
 23 fairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
 24 of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of  
 25 the House of Representatives a report on the fertility

1 counseling and treatment furnished by the Department of  
2 Veterans Affairs during the year preceding the submittal  
3 of the report.

4 (b) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under sub-  
5 section (a) shall include, for the period covered by the re-  
6 port, the following:

7 (1) The number of veterans who received fer-  
8 tility counseling or treatment furnished by the De-  
9 partment of Veterans Affairs, disaggregated by era  
10 of military service of such veterans.

11 (2) The number of spouses and surrogates of  
12 veterans who received fertility counseling or treat-  
13 ment furnished by the Department.

14 (3) The cost to the Department of furnishing  
15 fertility counseling and treatment, disaggregated by  
16 cost of services and administration.

17 (4) The average cost to the Department per re-  
18 cipient of such counseling and treatment.

19 (5) In cases in which the Department furnished  
20 fertility treatment through the use of assisted repro-  
21 ductive technology, the average number of cycles per  
22 person furnished.

23 (6) A description of how fertility counseling and  
24 treatment services of the Department are coordi-

1 nated with similar services of the Department of De-  
2 fense.

3 **SEC. 178. PROGRAM ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR**  
4 **CERTAIN VETERANS.**

5 (a) ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN  
6 VETERANS RECEIVING HEALTH CARE.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17  
8 is amended by adding at the end the following new  
9 section:

10 **“§ 1709B. Assistance for child care for certain vet-**  
11 **erans receiving health care**

12 “(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall  
13 carry out a program to provide, subject to subsection (b),  
14 assistance to qualified veterans described in subsection (c)  
15 to obtain child care so that such veterans can receive  
16 health care services described in subsection (c).

17 “(b) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—As-  
18 sistance may only be provided to a qualified veteran under  
19 this section for receipt of child care during the period that  
20 the qualified veteran—

21 “(1) receives health care services described in  
22 subsection (c) at a facility of the Department; and

23 “(2) requires travel to and from such facility  
24 for the receipt of such health care services.

1       “(c) QUALIFIED VETERANS.—For purposes of this  
2 section, a qualified veteran is a veteran who is—

3           “(1) the primary caretaker of a child or chil-  
4 dren; and

5           “(2)(A) receiving from the Department—

6               “(i) regular mental health care services;

7               “(ii) intensive mental health care services;

8           or

9               “(iii) such other intensive health care serv-  
10 ices that the Secretary determines that provi-  
11 sion of assistance to the veteran to obtain child  
12 care would improve access to such health care  
13 services by the veteran; or

14           “(B) in need of regular or intensive mental  
15 health care services from the Department, and but  
16 for lack of child care services, would receive such  
17 health care services from the Department.

18       “(d) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the  
19 program in no fewer than three Veterans Integrated Serv-  
20 ice Networks selected by the Secretary for purposes of the  
21 program.

22       “(e) FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.—(1)  
23 Child care assistance under this section may include the  
24 following:

1           “(A) Stipends for the payment of child care of-  
 2           ferred by licensed child care centers (either directly  
 3           or through a voucher program) which shall be, to  
 4           the extent practicable, modeled after the Depart-  
 5           ment of Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Pro-  
 6           gram established pursuant to section 630 of the  
 7           Treasury and General Government Appropriations  
 8           Act, 2002 (Public Law 107–67; 115 Stat. 552).

9           “(B) Direct provision of child care at an on-site  
 10          facility of the Department.

11          “(C) Payments to private child care agencies.

12          “(D) Collaboration with facilities or programs  
 13          of other Federal departments or agencies.

14          “(E) Such other forms of assistance as the Sec-  
 15          retary considers appropriate.

16          “(2) In the case that child care assistance under this  
 17          section is provided as a stipend under paragraph (1)(A),  
 18          such stipend shall cover the full cost of such child care.”.

19                 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
 20          tions at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by  
 21          inserting after the item relating to section 1709A  
 22          the following new item:

“1709B. Assistance for child care for certain veterans receiving health care.”.

23                 (3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section  
 24          205(e) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus  
 25          Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163;

1 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended by inserting “but  
2 not after the date of the enactment of the Restoring  
3 Veterans Trust Act of 2014” before the period at  
4 the end.

5 (b) ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS  
6 RECEIVING READJUSTMENT COUNSELING AND RELATED  
7 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17,  
9 as amended by subsection (a)(1) of this section, is  
10 further amended by adding at the end the following  
11 new section:

12 **“§ 1709C. Assistance for child care for individuals re-**  
13 **ceiving readjustment counseling and re-**  
14 **lated mental health services**

15 “(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall  
16 carry out a program to provide, subject to subsection (b),  
17 assistance to qualified individuals described in subsection  
18 (c) to obtain child care so that such individuals can receive  
19 readjustment counseling and related mental health serv-  
20 ices.

21 “(b) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—As-  
22 sistance may only be provided to a qualified individual  
23 under this section for receipt of child care during the pe-  
24 riod that the qualified individual receives readjustment

1 counseling and related health care services at a Vet Cen-  
2 ter.

3 “(c) QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this  
4 section, a qualified individual is an individual who is—

5 “(1) the primary caretaker of a child or chil-  
6 dren; and

7 “(2)(A) receiving from the Department regular  
8 readjustment counseling and related mental health  
9 services; or

10 “(B) in need of readjustment counseling and  
11 related mental health services from the Department,  
12 and but for lack of child care services, would receive  
13 such counseling and services from the Department.

14 “(d) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the  
15 program under this section in no fewer than three Read-  
16 justment Counseling Service Regions selected by the Sec-  
17 retary for purposes of the program.

18 “(e) FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.—(1)  
19 Child care assistance under this section may include the  
20 following:

21 “(A) Stipends for the payment of child care of-  
22 fered by licensed child care centers (either directly  
23 or through a voucher program) which shall be, to  
24 the extent practicable, modeled after the Depart-  
25 ment of Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Pro-

1       gram established pursuant to section 630 of the  
2       Treasury and General Government Appropriations  
3       Act, 2002 (Public Law 107–67; 115 Stat. 552).

4             “(B) Payments to private child care agencies.

5             “(C) Collaboration with facilities or programs  
6       of other Federal departments or agencies.

7             “(D) Such other forms of assistance as the Sec-  
8       retary considers appropriate.

9       “(2) In the case that child care assistance under this  
10      subsection is provided as a stipend under paragraph  
11      (1)(A), such stipend shall cover the full cost of such child  
12      care.

13       “(f) VET CENTER DEFINED.—In this section, the  
14      term ‘Vet Center’ means a center for readjustment coun-  
15      seling and related mental health services for individuals  
16      under section 1712A of this title.”.

17             (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
18      tions at the beginning of chapter 17, as amended by  
19      subsection (a)(2) of this section, is further amended  
20      by inserting after the item relating to section 1709B  
21      the following new item:

“1709C. Assistance for child care for individuals receiving readjustment coun-  
seling and related mental health services.”.

1 **SEC. 179. COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR WOMEN**  
2 **VETERANS NEWLY SEPARATED FROM SERV-**  
3 **ICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.**

4 (a) COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 17  
6 is amended by adding at the end the following new  
7 section:

8 **“§ 1720H. Counseling in retreat settings for women**  
9 **veterans newly separated from service in**  
10 **the Armed Forces**

11 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide,  
12 through the Readjustment Counseling Service of the Vet-  
13 erans Health Administration, reintegration and readjust-  
14 ment services described in subsection (c) in group retreat  
15 settings to women veterans who are recently separated  
16 from service in the Armed Forces after a prolonged de-  
17 ployment.

18 “(b) ELECTION OF VETERAN.—The receipt of serv-  
19 ices under this section by a woman veteran shall be at  
20 the election of the veteran.

21 “(c) COVERED SERVICES.—The services provided to  
22 a woman veteran under this section shall include the fol-  
23 lowing:

24 “(1) Information on reintegration into the vet-  
25 eran’s family, employment, and community.

26 “(2) Financial counseling.

1 “(3) Occupational counseling.

2 “(4) Information and counseling on stress re-  
3 duction.

4 “(5) Information and counseling on conflict res-  
5 olution.

6 “(6) Such other information and counseling as  
7 the Secretary considers appropriate to assist the vet-  
8 eran in reintegration into the veteran’s family, em-  
9 ployment, and community.”.

10 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
11 tions at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by  
12 inserting after the item relating to section 1720G  
13 the following new item:

“1720H. Counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated  
from service in the Armed Forces.”.

14 (b) REPEAL OF SUPERSEDED PILOT PROGRAM AU-  
15 THORITY.—Section 203 of the Caregivers and Veterans  
16 Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–  
17 163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is hereby repealed.

18 **Subtitle I—Major Medical Facility**  
19 **Leases**

20 **SEC. 181. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY**  
21 **LEASES.**

22 The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the  
23 following major medical facility leases at the locations  
24 specified, and in an amount for each lease not to exceed

1 the amount shown for such location (not including any es-  
2 timated cancellation costs):

3 (1) For a clinical research and pharmacy co-  
4 ordinating center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, an  
5 amount not to exceed \$9,560,000.

6 (2) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
7 Brick, New Jersey, an amount not to exceed  
8 \$7,280,000.

9 (3) For a new primary care and dental clinic  
10 annex, Charleston, South Carolina, an amount not  
11 to exceed \$7,070,250.

12 (4) For the Cobb County community-based  
13 Outpatient Clinic, Cobb County, Georgia, an amount  
14 not to exceed \$6,409,000.

15 (5) For the Leeward Outpatient Healthcare Ac-  
16 cess Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, including a co-lo-  
17 cated clinic with the Department of Defense and the  
18 co-location of the Honolulu Regional Office of the  
19 Veterans Benefits Administration and the Kapolei  
20 Vet Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs,  
21 an amount not to exceed \$15,887,370.

22 (6) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
23 Johnson County, Kansas, an amount not to exceed  
24 \$2,263,000.

1           (7) For a replacement community-based out-  
2           patient clinic, Lafayette, Louisiana, an amount not  
3           to exceed \$2,996,000.

4           (8) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
5           Lake Charles, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed  
6           \$2,626,000.

7           (9) For outpatient clinic consolidation, New  
8           Port Richey, Florida, an amount not to exceed  
9           \$11,927,000.

10          (10) For an outpatient clinic, Ponce, Puerto  
11          Rico, an amount not to exceed \$11,535,000.

12          (11) For lease consolidation, San Antonio,  
13          Texas, an amount not to exceed \$19,426,000.

14          (12) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
15          San Diego, California, an amount not to exceed  
16          \$11,946,100.

17          (13) For an outpatient clinic, Tyler, Texas, an  
18          amount not to exceed \$4,327,000.

19          (14) For the Errera Community Care Center,  
20          West Haven, Connecticut, an amount not to exceed  
21          \$4,883,000.

22          (15) For the Worcester community-based Out-  
23          patient Clinic, Worcester, Massachusetts, an amount  
24          not to exceed \$4,855,000.

1           (16) For the expansion of a community-based  
2           outpatient clinic, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, an  
3           amount not to exceed \$4,232,060.

4           (17) For a multispecialty clinic, Chattanooga,  
5           Tennessee, an amount not to exceed \$7,069,000.

6           (18) For the expansion of a community-based  
7           outpatient clinic, Chico, California, an amount not to  
8           exceed \$4,534,000.

9           (19) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
10          Chula Vista, California, an amount not to exceed  
11          \$3,714,000.

12          (20) For a new research lease, Hines, Illinois,  
13          an amount not to exceed \$22,032,000.

14          (21) For a replacement research lease, Hous-  
15          ton, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$6,142,000.

16          (22) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
17          Lincoln, Nebraska, an amount not to exceed  
18          \$7,178,400.

19          (23) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
20          Lubbock, Texas, an amount not to exceed  
21          \$8,554,000.

22          (24) For a community-based outpatient clinic  
23          consolidation, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, an  
24          amount not to exceed \$8,022,000.

1           (25) For a community-based outpatient clinic,  
2 Phoenix, Arizona, an amount not to exceed  
3 \$20,757,000.

4           (26) For the expansion of a community-based  
5 outpatient clinic, Redding, California, an amount not  
6 to exceed \$8,154,000.

7           (27) For the expansion of a community-based  
8 outpatient clinic, Tulsa, Oklahoma, an amount not  
9 to exceed \$13,269,200.

10 **SEC. 182. BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF**

11 **VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILI-**

12 **TIES LEASES.**

13 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

14           (1) Title 31, United States Code, requires the  
15 Department of Veterans Affairs to record the full  
16 cost of its contractual obligation against funds avail-  
17 able at the time a contract is executed.

18           (2) Office of Management and Budget Circular  
19 A–11 provides guidance to agencies in meeting the  
20 statutory requirements under title 31, United States  
21 Code, with respect to leases.

22           (3) For operating leases, Office of Management  
23 and Budget Circular A–11 requires the Department  
24 of Veterans Affairs to record up-front budget au-  
25 thority in an “amount equal to total payments under

1 the full term of the lease or [an] amount sufficient  
2 to cover first year lease payments plus cancellation  
3 costs”.

4 (b) REQUIREMENT FOR OBLIGATION OF FULL  
5 COST.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of  
7 appropriations provided in advance, in exercising the  
8 authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to  
9 enter into leases provided in this Act, the Secretary  
10 shall record, pursuant to section 1501 of title 31,  
11 United States Code, as the full cost of the contrac-  
12 tual obligation at the time a contract is executed ei-  
13 ther—

14 (A) an amount equal to total payments  
15 under the full term of the lease; or

16 (B) if the lease specifies payments to be  
17 made in the event the lease is terminated before  
18 its full term, an amount sufficient to cover the  
19 first year lease payments plus the specified can-  
20 cellation costs.

21 (2) SELF-INSURING AUTHORITY.—The require-  
22 ments of paragraph (1) may be satisfied through the  
23 use of a self-insuring authority consistent with Of-  
24 fice of Management and Budget Circular A-11.

25 (c) TRANSPARENCY.—

1           (1) COMPLIANCE.—Subsection (b) of section  
2           8104 is amended by adding at the end the following  
3           new paragraph:

4           “(7) In the case of a prospectus proposing  
5           funding for a major medical facility lease, a detailed  
6           analysis of how the lease is expected to comply with  
7           Office of Management and Budget Circular A–11  
8           and section 1341 of title 31 (commonly referred to  
9           as the ‘Anti-Deficiency Act’). Any such analysis shall  
10          include—

11                   “(A) an analysis of the classification of the  
12                   lease as a ‘lease-purchase’, ‘capital lease’, or  
13                   ‘operating lease’ as those terms are defined in  
14                   Office of Management and Budget Circular A–  
15                   11;

16                   “(B) an analysis of the obligation of budg-  
17                   etary resources associated with the lease; and

18                   “(C) an analysis of the methodology used  
19                   in determining the asset cost, fair market value,  
20                   and cancellation costs of the lease.”.

21          (2) SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—Such section  
22          8104 is further amended by adding at the end the  
23          following new subsection:

24          “(h)(1) Not less than 30 days before entering into  
25          a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit

1 to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and  
2 the House of Representatives—

3           “(A) notice of the Secretary’s intention to enter  
4 into the lease;

5           “(B) a detailed summary of the proposed lease;

6           “(C) a description and analysis of any dif-  
7 ferences between the prospectus submitted pursuant  
8 to subsection (b) and the proposed lease; and

9           “(D) a scoring analysis demonstrating that the  
10 proposed lease fully complies with Office of Manage-  
11 ment and Budget Circular A–11.

12           “(2) Each committee described in paragraph (1) shall  
13 ensure that any information submitted to the committee  
14 under such paragraph is treated by the committee with  
15 the same level of confidentiality as is required by law of  
16 the Secretary and subject to the same statutory penalties  
17 for unauthorized disclosure or use as the Secretary.

18           “(3) Not more than 30 days after entering into a  
19 major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to  
20 each committee described in paragraph (1) a report on  
21 any material differences between the lease that was en-  
22 tered into and the proposed lease described under such  
23 paragraph, including how the lease that was entered into  
24 changes the previously submitted scoring analysis de-  
25 scribed in subparagraph (D) of such paragraph.”.

1 (d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-  
2 tion, or the amendments made by this section, shall be  
3 construed to in any way relieve the Department of Vet-  
4 erans Affairs from any statutory or regulatory obligations  
5 or requirements existing prior to the enactment of this  
6 section and such amendments.

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

9 **SEC. 201. 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  
16 subsection (a) shall take effect as of September 30, 2014,  
17 and shall apply to any surviving spouse who was eligible  
18 for or in receipt of benefits under section 1311(f) of title  
19 38, United States Code, on or after the date of the enact-  
20 ment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 202. 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  
6 103(d) 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  
15 this section shall take effect on the date that is one year  
16 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

17 **SEC. 203. EXTENSION OF MARRIAGE DELIMITING DATE FOR**  
18 **SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PERSIAN GULF WAR**  
19 **VETERANS TO QUALIFY FOR DEATH PEN-**  
20 **SION.**

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

1 **SEC. 204. 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  
8 child upon termination of the child’s marriage by death  
9 or divorce,”.

10 **SEC. 205. EXPANSION OF MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT**  
11 **JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP.**

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

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

17 (1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as para-  
18 graph (4); and

19 (2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-  
20 lowing new paragraphs:

21 “(2) **LIMITATION.**—The entitlement of an indi-  
22 vidual to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to  
23 paragraph (9) of subsection (b) because the indi-  
24 vidual was a spouse of a person described in such  
25 paragraph shall expire on the earlier of—

1           “(A) the date that is 15 years after the  
2           date on which the person died; and

3           “(B) the date on which the individual re-  
4           marries.

5           “(3) ELECTION ON RECEIPT OF CERTAIN BENE-  
6           FITS.—A surviving spouse entitled to assistance  
7           under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of  
8           subsection (b) who is also entitled to educational as-  
9           sistance under chapter 35 of this title may not re-  
10          ceive assistance under both this section and such  
11          chapter, but shall make an irrevocable election (in  
12          such form and manner as the Secretary may pre-  
13          scribe) under which section or chapter to receive  
14          educational assistance.”.

15          (c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3321(b)(4)  
16          is amended—

17                 (1) by striking “an individual” and inserting “a  
18                 child”; and

19                 (2) by striking “such individual’s” each time it  
20                 appears and inserting “such child’s”.

21          (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
22          this section shall take effect on the date that is two years  
23          after the date of the enactment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 206. EXPANSION OF YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION**  
2 **ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3317(a) is amended by  
4 striking “in paragraphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “in  
5 paragraphs (1), (2), and (9)”.

6 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
7 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to academic terms  
8 beginning after July 1, 2015.

9 **SEC. 207. BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF CERTAIN THAILAND**  
10 **SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA**  
11 **BIFIDA.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 18 is  
13 amended by adding at the end the following new section:  
14 “**§ 1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand**  
15 **service veterans born with spina bifida**

16 “(a) BENEFITS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may  
17 provide to any child of a veteran of covered service in  
18 Thailand who is suffering from spina bifida the health  
19 care, vocational training and rehabilitation, and monetary  
20 allowance required to be paid to a child of a Vietnam vet-  
21 eran who is suffering from spina bifida under subchapter  
22 I of this chapter as if such child of a veteran of covered  
23 service in Thailand were a child of a Vietnam veteran who  
24 is suffering from spina bifida under such subchapter.

1       “(b) SPINA BIFIDA CONDITIONS COVERED.—This  
2 section applies with respect to all forms and manifesta-  
3 tions of spina bifida, except spina bifida occulta.

4       “(c) VETERAN OF COVERED SERVICE IN THAI-  
5 LAND.—For purposes of this section, a veteran of covered  
6 service in Thailand is any individual, without regard to  
7 the characterization of that individual’s service, who—

8               “(1) served in the active military, naval, or air  
9 service in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary  
10 in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, dur-  
11 ing the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and  
12 ending on May 7, 1975; and

13               “(2) is determined by the Secretary, in con-  
14 sultation with the Secretary of Defense, to have been  
15 exposed to a herbicide agent during such service in  
16 Thailand.

17       “(d) HERBICIDE AGENT.—For purposes of this sec-  
18 tion, the term ‘herbicide agent’ means a chemical in a her-  
19 bicide used in support of United States and allied military  
20 operations in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in  
21 consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the pe-  
22 riod beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May  
23 7, 1975.”.

24       (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF  
25 “CHILD”.—Section 1831(1) is amended—

1 (1) in subparagraph (B)—

2 (A) by striking “subchapter III of this  
3 chapter” and inserting “section 1821 of this  
4 title”; and

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

7 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
8 paragraph:

9 “(C) For purposes of section 1822 of this title,  
10 an individual, regardless of age or marital status,  
11 who—

12 “(i) is the natural child of a veteran of  
13 covered service in Thailand (as determined for  
14 purposes of that section); and

15 “(ii) was conceived after the date on which  
16 that veteran first entered service described in  
17 subsection (c) of that section.”.

18 (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

19 (1) SUBCHAPTER HEADING.—The heading for  
20 subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by insert-  
21 ing “AND THAILAND” after “KOREA”.

22 (2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections  
23 at the beginning of chapter 18 is amended—

1 (A) by striking the item relating to sub-  
 2 chapter III and inserting the following new  
 3 item:

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

4 and

5 (B) by inserting after the item relating to  
 6 section 1821 the following new item:

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

7 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
 8 this section shall take effect on the date that is one year  
 9 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

10 **SEC. 208. PROGRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING FOR CHILDREN**  
 11 **OF VIETNAM VETERANS AND CERTAIN**  
 12 **KOREA SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH**  
 13 **SPINA BIFIDA.**

14 (a) PROGRAM.—Commencing not later than 180 days  
 15 after the date on which this section takes effect, the Sec-  
 16 retary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to  
 17 assess the feasibility and advisability of providing assisted  
 18 living, group home care, or similar services in lieu of nurs-  
 19 ing home care to covered individuals.

20 (b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this  
 21 section, a covered individual is any individual who is enti-  
 22 tled to health care under subchapter I or III of chapter  
 23 18 of title 38, United States Code.

1 (c) DURATION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise pro-  
3 vided in this subsection, the program shall be carried  
4 out during the three-year period beginning on the  
5 date of the commencement of the program.

6 (2) CONTINUATION.—Subject to paragraph (3),  
7 the Secretary may continue the program for an addi-  
8 tional two-year period as the Secretary considers ap-  
9 propriate.

10 (3) TERMINATION.—The program may not op-  
11 erate after the date that is five years after the date  
12 of the commencement of the program.

13 (d) SCOPE OF SERVICES AND PROGRAM.—Under the  
14 program, the Secretary shall provide covered individuals  
15 with integrated, comprehensive services, including the fol-  
16 lowing:

17 (1) Assisted living, group home care, or such  
18 other similar services as the Secretary considers ap-  
19 propriate.

20 (2) Transportation services.

21 (3) Such other services as the Secretary con-  
22 siders appropriate for the care of covered individuals  
23 under the program.

24 (e) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the  
25 program, the Secretary shall—

1           (1) inform all covered individuals of the services  
2 available under the program;

3           (2) enter into agreements with appropriate pro-  
4 viders of assisted living, group home care, or other  
5 similar services for provision of services under the  
6 program; and

7           (3) determine the appropriate number of cov-  
8 ered individuals to be enrolled in the program and  
9 criteria for such enrollment.

10 (f) REPORTS.—

11           (1) PRELIMINARY REPORTS.—

12                   (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year  
13 after the date of the commencement of the pro-  
14 gram and, if the program is continued under  
15 subsection (c)(2), not later than three years  
16 after the date of the commencement of the pro-  
17 gram, the Secretary shall submit to the Com-  
18 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and  
19 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
20 House of Representatives a report on the pro-  
21 gram.

22                   (B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted  
23 under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-  
24 lowing:

1 (i) A description of the implementa-  
2 tion and operation of the program.

3 (ii) The number of covered individuals  
4 receiving benefits under the program.

5 (iii) An analysis that compares the  
6 costs of furnishing assisted living, group  
7 home care, or similar services with the  
8 costs of furnishing nursing home care.

9 (iv) An analysis of the costs and bene-  
10 fits under the program.

11 (v) The findings and conclusions of  
12 the Secretary with respect to the program.

13 (vi) Such recommendations for the  
14 continuation or expansion of the program  
15 as the Secretary may have.

16 (2) FINAL REPORT.—

17 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180  
18 days after the completion of the program, the  
19 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on  
20 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-  
21 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of  
22 Representatives a report on the program.

23 (B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted  
24 under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-  
25 lowing:

1 (i) The findings and conclusions of  
2 the Secretary with respect to the program.

3 (ii) Such recommendations for the  
4 continuation or expansion of the program  
5 as the Secretary may have.

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

10 (h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
11 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
12 ment of this Act.

13 **SEC. 209. PROGRAM ON GRIEF COUNSELING IN RETREAT**  
14 **SETTINGS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF MEM-**  
15 **BERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO DIE**  
16 **WHILE SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE**  
17 **ARMED FORCES.**

18 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than  
20 180 days after the date on which this section takes  
21 effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry  
22 out, through the Readjustment Counseling Service of  
23 the Veterans Health Administration, a program to  
24 assess the feasibility and advisability of providing  
25 grief counseling services described in subsection (b)

1 in group retreat settings to surviving spouses of  
2 members of the Armed Forces who die while serving  
3 on active duty in the Armed Forces who would, as  
4 determined by the Readjustment Counseling Service,  
5 benefit from the services provided under the pro-  
6 gram.

7 (2) PARTICIPATION AT ELECTION OF SUR-  
8 VIVING SPOUSE.—The participation of a surviving  
9 spouse in the program under this section shall be at  
10 the election of the surviving spouse.

11 (b) COVERED SERVICES.—The services provided to a  
12 surviving spouse under the program shall include the fol-  
13 lowing:

14 (1) Information and counseling on coping with  
15 grief.

16 (2) Information about benefits and services  
17 available to surviving spouses under laws adminis-  
18 tered by the Secretary.

19 (3) Such other information and counseling as  
20 the Secretary considers appropriate to assist a sur-  
21 viving spouse under the program with adjusting to  
22 the death of a spouse.

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

1           (1) Three events at which surviving spouses  
2 with dependent children are encouraged to bring  
3 their children.

4           (2) Three events at which surviving spouses  
5 with dependent children are not encouraged to bring  
6 their children.

7           (d) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out  
8 during the two-year period beginning on the date of the  
9 commencement of the program.

10          (e) REPORTS.—

11           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
12 after the completion of the first year of the program  
13 and not later than 180 days after the completion of  
14 the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress  
15 a report on the program.

16           (2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under  
17 paragraph (1) shall contain the findings and conclu-  
18 sions of the Secretary as a result of the program,  
19 and shall include such recommendations for the con-  
20 tinuation or expansion of the program as the Sec-  
21 retary considers appropriate.

22           (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “active  
23 duty”, “Armed Forces”, and “surviving spouse” have the  
24 meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38,  
25 United States Code.

1 (g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
2 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
3 ment of this Act.

4 **SEC. 210. PROGRAM EVALUATION ON SURVIVORS' AND DE-**  
5 **PENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AU-**  
6 **THORITIES.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
8 shall enter into a contract with an appropriate private sec-  
9 tor entity to conduct a program evaluation of the authori-  
10 ties for survivors' and dependents' educational assistance  
11 under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code.

12 (b) REPORT.—Not later than six months after the  
13 entry into the contract required by subsection (a), the Sec-  
14 retary 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 setting forth the  
17 results of the program evaluation conducted pursuant to  
18 the contract, together with such comments on the results  
19 of the program evaluation as the Secretary considers ap-  
20 propriate.

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

1 **TITLE III—EDUCATION MATTERS**

2 **SEC. 301. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PRO-**  
 3 **VIDED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER**  
 4 **LEARNING FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUN-**  
 5 **TEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**  
 6 **PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL AS-**  
 7 **SISTANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUI-**  
 8 **TION RATE FOR VETERANS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3679 is amended by add-  
 10 ing at the end the following new subsection:

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

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

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

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

10          “(3) If after enrollment in a course of education that  
11         is subject to disapproval under paragraph (1) by reason  
12         of paragraph (2)(A) or (2)(B) a covered individual pur-  
13         sues one or more courses of education at the same public  
14         institution of higher learning while remaining continuously  
15         enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks be-  
16         tween courses, semesters or terms) at that institution of  
17         higher learning, any course so pursued by the covered indi-  
18         vidual at that institution of higher learning while so con-  
19         tinuously enrolled shall also be subject to disapproval  
20         under paragraph (1).

21          “(4) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course  
22         of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution  
23         of higher learning requires a covered individual pursuing  
24         a course of education at the institution to demonstrate an  
25         intent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence

1 requirement, to establish residency in the State in which  
2 the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements  
3 not relating to the establishment of residency, in order to  
4 be charged tuition and fees for that course at a rate that  
5 is equal to or less than the rate the institution charges  
6 for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the  
7 State.

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

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

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

1 **SEC. 302. 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 AUTHOR-  
7 ITY.—Section 3485(a)(4) is amended by striking “June  
8 30, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “June 30,  
9 2015”.

10 (b) EXPANSION TO OUTREACH SERVICES PROVIDED  
11 THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES.—Such section is  
12 further amended by adding at the end the following new  
13 subparagraph:

14 “(K) During the period beginning on June 30,  
15 2013, and ending on June 30, 2015, the following  
16 activities carried out at the offices of Members of  
17 Congress for such Members:

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

24 “(ii) The preparation and processing of pa-  
25 pers and other documents, including documents  
26 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  
6           shall submit to Congress a report on the work-study  
7           allowances paid under paragraph (1) of section  
8           3485(a) of title 38, United States Code, during the  
9           most recent one-year period for qualifying work-  
10          study activities described in paragraph (4) of such  
11          section, as amended by subsections (a) and (b) of  
12          this section.

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

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

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

20                 (C) A description of the outreach con-  
21                 ducted by the Secretary to increase awareness  
22                 of the eligibility of such work-study activities  
23                 for such work-study allowances.

1 **SEC. 303. PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO REFERENCES TO GI**  
2 **BILL AND POST-9/11 GI BILL.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 36 is  
4 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

5 **“§ 3697B. Prohibition relating to references to GI Bill**  
6 **and Post-9/11 GI Bill**

7 “(a) PROHIBITION.—(1) No person may, except with  
8 the written permission of the Secretary, use the words and  
9 phrases covered by this subsection in connection with any  
10 promotion, goods, services, or commercial activity in a  
11 manner that reasonably and falsely suggests that such use  
12 is approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Department  
13 or any component thereof.

14 “(2) For purposes of this subsection, the words and  
15 phrases covered by this subsection are as follows:

16 “(A) ‘GI Bill’.

17 “(B) ‘Post-9/11 GI Bill’.

18 “(3) A determination that a use of one or more words  
19 and phrases covered by this subsection in connection with  
20 a promotion, goods, services, or commercial activity is not  
21 a violation of this subsection may not be made solely on  
22 the ground that such promotion, goods, services, or com-  
23 mercial activity includes a disclaimer of affiliation with the  
24 Department or any component thereof.

25 “(b) ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—(1)  
26 When any person is engaged or is about to engage in an

1 act or practice which constitutes or will constitute conduct  
 2 prohibited by subsection (a), the Attorney General may  
 3 initiate a civil proceeding in a district court of the United  
 4 States to enjoin such act or practice.

5 “(2) Such court may, at any time before final deter-  
 6 mination, enter such restraining orders or prohibitions, or  
 7 take such other action as is warranted, to prevent injury  
 8 to the United States or to any person or class of persons  
 9 for whose protection the action is brought.”.

10 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
 11 at the beginning of chapter 36 is amended by inserting  
 12 after the item relating to section 3697A the following new  
 13 item:

“3697B. Prohibition relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill.”.

14 **SEC. 304. REVIEW OF UTILIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL AS-**  
 15 **SISTANCE TO PURSUE PROGRAMS OF TRAIN-**  
 16 **ING ON THE JOB AND PARTICIPATING EM-**  
 17 **PLOYERS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the  
 19 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
 20 erans Affairs shall commence a review of—

21 (1) the utilization of educational assistance  
 22 under laws administered by the Secretary of Vet-  
 23 erans Affairs to pursue programs of training on the  
 24 job (other than programs of apprenticeship); and

1           (2) the availability of such programs to individ-  
2           uals seeking to pursue such programs with such edu-  
3           cational assistance.

4           (b) REPORT.—

5           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years  
6           after the date on which the Secretary commences the  
7           review required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall  
8           submit to Congress a report on such review.

9           (2) CONTENTS.—The report required by para-  
10          graph (1) shall include the following:

11           (A) The extent of utilization as described  
12           in paragraph (1) of subsection (a).

13           (B) An assessment of the availability of  
14           programs as described in paragraph (2) of such  
15           subsection.

16           (C) A description of any barriers the Sec-  
17           retary has identified to greater utilization of  
18           educational assistance for pursuit of a program  
19           of training on the job or availability of such  
20           programs.

21           (D) Such recommendations for legislative  
22           or administrative action as the Secretary may  
23           have to increase or decrease such utilization or  
24           availability.

1 (E) Such other matters as the Secretary  
2 considers appropriate.

3 **SEC. 305. REPORT ON DEBT MANAGEMENT AND COLLEC-**  
4 **TION.**

5 (a) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the effec-  
6 tive date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller Gen-  
7 eral of the United States shall submit to the Committee  
8 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on  
9 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report  
10 on processes used by the Department of Veterans Affairs  
11 to identify and resolve cases of incorrect payments associ-  
12 ated with educational assistance under chapters 30 and  
13 33 of title 38, United States Code.

14 (b) ISSUES ADDRESSED.—The report required by  
15 subsection (a) shall, to the extent possible, address the fol-  
16 lowing:

17 (1) The effectiveness of the processes referred  
18 to in subsection (a) in identifying and resolving in-  
19 correct payments associated with educational assist-  
20 ance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United  
21 States Code.

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



1     **TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND**  
2             **RELATED MATTERS**  
3     **Subtitle A—Training and Other**  
4             **Services for Veterans Seeking**  
5             **Employment**

6     **SEC. 401. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF**  
7             **VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE REHABILI-**  
8             **TATION AND VOCATIONAL BENEFITS TO**  
9             **MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES WITH SEVERE**  
10            **INJURIES OR ILLNESSES.**

11       (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1631(b)(2) of the Wound-  
12     ed Warrior Act (title XVI of Public Law 110–181; 10  
13     U.S.C. 1071 note) is amended by striking “December 31,  
14     2014” and inserting “December 31, 2016”.

15       (b) REPORT.—

16           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
17     after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
18     retary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appro-  
19     priate committees of Congress a report on the bene-  
20     fits provided by the Secretary under section 1631(b)  
21     of such Act.

22           (2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-  
23     GRESS.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate  
24     committees of Congress” means—

1 (A) the Committee on Armed Services and  
2 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Sen-  
3 ate; and

4 (B) the Committee on Armed Services and  
5 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
6 House of Representatives.

7 **Subtitle B—Employment of Vet-**  
8 **erans and Recognition of Vet-**  
9 **eran Status With Respect to Em-**  
10 **ployment Related Matters**

11 **SEC. 411. EMPLOYMENT OF VETERANS WITH THE FEDERAL**  
12 **GOVERNMENT.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4214 is amended—

14 (1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the  
15 following:

16 “(4)(A) The requirement under this paragraph is in  
17 addition to the appointment of qualified covered veterans  
18 under the authority specified in subparagraph (C) by the  
19 Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of  
20 Defense.

21 “(B) The head of each agency, in consultation with  
22 the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall  
23 develop a plan for exercising the authority specified in sub-  
24 paragraph (C) during the five-year period beginning on

1 the date of the enactment of the Restoring Veterans Trust  
2 Act of 2014.

3 “(C) The authority specified in this subparagraph is  
4 the authority as follows:

5 “(i) The authority under paragraph (1).

6 “(ii) The authority available to the agency con-  
7 cerned under the Veterans Employment Opportuni-  
8 ties Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–339) and the  
9 amendments made by that Act.

10 “(D) The Director of the Office of Personnel Man-  
11 agement shall ensure that under the plans developed  
12 under subparagraph (B) agencies shall appoint to existing  
13 vacancies not fewer than 15,000 qualified covered veterans  
14 during the five-year period beginning on the date of the  
15 enactment of the Restoring Veterans Trust Act of 2014.  
16 For purposes of complying with this subparagraph, an ap-  
17 pointment pursuant to the authority referred to in sub-  
18 paragraph (C)(ii) shall not count toward the number re-  
19 quired by this subparagraph unless the appointment is to  
20 a vacancy in a full-time, permanent position.”;

21 (2) in subsection (d), in the third sentence, by  
22 inserting “(including, during the 5-year period be-  
23 ginning on the date of the enactment of the Restor-  
24 ing Veterans Trust Act of 2014, the development  
25 and implementation by each agency of the plan re-

1       quired under subsection (b)(4), which shall include  
2       information regarding the grade or pay level of ap-  
3       pointments by the agency under the plan and wheth-  
4       er the appointments are, or are converted to, career  
5       or career-conditional appointments)” after “sub-  
6       section (b) of this section”; and

7               (3) in subsection (e)—

8                       (A) in paragraph (1)—

9                               (i) in the matter before subparagraph  
10                               (A), by striking “to the Congress” and in-  
11                               serting “to the appropriate committees of  
12                               Congress”; and

13                               (ii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting  
14                               “(including, during the 5-year period be-  
15                               ginning on the date of the enactment of  
16                               the Restoring Veterans Trust Act of 2014,  
17                               the development and implementation by  
18                               the agency of the plan required under sub-  
19                               section (b)(4), which shall include informa-  
20                               tion regarding the grade or pay level of ap-  
21                               pointments by the agency under the plan  
22                               and whether the appointments are, or are  
23                               converted to, permanent appointments)”  
24                               before the period; and

1 (B) by adding at the end the following new  
2 paragraph:

3 “(3) In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate com-  
4 mittees of Congress’ means—

5 “(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and  
6 the Committee on Homeland Security and Govern-  
7 mental Affairs of the Senate; and

8 “(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and  
9 the Committee on Oversight and Government Re-  
10 form of the House of Representatives.”.

11 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date  
12 of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Per-  
13 sonnel Management shall submit to the appropriate com-  
14 mittees of Congress (as defined under section 4214(e)(3)  
15 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection  
16 (a)) regarding the development of a plan to carry out the  
17 amendments made by subsection (a).

18 **SEC. 412. STATE RECOGNITION OF MILITARY EXPERIENCE**  
19 **OF VETERANS IN ISSUING LICENSES AND**  
20 **CREDENTIALS TO VETERANS.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4102A(c) is amended by  
22 striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following new  
23 paragraph (9):

24 “(9)(A) As a condition of a grant or contract under  
25 which funds are made available to a State under sub-

1 section (b)(5) in order to carry out section 4103A or 4104  
2 of this title, the State shall—

3 “(i) establish a program under which the State  
4 administers an examination to each veteran seeking  
5 a license or credential issued by the State and issues  
6 such license or credential to such veteran without re-  
7 quiring such veteran to undergo any training or ap-  
8 prenticeship if the veteran—

9 “(I) receives a satisfactory score on com-  
10 pletion of such examination, as determined by  
11 the State;

12 “(II) has been awarded a military occupa-  
13 tional specialty that is substantially equivalent  
14 to or exceeds the requirements of the State for  
15 the issuance of such license or credential;

16 “(III) has engaged in the active practice of  
17 the occupation for which the veteran is seeking  
18 such license or credential for at least two of the  
19 five years preceding the date of application; and

20 “(IV) pays any customary or usual fees re-  
21 quired by the State for such license or creden-  
22 tial; and

23 “(ii) submit each year to the Secretary a report  
24 on the examinations administered under clause (i)  
25 during the most recently completed 12-month period

1 that includes, for the period covered by the report  
2 the number of veterans who completed an examina-  
3 tion administered by the State under clause (i) and  
4 a description of the results of such examinations,  
5 disaggregated by occupational field.

6 “(B) The Secretary may waive the requirement under  
7 subparagraph (A) that a State establish a program de-  
8 scribed in that subparagraph as a condition of a grant  
9 or contract if the State certifies to the Secretary that the  
10 State—

11 “(i) takes into account previous military train-  
12 ing for the purposes of issuing licenses or creden-  
13 tials; and

14 “(ii) for any credential or license for which a  
15 veteran is unable to completely satisfy a training or  
16 testing requirement through examination, the State  
17 substantially reduces training time required to sat-  
18 isfy such requirement based on the military training  
19 received by the veteran or establishes procedures for  
20 granting credit for prior learning related to prior  
21 military service or training.

22 “(C) Not less frequently than once each year, the  
23 Secretary shall submit to Congress and the Secretary of  
24 Defense a report summarizing the information received by  
25 the Secretary under subparagraph (A)(ii).”.

1 (b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor, in  
3 consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such  
4 other heads of Federal agencies as the Secretary of  
5 Labor considers appropriate, may provide technical  
6 assistance to a State to assist the State in meeting  
7 the requirements of section 4102A(c)(9) of title 38,  
8 United States Code, as amended by subsection (a).

9 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

10 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-  
11 retary of Labor to carry out paragraph (1)  
12 \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2015.

13 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

14 (1) EXAMINATIONS.—Subparagraph (A) of sec-  
15 tion 4102A(c)(9) of title 38, United States Code, as  
16 added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date  
17 that is one year after the date of the enactment of  
18 this Act and shall apply with respect to grants and  
19 contracts described in such subparagraph awarded  
20 after such date.

21 (2) REPORTS.—Subparagraph (B) of such sec-  
22 tion 4102A(c)(9), as so added, shall take effect on  
23 the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
24 ment of this Act and the Secretary of Labor shall  
25 submit the first report under such subparagraph not

1 later than 900 days after the date of the enactment  
2 of this Act.

3 **SEC. 413. REPORT ON DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MEMBERS**  
4 **OF RESERVE COMPONENTS OF ARMED**  
5 **FORCES AND VETERANS IN CIVILIAN LABOR**  
6 **MARKET.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 570 days after the  
8 date of the enactment of this act, the Secretary of Labor,  
9 in coordination with the heads of such agencies as the Sec-  
10 retary considers appropriate, shall submit to the appro-  
11 priate committees of Congress a report on barriers and  
12 potential discrimination facing veterans in the labor mar-  
13 ket.

14 (b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection  
15 (a) shall include the following:

16 (1) An evaluation of the following:

17 (A) The extent to which members of the  
18 reserve components of the Armed Forces and  
19 veterans face barriers to entry into the civilian  
20 labor market, including whether such members  
21 and veterans face obstacles in obtaining employ-  
22 ment, maintaining employment, or receiving  
23 promotions while employed.

24 (B) The extent to which a member of a re-  
25 serve component of the Armed Forces or a vet-

1           eran faces discrimination in the civilian labor  
2           market based on the member's or veteran's sta-  
3           tus as a member of a reserve component of the  
4           Armed Forces or as a veteran, as the case may  
5           be.

6           (C) The adequacy and effectiveness of  
7           Federal laws in effect on the day before the  
8           date of the enactment of this Act in preventing  
9           or ameliorating acts of discrimination against  
10          members of the reserve components of the  
11          Armed Forces and veterans seeking or retaining  
12          employment in the civilian labor market.

13          (D) The adequacy and effectiveness of pro-  
14          grams of the Department of Labor in effect on  
15          the day before the date of the enactment of this  
16          Act in educating private sector employers on  
17          matters relevant to hiring and employing vet-  
18          erans and the military experience of veterans.

19          (2) Such recommendations as the Secretary  
20          may have for legislative or administrative action—

21                (A) to address barriers or discrimination  
22                that members of the reserve components of the  
23                Armed Forces and veterans may face in the ci-  
24                vilian labor market;

1           (B) to improve education and outreach for  
2           employers in the civilian labor market on issues  
3           regarding hiring and employing such members  
4           and veterans; and

5           (C) to assist employers in the civilian labor  
6           market in matching the military experience of  
7           such members and veterans with the needs of  
8           such employers.

9           (3) Such other matters as the Secretary con-  
10          siders appropriate.

11          (c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In  
12          this section, the term “appropriate committees of Con-  
13          gress” means—

14               (1) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the  
15               Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pen-  
16               sions of the Senate; and

17               (2) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the  
18               Committee on Education and the Workforce of the  
19               House of Representatives.

20          (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
21          on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
22          ment of this Act.

1 **Subtitle C—Improving Employment and Reemployment Rights**  
 2 **of Members of the Uniformed**  
 3 **Services**

5 **SEC. 421. SUSPENSION, TERMINATION, OR DEBARMENT OF**  
 6 **CONTRACTORS FOR REPEATED VIOLATIONS**  
 7 **OF EMPLOYMENT OR REEMPLOYMENT**  
 8 **RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERV-**  
 9 **ICES.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 43 is  
 11 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

12 **“§ 4328. Suspension, termination, or debarment of**  
 13 **contractors**

14 “(a) GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION, TERMINATION, OR  
 15 DEBARMENT.—Payment under a contract awarded by a  
 16 Federal executive agency may be suspended and the con-  
 17 tract may be terminated, and the contractor who made  
 18 the contract with the agency may be suspended or  
 19 debarred in accordance with the requirements of this sec-  
 20 tion, if the head of the agency determines that the con-  
 21 tractor as an employer has repeatedly been convicted of  
 22 failing or refusing to comply with one or more provisions  
 23 of this chapter.

24 “(b) EFFECT OF DEBARMENT.—A contractor  
 25 debarred by a final decision under this section is ineligible

1 for award of a contract by a Federal executive agency,  
2 and for participation in a future procurement by a Federal  
3 executive agency, for a period specified in the decision, not  
4 to exceed 5 years.”.

5 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
6 at the beginning of chapter 43 is amended by inserting  
7 after the item relating to section 4327 the following new  
8 item:

“4328. Suspension, termination, or debarment of contractor.”.

9 (c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after  
10 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisi-  
11 tion Regulatory Council shall amend the Federal Acquisi-  
12 tion Regulation to carry out section 4328 of title 38,  
13 United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

14 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 4328 of title 38,  
15 United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall  
16 apply with respect to failures and refusals to comply with  
17 provisions of chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code,  
18 occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this  
19 Act.

20 (e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 4332(a) is amend-  
21 ed—

22 (1) by redesignating paragraph (10) as para-  
23 graph (11); and

24 (2) by inserting after paragraph (9) the fol-  
25 lowing new paragraph (10):

1           “(10) The number of suspensions, terminations,  
2           and debarments under section 4328 of this title,  
3           disaggregated by the agency or department imposing  
4           the suspension or debarment.”.

## 5 **Subtitle D—Small Business Matters**

### 6 **SEC. 431. EXPANSION OF CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREF-** 7                           **ERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-** 8                           **FAIRS TO INCLUDE CONDITIONALLY OWNED** 9                           **SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS 100 PERCENT** 10                          **OWNED BY VETERANS.**

11           Section 8127(l) is amended—

12                   (1) in paragraph (2), by inserting “uncondition-  
13                   ally” before “owned by” each place it appears; and

14                   (2) by adding at the end the following new  
15                   paragraph:

16                   “(3) The term ‘unconditionally owned’ includes,  
17                   with respect to ownership of a small business con-  
18                   cern, conditional ownership of such small business  
19                   concern if such business concern is 100 percent  
20                   owned by one or more veterans.”.

1 **SEC. 432. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT UNDER CON-**  
2 **TRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DE-**  
3 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR**  
4 **SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY VETERANS OF**  
5 **SMALL BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF DIS-**  
6 **ABLED VETERAN OWNERS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127(h) is amended—

8 (1) in paragraph (3), by striking “rated as”  
9 and all that follows through “disability.” and insert-  
10 ing a period; and

11 (2) in paragraph (2), by amending subpara-  
12 graph (C) to read as follows:

13 “(C) The date that—

14 “(i) in the case of a surviving spouse of a  
15 veteran with a service-connected disability rated  
16 as 100 percent disabling or who dies as a result  
17 of a service-connected disability, is 10 years  
18 after the date of the veteran’s death; or

19 “(ii) in the case of a surviving spouse of a  
20 veteran with a service-connected disability rated  
21 as less than 100 percent disabling who does not  
22 die as a result of a service-connected disability,  
23 is three years after the date of the veteran’s  
24 death.”.

25 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
26 subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180

1 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall  
2 apply with respect to applications received pursuant to  
3 section 8127(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, that  
4 are verified on or after such date.

5 **SEC. 433. TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATHS OF**  
6 **SERVICEMEMBER-OWNERS FOR PURPOSES**  
7 **OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
8 **CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127 is amended—

10 (1) by redesignating subsections (i) through (l)  
11 as subsections (j) through (m), respectively; and

12 (2) by inserting after subsection (h) the fol-  
13 lowing new subsection (i):

14 “(i) TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF  
15 SERVICEMEMBER-OWNER.—(1) If a member of the Armed  
16 Forces owns at least 51 percent of a small business con-  
17 cern and such member is killed in line of duty in the active  
18 military, naval, or air service, the surviving spouse or de-  
19 pendent child of such member who acquires such owner-  
20 ship rights in such small business concern shall, for the  
21 period described in paragraph (2), be treated as if the sur-  
22 viving spouse or dependent child were a veteran with a  
23 service-connected disability for purposes of determining  
24 the status of the small business concern as a small busi-  
25 ness concern owned and controlled by veterans for pur-

1 poses of contracting goals and preferences under this sec-  
2 tion.

3 “(2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) is the  
4 period beginning on the date on which the member of the  
5 Armed Forces dies and ending on the date as follows:

6 “(A) In the case of a surviving spouse, the ear-  
7 liest of the following dates:

8 “(i) The date on which the surviving  
9 spouse remarries.

10 “(ii) The date on which the surviving  
11 spouse relinquishes an ownership interest in the  
12 small business concern and no longer owns at  
13 least 51 percent of such small business concern.

14 “(iii) The date that is ten years after the  
15 date of the member’s death.

16 “(B) In the case of a dependent child, the ear-  
17 liest of the following dates:

18 “(i) The date on which the surviving de-  
19 pendent child relinquishes an ownership interest  
20 in the small business concern and no longer  
21 owns at least 51 percent of such small business  
22 concern.

23 “(ii) The date that is ten years after the  
24 date of the member’s death.”.

1 (b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Subsection (i) of section  
2 8127 of title 38, United States Code, as added by sub-  
3 section (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment  
4 of this Act and shall apply with respect to the deaths of  
5 members of the Armed Forces occurring on or after such  
6 date.

7 **SEC. 434. SPECIAL RULE FOR TREATMENT UNDER CON-**  
8 **TRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DE-**  
9 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF SMALL**  
10 **BUSINESS CONCERNS LICENSED IN COMMU-**  
11 **NITY PROPERTY STATES.**

12 Section 8127, as amended by section 433 of this Act,  
13 is further amended by adding at the end the following new  
14 subsection:

15 “(n) **SPECIAL RULE FOR COMMUNITY PROPERTY**  
16 **STATES.**—Whenever the Secretary assesses, for purposes  
17 of this section, the degree of ownership by an individual  
18 of a small business concern licensed in a community prop-  
19 erty State, the Secretary shall also assess what that degree  
20 of ownership would be if such small business concern had  
21 been licensed in a State other than a community property  
22 State. If the Secretary determines that such individual  
23 would have had a greater degree of ownership of the small  
24 business concern had such small business concern been li-  
25 censed in a State other than a community property State,

1 the Secretary shall treat, for purposes of this section, such  
2 small business concern as if it had been licensed in a State  
3 other than a community property State.”.

4 **SEC. 435. REPORT ON ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS IN OB-**  
5 **TAINING TRAINING ON PURCHASING AND OP-**  
6 **ERATING A FRANCHISE.**

7 (a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year  
8 after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Sec-  
9 retary of Labor shall, in consultation with the Secretary  
10 of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Small Busi-  
11 ness Administration, and other appropriate entities, sub-  
12 mit to Congress a report on the assistance available to  
13 veterans to obtain training necessary to purchase and op-  
14 erate a franchise.

15 (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection  
16 (a) shall include the following:

17 (1) A description of the assistance available for  
18 veterans through the Department of Labor, the De-  
19 partment of Veterans Affairs, the Small Business  
20 Administration, or any other agency of the Federal  
21 Government in order to obtain training necessary to  
22 purchase or operate a franchise.

23 (2) Information on the number of veterans who  
24 have sought and obtained the training described in

1 paragraph (1) during the five calendar years pre-  
2 ceding the report.

3 (3) A description of any barriers encountered  
4 by veterans in obtaining the training described in  
5 paragraph (1).

6 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
7 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
8 ment of this Act.

9 **TITLE V—ACCOUNTABILITY AND**  
10 **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVE-**  
11 **MENTS**

12 **SEC. 501. ADMINISTRATION OF VETERANS INTEGRATED**  
13 **SERVICE NETWORKS.**

14 (a) VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 73  
16 is amended by adding at the end the following new  
17 section:

18 **“§ 7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks**

19 “(a) ORGANIZATION.—(1) The Secretary shall orga-  
20 nize the Veterans Health Administration in geographically  
21 defined Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

22 “(2) Each Veterans Integrated Service Network shall  
23 be organized in consideration of the following:

24 “(A) The size of the veteran population of the  
25 region of the network.

1           “(B) The complexity of the medical needs of  
2 the veterans in such region.

3           “(C) Patient referral patterns.

4           “(D) The availability of a full continuum of  
5 health care services.

6           “(E) The ability of the Department to furnish  
7 health care efficiently.

8           “(F) Partnerships with non-Department health  
9 care entities.

10          “(b) STAFFING MODEL.—(1) The Secretary shall es-  
11 tablish a staffing model for each Veterans Integrated  
12 Service Network that—

13           “(A) is appropriate for the mission and respon-  
14 sibilities of the Veterans Integrated Service Net-  
15 work; and

16           “(B) accounts for the specific health care needs  
17 of differing populations in the Veterans Integrated  
18 Service Network.

19          “(2) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans  
20 Integrated Service Network complies with the staffing  
21 model established by the Secretary under paragraph (1)  
22 for such Veterans Integrated Service Network.

23          “(c) INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.—The  
24 Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Serv-

1 ice Network maintains a regional integrated healthcare  
2 system by—

3 “(1) implementing alliances with such other  
4 governmental, public, and private health care organi-  
5 zations and practitioners as the Secretary considers  
6 appropriate to meet the needs of veterans in the  
7 Network;

8 “(2) providing oversight and management of,  
9 and taking responsibility for, a regional budget for  
10 the activities of the Veterans Health Administration  
11 in the geographic area of the Network that is—

12 “(A) aligned with the budget guidelines of  
13 the Department and the Veterans Health Ad-  
14 ministration;

15 “(B) balanced at the end of each fiscal  
16 year; and

17 “(C) sufficient to provide high-quality  
18 health care to veterans within the region and to  
19 meet any unique needs of the veterans of the  
20 region;

21 “(3) using national metrics to develop systems  
22 to provide effective, efficient, and safe delivery of  
23 health care; and

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

1           “(A) the medical centers and outpatient  
2           clinics of the Department that are located in  
3           the Network; and

4           “(B) other non-Department clinical or  
5           health care delivery settings located in the Net-  
6           work.

7           “(d) REDUCTION IN DUPLICATE FUNCTIONS.—The  
8           Secretary shall ensure that the Veterans Integrated Serv-  
9           ice Networks identify and reduce, whenever practicable,  
10          the duplication of functions in clinical, administrative, and  
11          operational processes and practices of the Veterans Health  
12          Administration.

13          “(e) COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION.—The Sec-  
14          retary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service  
15          Network—

16                 “(1) works to achieve maximum effectiveness in  
17                 patient care and safety, graduate medical education,  
18                 and research; and

19                 “(2) assesses the consolidation or realignment  
20                 of institutional functions, including capital asset,  
21                 safety, and operational support functions, in collabo-  
22                 ration and cooperation with other Veterans Inte-  
23                 grated Service Networks and the following offices or  
24                 entities within the geographical area of the Network:

1           “(A) The offices of the Veterans Benefits  
2 Administration and the National Cemetery Ad-  
3 ministration.

4           “(B) The offices, installations, and facili-  
5 ties of the Department of Defense, including  
6 the offices, installations, and facilities of each  
7 branch of the Armed Forces and the reserve  
8 components of the Armed Forces.

9           “(C) The offices, installations, and facili-  
10 ties of the Coast Guard.

11           “(D) Offices of State and local agencies  
12 that have a mission to provide assistance to vet-  
13 erans.

14           “(E) Medical schools and other affiliates.

15           “(F) Offices of Congress, offices of State  
16 and local elected officials, and other government  
17 offices.

18           “(G) Federal, State, and local emergency  
19 preparedness organizations.

20           “(H) Community and nonprofit organiza-  
21 tions.

22           “(I) Such other entities of the Federal  
23 Government as the Secretary considers appro-  
24 priate.

1       “(f) HEADQUARTERS.—(1) The Secretary shall en-  
2       sure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network has  
3       only one headquarters office.

4       “(2) The location of a headquarters office for a Vet-  
5       erans Integrated Service Network shall be determined by  
6       the Secretary and co-located with a Department of Vet-  
7       erans Affairs medical center.

8       “(3)(A) The Secretary may employ or contract for  
9       the services of such full time equivalent employees and  
10       contractors at the headquarters of each Veterans Inte-  
11       grated Service Network as the Secretary considers appro-  
12       priate in accordance with the staffing models established  
13       under subsection (b).

14       “(B) Not later than December 31 each year, the Sec-  
15       retary 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 employment at  
18       the headquarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks  
19       during the most recently completed fiscal year.

20       “(C) Each report submitted under subparagraph (B)  
21       shall include the following for the year covered by the re-  
22       port:

23               “(i) The number of individuals employed at  
24       each headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service  
25       Network.

1           “(ii) The number of individuals employed by the  
2           Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans  
3           Integrated Service Network who are not employed at  
4           the same location as the headquarters of the Net-  
5           work.

6           “(iii) The title for each position of employment  
7           at a headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service  
8           Network.

9           “(iv) The title for each position of employment  
10          with the Veterans Health Administration in each  
11          Veterans Integrated Service Network that is not at  
12          the same location as the headquarters of the Net-  
13          work.

14          “(v) An assessment of the impact on the budget  
15          of the Department by the employment of individuals  
16          at the headquarters of the Veterans Integrated Serv-  
17          ice Networks.

18          “(g) TRIENNIAL STRUCTURE REVIEW, REASSESS-  
19          MENT, AND REPORT.—(1) Beginning three years after the  
20          date of the enactment of this section and not less fre-  
21          quently than once every three years thereafter, the Sec-  
22          retary shall conduct a review and assessment of the struc-  
23          ture and operations of the Veterans Integrated Service  
24          Networks in order to identify recommendations—

1           “(A) for streamlining and reducing costs associ-  
2           ated with the operation of each headquarters of a  
3           Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

4           “(B) for reducing costs of health care within  
5           the Veterans Health Administration.

6           “(2) Not later than 180 days after conducting a re-  
7           view and assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary  
8           shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the  
9           Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the  
10          House of Representatives a report on such review and as-  
11          sessment, which shall include such recommendations for  
12          legislative or administrative action as the Secretary con-  
13          siders appropriate to improve the Veterans Integrated  
14          Service Networks.”.

15           (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
16          tions at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by  
17          inserting after the item relating to section 7309 the  
18          following new item:

“7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”.

19           (b) RELOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS.—

20           (1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a head-  
21          quarters office of a Veterans Integrated Service Net-  
22          work that on the day before the date of the enact-  
23          ment of this Act was in a location that was not co-  
24          located with a Department of Veterans Affairs med-

1 ical center and the Secretary is engaged in a lease  
2 for such location, the Secretary may—

3 (A) relocate such headquarters upon the  
4 expiration of such lease so that such head-  
5 quarters is co-located as required by section  
6 7310(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code (as  
7 added by subsection (a)(1)); or

8 (B) notwithstanding such section  
9 7310(f)(2) (as so added), renew such lease or  
10 enter into a new lease to keep such head-  
11 quarters in such location.

12 (2) REPORT.—If the Secretary renews a lease  
13 or engages in a new lease under paragraph (1)(B),  
14 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
15 erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on  
16 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives,  
17 before renewing such lease or engaging in such  
18 lease, a report describing the reasons for such re-  
19 newal or engagement. Such report shall include the  
20 following:

21 (A) A list of Department of Veterans Af-  
22 fairs medical centers in the Veterans Integrated  
23 Service Network of the headquarters with un-  
24 derutilized buildings, the number of such build-

1           ings, and the total underutilized square footage  
2           for each such medical center.

3           (B) The cost of the current lease (the an-  
4           nual amount of rent, the total cost over the life  
5           of the lease, and the total cost per square foot)  
6           and the current square footage being leased.

7           (C) The cost of the new lease (the annual  
8           amount of rent, the total cost over the life of  
9           the lease, and the total cost per square foot)  
10          and the square footage to be leased.

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

21          (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section, and the amend-  
22        ments made by this section, shall take effect on the date  
23        that is one year after the date of the enactment of this  
24        Act.

1 **SEC. 502. REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS FOR VETERANS IN-**  
2 **TEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 73, as  
4 amended by section 501(a)(1) of this Act, is further  
5 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

6 **“§ 7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Inte-**  
7 **grated Service Networks**

8 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-  
9 lish not more than four regional support centers within  
10 the Veterans Health Administration to assess the effec-  
11 tiveness and efficiency of the Veterans Integrated Service  
12 Networks. The head of each regional support center shall  
13 report to the Under Secretary of Health.

14 “(b) FUNCTIONS.—The functions of the regional sup-  
15 port centers established under subsection (a) are as fol-  
16 lows:

17 “(1) To assess the quality of work performed  
18 within finance operations and other compliance re-  
19 lated activities of the Veterans Integrated Service  
20 Networks.

21 “(2) To assess how effectively and efficiently  
22 each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts  
23 outreach to veterans who served in Operation En-  
24 during Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Oper-  
25 ation New Dawn, or any other contingency operation  
26 (as that term is defined in section 101 of title 10).

1           “(3) To assess how effectively and efficiently  
2 each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts  
3 programs for the benefit of women veterans.

4           “(4) To assess how effectively and efficiently  
5 each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts  
6 programs that address homelessness among vet-  
7 erans.

8           “(5) To assess how effectively and efficiently  
9 each Veterans Integrated Service Network consumes  
10 energy.

11           “(6) To assess such other matters concerning  
12 the operations and activities of the Veterans Inte-  
13 grated Service Networks as the Secretary considers  
14 appropriate.

15           “(c) STAFF.—The Secretary may hire such employ-  
16 ees and contractors as the Secretary considers appropriate  
17 to carry out the functions of the regional support centers.

18           “(d) LOCATION OF REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS.—

19 (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the location of  
20 each regional support center established under subsection  
21 (a) shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located  
22 with a medical center of the Department.

23           “(2) The Secretary may choose a location for a re-  
24 gional support center established under subsection (a) that  
25 is not co-located with a medical center of the Department

1 if the Secretary submits to the Committee on Veterans'  
2 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
3 fairs of the House of Representatives, before entering into  
4 a contract for a location that is not co-located with a med-  
5 ical center, a report describing the reasons for choosing  
6 a location for the regional support center that is not co-  
7 located with a medical center of the Department. Such re-  
8 port shall include the following:

9           “(A) A list of medical centers of the Depart-  
10           ment in the Veterans Integrated Service Network of  
11           the regional support center with underutilized build-  
12           ings, the number of all Veterans Health Administra-  
13           tion buildings in such Network, and the total under-  
14           utilized square footage for each medical center of the  
15           Department in such Network.

16           “(B) The estimated cost of such lease (the an-  
17           nual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of  
18           the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the  
19           square footage to be leased.”.

20           (b) INITIAL STAFFING.—In providing for the initial  
21 staff of each regional support center established under sec-  
22 tion 7310A(a) of title 38, United States Code, as added  
23 by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall,  
24 to the degree practicable, transfer employees from head-  
25 quarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks to re-

1 gional support centers who were employed in positions at  
2 such headquarters that covered functions similar to those  
3 described in section 7310A(b) of such title, as so added.

4 (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
5 at the beginning of chapter 73, as amended by section  
6 501(a)(2) of this Act, is further amended by inserting  
7 after the item relating to section 7310 the following new  
8 item:

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

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

19 (e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section, and the amend-  
20 ments made by this section, shall take effect on the date  
21 that is one year after the date of the enactment of this  
22 Act.

1 **SEC. 503. COMMISSION ON CAPITAL PLANNING FOR DE-**  
2 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL**  
3 **FACILITIES.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.—

5 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the  
6 Commission on Capital Planning for Department of  
7 Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities (in this section  
8 referred to as the “Commission”).

9 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—

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

13 (i) 1 shall be appointed by the Presi-  
14 dent.

15 (ii) 1 shall be appointed by the Ad-  
16 ministrator of General Services.

17 (iii) 3 shall be appointed by the Sec-  
18 retary of Veterans Affairs, of whom—

19 (I) 1 shall be an employee of the  
20 Veterans Health Administration;

21 (II) 1 shall be an employee of the  
22 Office of Asset Enterprise Manage-  
23 ment of the Department of Veterans  
24 Affairs; and

25 (III) 1 shall be an employee of  
26 the Office of Construction and Facili-

1                   ties Management of the Department  
2                   of Veterans Affairs.

3                   (iv) 1 shall be appointed by the Sec-  
4                   retary of Defense from among employees  
5                   of the Army Corps of Engineers.

6                   (v) 1 shall be appointed by the major-  
7                   ity leader of the Senate.

8                   (vi) 1 shall be appointed by the minor-  
9                   ity leader of the Senate.

10                  (vii) 1 shall be appointed by the  
11                  Speaker of the House of Representatives.

12                  (viii) 1 shall be appointed by the mi-  
13                  nority leader of the House of Representa-  
14                  tives.

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

21                  (C) NON-VOTING MEMBERS.—The Com-  
22                  mission shall be assisted by 10 non-voting mem-  
23                  bers, appointed by the vote of a majority of  
24                  members of the Commission under subpara-  
25                  graph (A), of whom—

1 (i) 6 shall be representatives of vet-  
2 erans service organizations recognized by  
3 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

4 (ii) 4 shall be individuals from outside  
5 the Department of Veterans Affairs with  
6 experience and expertise in matters relat-  
7 ing to management, construction, and leas-  
8 ing of capital assets.

9 (D) DATE OF APPOINTMENT OF VOTING  
10 MEMBERS.—The appointments of the members  
11 of the Commission under subparagraph (A)  
12 shall be made not later than 60 days after the  
13 date of the enactment of this Act.

14 (3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—  
15 Members shall be appointed for the life of the Com-  
16 mission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not  
17 affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same  
18 manner as the original appointment.

19 (4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 15 days  
20 after the date on which 7 members of the Commis-  
21 sion have been appointed, the Commission shall hold  
22 its first meeting.

23 (5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at  
24 the call of the Chair.

1           (6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of  
2 the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a  
3 lesser number of members may hold hearings.

4           (7) CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.—The Commission  
5 shall select a Chair and Vice Chair from among its  
6 members.

7           (b) DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—

8           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall un-  
9 dertake a comprehensive evaluation and assessment  
10 of various options for capital planning for Depart-  
11 ment of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, including  
12 an evaluation and assessment of the mechanisms by  
13 which the Department currently selects means for  
14 the delivery of health care, whether by major con-  
15 struction, major medical facility leases, sharing  
16 agreements with the Department of Defense, the In-  
17 dian Health Service, and Federally Qualified Health  
18 Clinics under section 330 of the Public Health Serv-  
19 ice Act (42 U.S.C. 254b), contract care, multisite  
20 care, telemedicine, extended hours for care, or other  
21 means.

22           (2) CONTEXT OF EVALUATION AND ASSESS-  
23 MENT.—In undertaking the evaluation and assess-  
24 ment, the Commission shall consider—

1 (A) the importance of access to health care  
2 through the Department, including associated  
3 guidelines of the Department on access to, and  
4 drive time for, health care;

5 (B) limitations and requirements applica-  
6 ble to the construction and leasing of medical  
7 facilities for the Department, including applica-  
8 ble laws, regulations, and costs as determined  
9 by both the Congressional Budget Office and  
10 the Office of Management and Budget;

11 (C) the nature of capital planning for De-  
12 partment medical facilities in an era of fiscal  
13 uncertainty;

14 (D) projected future fluctuations in the  
15 population of veterans; and

16 (E) the extent to which the Department  
17 was able to meet the mandates of the Capital  
18 Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Com-  
19 mission.

20 (3) PARTICULAR CONSIDERATIONS.—In under-  
21 taking the evaluation and assessment, the Commis-  
22 sion shall address, in particular, the following:

23 (A) The Major Medical Facility Lease Pro-  
24 gram of the Department, including an identi-

1           fication of potential improvements to the lease  
2           authorization processes under that Program.

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

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

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

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

20           (iii) the effectiveness of the facility  
21          master planning initiative of the Depart-  
22          ment; and

23           (iv) the extent to which sustainable  
24          attributes are planned for to decrease oper-

1           ating costs for Department medical facili-  
2           ties.

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

11          (4) REPORTS.—Subject to paragraph (5), the  
12          Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Vet-  
13          erans Affairs, and to the Committee Veterans’ Af-  
14          fairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’  
15          Affairs of the House of Representatives, reports as  
16          follows:

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

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

1 (i) on the management processes of  
2 the Department for the construction of De-  
3 partment 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  
14 this 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  
22 this 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  
9           capital asset planning process of the Department  
10          covered by such report, such recommendations as  
11          the Commission considers appropriate for the im-  
12          provement and enhancement of such aspect of the  
13          capital asset planning process.

14          (c) POWERS OF COMMISSION.—

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

20           (2) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—  
21           The Commission may secure directly from any Fed-  
22           eral department or agency such information as the  
23           Commission considers necessary to carry out this  
24           section. Upon request of the Chair of the Commis-

1 sion, the head of such department or agency shall  
2 furnish such information to the Commission.

3 (d) COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.—

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

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

24 (3) STAFF.—

1           (A) IN GENERAL.—The Chair of the Com-  
2 mission may, without regard to the civil service  
3 laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an  
4 executive director and such other additional  
5 personnel as may be necessary to enable the  
6 Commission to perform its duties. The employ-  
7 ment of an executive director shall be subject to  
8 confirmation by the Commission.

9           (B) COMPENSATION.—The Chair of the  
10 Commission may fix the compensation of the  
11 executive director and other personnel without  
12 regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of  
13 chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relat-  
14 ing to classification of positions and General  
15 Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay  
16 for the executive director and other personnel  
17 may not exceed the rate payable for level V of  
18 the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of  
19 such title.

20           (4) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—  
21 Any Federal Government employee may be detailed  
22 to the Commission without reimbursement, and such  
23 detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil  
24 service status or privilege.

1           (5) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTER-  
2           MITTENT SERVICES.—The Chair of the Commission  
3           may procure temporary and intermittent services  
4           under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code,  
5           at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily  
6           equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed  
7           for level V of the Executive Schedule under section  
8           5316 of such title.

9           (e) TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.—The Commis-  
10          sion shall terminate 60 days after the date on which the  
11          Commission submits its report under subsection  
12          (b)(4)(E).

13          (f) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
14          shall make available to the Commission such amounts as  
15          the Secretary and the Chair of the Commission jointly  
16          consider appropriate for the Commission to perform its  
17          duties under this section.

18          (g) ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS.—

19                (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
20          Affairs shall implement each recommendation in-  
21          cluded in a report under subsection (b)(4) that the  
22          Secretary considers feasible and advisable and can  
23          be implemented without further legislative action.

24                (2) REPORTS.—Not later than 120 days after  
25          receipt of a report under subparagraphs (A) through

1 (D) of subsection (b)(4), the Secretary shall submit  
2 to the Committee Veterans' Affairs of the Senate  
3 and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
4 House of Representatives a report setting forth the  
5 following:

6 (A) An assessment of the feasibility and  
7 advisability of each recommendation contained  
8 in such report.

9 (B) For each recommendation assessed as  
10 feasible and advisable—

11 (i) if such recommendation does not  
12 require further legislative action for imple-  
13 mentation, a description of the actions  
14 taken, and to be taken, by the Secretary to  
15 implement such recommendation; and

16 (ii) if such recommendation requires  
17 further legislative action for implementa-  
18 tion, recommendations for such legislative  
19 action.

20 **SEC. 504. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN AC-**  
21 **COUNTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
22 **AFFAIRS.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 117 is amended—

1           (1) by striking “medical care accounts of the  
2 Department” each place it appears and inserting  
3 “covered accounts of the Department”;

4           (2) in subsection (c)—

5           (A) by striking “medical care accounts of  
6 the Veterans Health Administration, Depart-  
7 ment of Veterans Affairs account” and insert-  
8 ing “accounts of the Department of Veterans  
9 Affairs account”;

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

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

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

16          (E) by redesignating paragraphs (1)  
17 through (3) as paragraphs (7) through (9), re-  
18 spectively;

19          (F) by inserting before paragraph (7), as  
20 redesignated by subparagraph (E), the fol-  
21 lowing new paragraphs:

22           “(1) Veterans Benefits Administration, Com-  
23 pensation and Pensions.

24           “(2) Veterans Benefits Administration, Read-  
25 justment Benefits.

1           “(3) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vet-  
2           erans Insurance and Indemnities.

3           “(4) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vet-  
4           erans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

5           “(5) Veterans Benefits Administration, Voca-  
6           tional Rehabilitation Loans Program Account.

7           “(6) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native  
8           American Veteran Housing Loan Program Ac-  
9           count.”; and

10           (G) in the subsection heading, by striking

11           “MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting

12           “COVERED ACCOUNTS”; and

13           (3) in the section heading, by striking “**cer-**  
14           **tain medical care accounts**” and inserting  
15           “**certain accounts**”.

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

19           (c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1105 of  
20           title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the  
21           first paragraph (37) and inserting the following:

22           “(37) information on estimates of appropria-  
23           tions for the fiscal year following the fiscal year for  
24           which the budget is submitted for the following ac-  
25           counts of the Department of Veterans Affairs:

1           “(A) Veterans Benefits Administration,  
2           Compensation and Pensions.

3           “(B) Veterans Benefits Administration,  
4           Readjustment Benefits.

5           “(C) Veterans Benefits Administration,  
6           Veterans Insurance and Indemnities.

7           “(D) Veterans Benefits Administration,  
8           Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

9           “(E) Veterans Benefits Administration,  
10          Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Ac-  
11          count.

12          “(F) Veterans Benefits Administration,  
13          Native American Veteran Housing Loan Pro-  
14          gram Account.

15          “(G) Veterans Health Administration,  
16          Medical Services.

17          “(H) Veterans Health Administration,  
18          Medical Support and Compliance.

19          “(I) Veterans Health Administration, Med-  
20          ical Facilities.”.

21          (d) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Such section is fur-  
22          ther amended by redesignating the second paragraph (37),  
23          as added by section 11(a)(2) of the GPRA Modernization  
24          Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–352; 124 Stat. 3881), as  
25          paragraph (39).

1 **SEC. 505. PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
2 **AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND DATA SHARING BE-**  
3 **TWEEN DEPARTMENTS.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNET WEBSITE.—The  
5 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available on an  
6 Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs  
7 available to the public the following:

8 (1) Data files that contain information on re-  
9 search of the Department.

10 (2) A data dictionary on each data file.

11 (3) Instructions for how to obtain access to  
12 each data file for use in research.

13 (b) PUBLIC ACCESS TO MANUSCRIPTS ON DEPART-  
14 MENT FUNDED RESEARCH.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than  
16 540 days after the effective date specified in sub-  
17 section (e), the Secretary shall require, as a condi-  
18 tion on the use of any data gathered or formulated  
19 from research funded by the Department, that any  
20 final, peer-reviewed manuscript prepared for publica-  
21 tion that uses such data be submitted to the Sec-  
22 retary for deposit in the digital archive under para-  
23 graph (2) and publication under paragraph (3).

24 (2) DIGITAL ARCHIVE.—Not later than 540  
25 days after the effective date specified in subsection  
26 (e), the Secretary shall—

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

3 (B) partner with another executive agency  
4 to compile such manuscripts in a digital ar-  
5 chive.

6 (3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

7 (A) AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVE.—The Sec-  
8 retary shall ensure that the digital archive  
9 under paragraph (2) and the contents of such  
10 archive are available to the public via a publicly  
11 accessible Internet website at no cost to the  
12 public.

13 (B) AVAILABILITY OF MANUSCRIPTS.—The  
14 Secretary shall ensure that each manuscript  
15 submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1)  
16 is available to the public under subparagraph  
17 (A) not later than one year after the official  
18 date on which the manuscript is otherwise pub-  
19 lished.

20 (4) CONSISTENT WITH COPYRIGHT LAW.—The  
21 Secretary shall carry out this subsection in a man-  
22 ner consistent with applicable copyright law.

23 (5) ANNUAL REPORT.—

24 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year  
25 after the date the Secretary begins making

1 manuscripts available to the public under this  
2 subsection and not less frequently than once  
3 each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit  
4 to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the  
5 Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
6 of the House of Representatives a report on the  
7 implementation of this subsection during the  
8 most recent one-year period.

9 (B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted  
10 under subparagraph (A) shall include for the  
11 period of the report:

12 (i) The number of manuscripts sub-  
13 mitted under paragraph (1).

14 (ii) The titles of such manuscripts.

15 (iii) The authors of such manuscripts.

16 (iv) For each such manuscript, the  
17 name and issue number or volume number,  
18 as the case may be, of the journal or other  
19 publication in which such manuscript was  
20 published.

21 (c) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA SHARING BE-  
22 TWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DE-  
23 PARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Not later than one year after  
24 the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Depart-  
25 ment of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint

1 Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title  
2 38, United States Code, shall submit to the Secretary of  
3 Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense options and  
4 recommendations for the establishment of a program for  
5 long-term cooperation and data sharing between and with-  
6 in the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Depart-  
7 ment of Defense to facilitate research on outcomes of mili-  
8 tary service, readjustment after combat deployment, and  
9 other topics of importance to the following:

10 (1) Veterans.

11 (2) Members of the Armed Forces.

12 (3) Family members of veterans.

13 (4) Family members of members of the Armed  
14 Forces.

15 (5) Members of communities that have a sig-  
16 nificant population of veterans or members of the  
17 Armed Forces.

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

21 (e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
22 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
23 ment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 506. ASSESSMENT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF**  
2 **THE UNITED STATES OF INFORMATION MADE**  
3 **AVAILABLE BY VETERANS BENEFITS ADMIN-**  
4 **ISTRATION.**

5 (a) ASSESSMENT OF INFORMATION CURRENTLY  
6 AVAILABLE.—Not later than two years after the date of  
7 the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the  
8 United States shall—

9 (1) conduct an assessment of the process by  
10 which the Veterans Benefits Administration informs  
11 veterans, veterans service organizations, and such  
12 other persons as the Comptroller General considers  
13 appropriate regarding the furnishing of benefits  
14 under laws administered by the Secretary of Vet-  
15 erans Affairs to determine the extent to which the  
16 process results in disseminated information that—

17 (A) adequately supports and improves the  
18 timeliness and accuracy of decisions made by  
19 the Administration with respect to claims for  
20 disability compensation and such other benefits  
21 furnished under laws administered by the Sec-  
22 retary of Veterans Affairs as the Comptroller  
23 General considers appropriate; and

24 (B) encourages the filing of fully developed  
25 claims for benefits under laws administered by  
26 the Secretary; and

1           (2) assess how the Veterans Benefits Adminis-  
2           tration notifies each claimant during, and as part of,  
3           any electronic filing process established by the Sec-  
4           retary for the filing of applications for disability  
5           compensation and such other benefits under laws ad-  
6           ministered by the Secretary as the Comptroller Gen-  
7           eral considers appropriate that services may be  
8           available to the claimant from a veterans service or-  
9           ganization.

10          (b) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date  
11          of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall  
12          submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Sen-  
13          ate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House  
14          of Representatives a report on the findings of the Comp-  
15          troller General under subsection (a). Such report shall in-  
16          clude such recommendations as the Comptroller General  
17          may have for legislative or administrative action to im-  
18          prove the availability of information made available to the  
19          public by the Veterans Benefits Administration regarding  
20          the furnishing of benefits under laws administered by the  
21          Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

22          (c) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—  
23          In this section, the term “veterans service organization”  
24          means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Vet-

1 erans Affairs for the representation of veterans under sec-  
2 tion 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

3 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
4 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
5 ment of this Act.

6 **SEC. 507. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON ADVISORY**  
7 **COMMITTEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
8 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the  
10 effective date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller  
11 General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
12 fairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
13 fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the advi-  
14 sory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

15 (b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection  
16 (a)—

17 (1) shall include—

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

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

25 (2) may include—

1 (A) a description of each advisory com-  
2 mittee, including with respect to each com-  
3 mittee—

4 (i) the purpose of the committee;

5 (ii) the commencement date of the  
6 committee; and

7 (iii) the anticipated termination date  
8 of the committee;

9 (B) a summary of the anticipated expenses  
10 and the actual expenses incurred for each advi-  
11 sory committee during the most recent three  
12 fiscal years ending before the date of the enact-  
13 ment of this Act; and

14 (C) with respect to meetings held by each  
15 advisory committee—

16 (i) the frequency with which each  
17 committee has met during the shorter of—

18 (I) the most recent three fiscal  
19 years ending before the date of the  
20 enactment of this Act; and

21 (II) the life of the committee;

22 (ii) the date of the most recent meet-  
23 ing held by the committee before such date  
24 of enactment; and

1 (iii) the date of the most recent report  
 2 or other written product developed by the  
 3 committee before such date of enactment.

4 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
 5 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
 6 ment of this Act.

7 **TITLE VI—IMPROVEMENT OF**  
 8 **PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR**  
 9 **COMPENSATION**  
 10 **Subtitle A—Claims Based on**  
 11 **Military Sexual Trauma**

12 **SEC. 601. MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND OPINION FOR DIS-**  
 13 **ABILITY COMPENSATION CLAIMS BASED ON**  
 14 **MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**

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

17 “(3)(A) In the case of a claim for disability com-  
 18 pensation based on a mental health condition related to  
 19 military sexual trauma, the Secretary shall treat an exam-  
 20 ination or opinion as being necessary to make a decision  
 21 on a claim for purposes of paragraph (1) if the evidence  
 22 of record before the Secretary, taking into consideration  
 23 all information and lay or medical evidence (including  
 24 statements of the claimant)—

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

4           “(II) indicates that the disability or symptoms  
5           may be associated with the claimant’s active mili-  
6           tary, naval, or air service; but

7           “(ii) does not contain a diagnosis or opinion by  
8           a mental health professional that may assist in cor-  
9           roborating the occurrence of a military sexual trau-  
10          ma stressor related to a diagnosable mental health  
11          condition.

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

16          (b) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the  
17          date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
18          erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’  
19          Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Af-  
20          fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the num-  
21          ber of examinations and opinions conducted by the Sec-  
22          retary pursuant to paragraph (3) of section 5103A(d) of  
23          title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)),  
24          including the following:

1           (1) The number of examinations conducted  
2           using a standardized disability assessment.

3           (2) The number of examinations conducted  
4           using a non-standardized clinical interview.

5 **SEC. 602. CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICERS FOR MILITARY**  
6 **SEXUAL TRAUMA SUPPORT.**

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

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

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

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

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 sex-  
12 ual trauma as the Secretary considers appro-  
13 priate.

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

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

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make  
23 available to the public information on the availability  
24 of case representative officers under subsection (a)  
25 to assist in the application for benefits based on

1 military sexual trauma. The Secretary shall revise  
2 and update the information so made available in  
3 order to ensure that the information is as current as  
4 possible.

5 (2) INDIVIDUALS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY  
6 SERVICE.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with  
7 the Secretary of Defense, ensure that individuals  
8 who are being separated from the active military,  
9 naval, or air service are provided appropriate infor-  
10 mation about programs, requirements, and proce-  
11 dures for applying for benefits based on military sex-  
12 ual trauma and the availability of case representa-  
13 tive officers under subsection (a).

14 (e) INFORMATION ON TRAINING FOR AGENTS AND  
15 REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED CASE  
16 REPRESENTATIVE OFFICER.—The Secretary shall make  
17 available to the authorized agent or attorney of an indi-  
18 vidual assigned a case representative under subsection (a),  
19 or to the otherwise accredited representative of the indi-  
20 vidual, any relevant materials used to train such case rep-  
21 resentative officer for the duties of such position.

22 (f) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS  
23 CONSIDERATION OF MECHANISMS TO ENHANCE COORDI-  
24 NATION BETWEEN VBA AND VHA ON BENEFITS FOR  
25 MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The Advisory Committee

1 on Women Veterans established under section 542 of title  
2 38, United States Code, shall undertake actions to identify  
3 mechanisms to enhance coordination between the Veterans  
4 Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Admin-  
5 istration in the provision of benefits based on military sex-  
6 ual trauma, including the identification of barriers to the  
7 appropriate provision of benefits for military sexual trau-  
8 ma by such Administrations and of means of eliminating  
9 or reducing such barriers.

10 (g) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than an-  
11 nually, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to  
12 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the  
13 Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-  
14 resentatives a report setting forth the following:

15 (1) A certification whether or not the case rep-  
16 resentative officers assigned under subsection (a)  
17 during the preceding year met the requirements  
18 specified in subsection (c).

19 (2) A description of the current training the  
20 Secretary provides to employees of the Veterans  
21 Benefits Administration on claims for benefits based  
22 on military sexual trauma, including the frequency,  
23 length, and content of such training.

24 (3) A description of current policies and proce-  
25 dures on the training the Secretary provides to case

1 representative officers, including the current position  
2 descriptions for case representative officers.

3 (4) A description of current efforts to coordi-  
4 nate activities and assistance provided to individuals  
5 who seek care or benefits for military sexual trauma  
6 between the Veterans Health Administration and  
7 Veterans Benefits Administration, including the ef-  
8 forts of the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans  
9 under subsection (f).

10 (h) SUNSET.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—No case representative offi-  
12 cer may be assigned under subsection (a) after De-  
13 cember 31, 2018.

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

22 (i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

23 (1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERV-  
24 ICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air serv-

1       ice” has the meaning given that term in section 101  
2       of title 38, United States Code.

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

8       **SEC. 603. REPORT ON STANDARD OF PROOF FOR SERVICE-**  
9                   **CONNECTION OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDI-**  
10                   **TIONS RELATED TO MILITARY SEXUAL TRAU-**  
11                   **MA.**

12       (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the  
13       date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
14       erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’  
15       Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Af-  
16       fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the cur-  
17       rent standard of proof for service-connection under chap-  
18       ter 11 of title 38, United States Code, for covered mental  
19       health conditions based on military sexual trauma.

20       (b) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—The Secretary shall in-  
21       clude in the report under subsection (a) any recommenda-  
22       tions the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the  
23       adjudication of claims for compensation based on military  
24       sexual trauma, including—

1 (1) recommendations for an appropriate stand-  
2 ard of proof for such claims if the Secretary con-  
3 siders such recommendations advisable; and

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

6 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERV-  
8 ICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air serv-  
9 ice” has the meaning given that term in section 101  
10 of title 38, United States Code.

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

16 (3) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term  
17 “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning  
18 specified by the Secretary for purposes of this sec-  
19 tion, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so  
20 specified).

21 **SEC. 604. REPORTS ON CLAIMS FOR DISABILITIES IN-**  
22 **CURRED OR AGGRAVATED BY MILITARY SEX-**  
23 **UAL TRAUMA.**

24 (a) REPORTS.—Not later than December 1, 2014,  
25 and each year thereafter through 2018, the Secretary of

1 Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the  
2 covered claims submitted to the Secretary during the pre-  
3 vious fiscal year.

4 (b) ELEMENTS.—Each report under subsection (a)  
5 shall include the following:

6 (1) The number of covered claims submitted to  
7 or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year  
8 covered by the report.

9 (2) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1),  
10 the number and percentage of such claims—

11 (A) submitted by each gender;

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

15 (C) that were denied, including the number  
16 and percentage of such denied claims submitted  
17 by each gender.

18 (3) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1)  
19 that were approved, the number and percentage, list-  
20 ed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating  
21 percentage of disability.

22 (4) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1)  
23 that were denied—

24 (A) the three most common reasons given  
25 by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of

1 title 38, United States Code, for such denials;  
2 and

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

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

9 (A) the number of such claims submitted  
10 to or considered by the Secretary during the fis-  
11 cal year covered by the report;

12 (B) the number and percentage of such  
13 claims—

14 (i) submitted by each gender;

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

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

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

24 (D) of such claims that were again de-  
25 nied—

1 (i) the three most common reasons  
2 given by the Secretary under section  
3 5104(b)(1) of such title for such denials;  
4 and

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

8 (6) The number of covered claims that, as of  
9 the end of the fiscal year covered by the report, are  
10 pending and, separately, the number of such claims  
11 on appeal.

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

16 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERV-  
18 ICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air serv-  
19 ice” has the meaning given that term in section 101  
20 of title 38, United States Code.

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

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

6           **Subtitle B—Claims for Dependency**  
7           **and Indemnity Compensation**

8           **SEC. 611. PROGRAM ON TREATMENT OF CERTAIN APPLICA-**  
9                           **TIONS FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY**  
10                          **COMPENSATION AS FULLY DEVELOPED**  
11                          **CLAIMS.**

12           (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
13           shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and ad-  
14           visability of expediting the treatment of a covered depend-  
15           ency and indemnity compensation claim.

16           (b) COVERED DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COM-  
17           PENSATION CLAIMS.—For purposes of this section, a cov-  
18           ered dependency and indemnity compensation claim is a  
19           claim submitted to the Secretary for compensation under  
20           chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, for which the  
21           claimant—

22                   (1) applies for such compensation within one-  
23           year of the death of the veteran upon whose service  
24           the claim is based;

1           (2) was the dependent on the claim of a veteran  
2           who was receiving benefits for one or more service-  
3           connected conditions as of the date of death;

4           (3) submits a death certificate or other evidence  
5           with the claim indicating that the veteran's death  
6           was due to a service-connected or compensable dis-  
7           ability; and

8           (4) in the case that the claimant is the spouse  
9           of the deceased veteran, certifies that he or she has  
10          not remarried since the date of the veteran's death.

11          (c) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out  
12          during the one-year period beginning on the date that is  
13          90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

14          (d) LOCATIONS.—The program shall be carried out  
15          at the Pension Management Center of the Department of  
16          Veterans Affairs or such centers selected by the Secretary  
17          for purposes of the program.

18          (e) REPORT.—

19                (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days  
20                after the date on which the program is completed,  
21                the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
22                erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on  
23                Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a  
24                report on the program.

1           (2) CONTENTS.—The report required by para-  
2 graph (1) shall include the following:

3           (A) The number of covered dependency  
4 and indemnity compensation claims that were  
5 adjudicated under the program, disaggregated  
6 by the following:

7           (i) Claims in which the claimant  
8 claimed entitlement to compensation on the  
9 basis of the claimant's status as the spouse  
10 of a deceased veteran.

11           (ii) Claims in which the claimant  
12 claimed entitlement to compensation on the  
13 basis of the claimant's status as the child  
14 of a deceased veteran.

15           (iii) Claims in which the claimant  
16 claimed entitlement to compensation on the  
17 basis of the claimant's status as the parent  
18 of a deceased veteran.

19           (B) The number of covered dependency  
20 and indemnity compensation claims that were  
21 adjudicated under the program and for which  
22 compensation was not awarded, disaggregated  
23 by clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (A).

24           (C) A comparison of the accuracy and  
25 timeliness of claims adjudicated under the pro-

1           gram with claims submitted to the Secretary for  
2           compensation under chapter 13 of title 38,  
3           United States Code, that were not provided ex-  
4           peditious treatment under the program.

5           (D) The findings of the Secretary with re-  
6           spect to the program.

7           (E) Such recommendations as the Sec-  
8           retary may have for legislative or administrative  
9           action to improve the adjudication of claims  
10          submitted to the Secretary for compensation  
11          under chapter 13 of title 38, United States  
12          Code.

13 **SEC. 612. REPORT BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
14           **ON IMPROVING TIMELINESS AND ACCURACY**  
15           **OF ADMINISTRATION OF CLAIMS FOR DE-**  
16           **PENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION**  
17           **AND PENSION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES AND**  
18           **CHILDREN.**

19          (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 455 days after the  
20          date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
21          erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'  
22          Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
23          fairs of the House of Representatives a report with rec-  
24          ommendations for legislative or administrative actions to  
25          improve the timeliness and accuracy with which the Sec-

1 retary processes and adjudicates claims for compensation  
2 under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, and pen-  
3 sion under sections 1541 and 1542 of such title.

4 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
5 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
6 ment of this Act.

## 7 **Subtitle C—Agency of Original** 8 **Jurisdiction**

### 9 **SEC. 621. WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE WORK** 10 **CREDIT AND WORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS** 11 **OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION IN** 12 **AN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT.**

13 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after  
14 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of  
15 Veterans Affairs shall establish a working group to assess  
16 and develop recommendations for the improvement of the  
17 employee work credit and work management systems of  
18 the Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic en-  
19 vironment.

20 (b) COMPOSITION.—The working group shall be com-  
21 posed of the following:

- 22 (1) The Secretary or the Secretary's designee.
- 23 (2) Individuals selected by the Secretary from  
24 among employees of the Department of Veterans Af-  
25 fairs who handle claims for compensation and pen-

1 sion benefits and are recommended to the Secretary  
2 by a labor organization for purposes of this section,  
3 including at least one of each of the following indi-  
4 viduals:

5 (A) A veterans service representative.

6 (B) A rating veterans service representa-  
7 tive.

8 (C) A decision review officer.

9 (3) Not fewer than three individuals selected by  
10 the Secretary to represent different organizations  
11 recognized by the Secretary for the representation of  
12 veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United  
13 States Code.

14 (4) Individuals selected by the Secretary—

15 (A) that are not employees of the Depart-  
16 ment; and

17 (B) that are experts in work credit and  
18 work management systems.

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

21 (1) The improvement of the employee work  
22 credit and work management systems of the Vet-  
23 erans Benefits Administration in an electronic envi-  
24 ronment.

1           (2) A scientific, data based methodology to be  
2           used in revising the employee work credit system of  
3           the Department to improve the quality and quantity  
4           of work produced by employees of the Department.

5           (3) The improvement of the resource allocation  
6           model of the Veterans Benefits Administration, with  
7           a focus on the processing of claims in an electronic  
8           environment.

9           (4) A schedule by which the revisions referred  
10          to in paragraph (2) will be implemented by the De-  
11          partment.

12          (d) REVIEW AND INCORPORATION OF FINDINGS  
13 FROM PRIOR STUDY.—In carrying out its duties under  
14 subsection (c), the working group shall review the findings  
15 and conclusions of previous studies of the employee work  
16 credit and work management systems of the Veterans  
17 Benefits Administration.

18          (e) ROLE OF THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall  
19 consider the recommendations of the working group and  
20 implement such recommendations as the Secretary deter-  
21 mines appropriate.

22          (f) REPORTS.—

23               (1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 180  
24               days after the date of the establishment of the work-

1       ing group, the working group shall submit to Con-  
2       gress a report on the progress of the working group.

3           (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than one year  
4       after the date of the establishment of the working  
5       group, the Secretary shall submit to Congress the  
6       methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the  
7       schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Sec-  
8       retary has decided to implement pursuant to sub-  
9       section (e).

10       (g) IMPLEMENTATION OF METHODOLOGY AND  
11       SCHEDULE.—After submitting the report under sub-  
12       section (f), the Secretary shall take such actions as may  
13       be necessary to apply the methodology described in sub-  
14       section (c)(2) and the schedule described in subsection  
15       (c)(4) that the Secretary has decided to implement pursu-  
16       ant to subsection (e).

17       **SEC. 622. TASK FORCE ON RETENTION AND TRAINING OF**  
18                               **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
19                               **CLAIMS PROCESSORS AND ADJUDICATORS.**

20       (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans  
21       Affairs shall establish a task force to assess retention and  
22       training of claims processors and adjudicators that are  
23       employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and  
24       other departments and agencies of the Federal Govern-  
25       ment.

1 (b) COMPOSITION.—The task force shall be composed  
2 of the following:

3 (1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs or des-  
4 ignee.

5 (2) The Director of the Office of Personnel  
6 Management or designee.

7 (3) The Commissioner of Social Security or des-  
8 ignee.

9 (4) An individual selected by the Secretary of  
10 Veterans Affairs who represents an organization rec-  
11 ognized by the Secretary for the representation of  
12 veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United  
13 States Code.

14 (5) Such other individuals selected by the Sec-  
15 retary who represent such other organizations and  
16 institutions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

17 (c) DURATION.—The task force established under  
18 subsection (a) shall terminate not later than two years  
19 after the date on which the task force is established under  
20 such subsection.

21 (d) DUTIES.—The duties of the task force are as fol-  
22 lows:

23 (1) To identify key skills required by claims  
24 processors and adjudicators to perform the duties of  
25 claims processors and adjudicators in the various

1 claims processing and adjudication positions  
2 throughout the Federal Government.

3 (2) To identify reasons for employee attrition  
4 from claims processing positions.

5 (3) To coordinate with educational institutions  
6 to develop training and programs of education for  
7 members of the Armed Forces to prepare such mem-  
8 bers for employment in claims processing and adju-  
9 dication positions in the Federal Government.

10 (4) To identify and coordinate offices of the De-  
11 partment of Defense and the Department of Vet-  
12 erans Affairs located throughout the United States  
13 to provide information about, and promotion of,  
14 available claims processing positions to members of  
15 the Armed Forces transitioning to civilian life and to  
16 veterans with disabilities.

17 (5) To establish performance measures to  
18 evaluate the effectiveness of the task force.

19 (6) Not later than one year after the date of  
20 the establishment of the task force, to develop a  
21 Government-wide strategic and operational plan for  
22 promoting employment of veterans in claims proc-  
23 essing positions in the Federal Government.

24 (7) To establish performance measures to as-  
25 sess the plan developed under paragraph (6), to as-

1       sess the implementation of such plan, and to revise  
2       such plan as the task force considers appropriate.

3       (e) REPORTS.—

4           (1) SUBMITTAL OF PLAN.—Not later than one  
5       year after the date of the establishment of the task  
6       force, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit  
7       to Congress a report on the plan developed by the  
8       task force under subsection (d)(6).

9           (2) ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION.—Not  
10       later than 120 days after the termination of the task  
11       force, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a re-  
12       port that assesses the implementation of the plan  
13       developed by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

14   **SEC. 623. REPORTS ON REQUESTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF**  
15                   **VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR RECORDS OF**  
16                   **OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.**

17       (a) REPORTS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days  
18       after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180  
19       days thereafter through the date that is 910 days after  
20       the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of  
21       Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
22       erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Vet-  
23       erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report  
24       on the attempts of the Department of Veterans Affairs  
25       to obtain records necessary to adjudicate claims for bene-

1 fits from another department or agency of the Federal  
2 Government during the 180-day period ending on the date  
3 of such report.

4 (b) ELEMENTS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each report shall set forth  
6 the following:

7 (A) For the period covered by such report,  
8 the following:

9 (i) The total number of requests made  
10 by the Department.

11 (ii) The types of records requested.

12 (iii) The number of requests made be-  
13 fore the receipt of each record.

14 (iv) The amount of time between the  
15 initial request for each record and the re-  
16 ceipt of each record.

17 (v) The number of occurrences of the  
18 receipt of a record after the adjudication of  
19 the claim for which the record was sought.

20 (vi) A description of the efforts of the  
21 Secretary to expedite the delivery of  
22 records to the Department from other de-  
23 partments and agencies of the Federal  
24 Government.

1 (B) Such recommendations for legislative  
 2 or administrative action as the Secretary con-  
 3 siders appropriate in light of such report.

4 (2) PRESENTATION.—The information in a re-  
 5 port under clauses (i) through (v) of paragraph  
 6 (1)(A) shall be set forth separately for each depart-  
 7 ment and agency of the Federal Government covered  
 8 by such report.

9 **SEC. 624. RECOGNITION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIAN**  
 10 **TRIBES IN THE PREPARATION, PRESEN-**  
 11 **TATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CLAIMS**  
 12 **UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SEC-**  
 13 **RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

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

18 **SEC. 625. PROGRAM ON PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AND**  
 19 **TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN IMPROVING QUAL-**  
 20 **ITY OF CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSA-**  
 21 **TION SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
 22 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

23 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Vet-  
 24 erans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasi-  
 25 bility and advisability of entering into memoranda of un-

1 derstanding with local governments and tribal organiza-  
2 tions—

3           (1) to improve the quality of claims submitted  
4           to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11  
5           of title 38, United States Code, and pension under  
6           chapter 15 of such title; and

7           (2) to provide assistance to veterans who may  
8           be eligible for such compensation or pension in sub-  
9           mitting such claims.

10          (b) MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING TRIBAL  
11 ORGANIZATIONS.—In carrying out the program required  
12 by subsection (a), the Secretary shall enter into, or main-  
13 tain existing, memoranda of understanding with at least—

14           (1) two tribal organizations; and

15           (2) 10 State or local governments.

16          (c) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out  
17 during the two-year period beginning on the date of the  
18 commencement of the program.

19          (d) REPORT.—

20           (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than one year  
21 after the date of the commencement of the program,  
22 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Vet-  
23 erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on  
24 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a  
25 report that includes the following:

1           (A) A description of the implementation  
2           and operation of the program, including a de-  
3           scription of outreach conducted by the Sec-  
4           retary to tribal organizations and State and  
5           local governments.

6           (B) An evaluation of the program, includ-  
7           ing the total number of memoranda of under-  
8           standing entered into or maintained by the Sec-  
9           retary.

10          (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days  
11          after the termination of the program, the Secretary  
12          shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
13          of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
14          fairs of the House of Representatives a report that  
15          includes the following:

16               (A) A description of the implementation  
17               and operation of the program, including a de-  
18               scription of outreach conducted by the Sec-  
19               retary to tribal organizations and State and  
20               local governments.

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

1           (C) The findings and conclusions of the  
2           Secretary with respect to the program.

3           (D) Such recommendations for continu-  
4           ation or expansion of the program as the Sec-  
5           retary considers appropriate.

6           (e) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this sec-  
7           tion, the term “tribal organization” has the meaning given  
8           that term in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code.

9           **SEC. 626. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NOTICE OF**  
10                                   **AVERAGE TIMES FOR PROCESSING COM-**  
11                                   **PENSATION CLAIMS.**

12           (a) PUBLIC NOTICE.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-  
13           fairs shall, to the extent practicable, post the information  
14           described in subsection (b)—

15                   (1) in physical locations, such as Regional Of-  
16                   fices or other claims in-take facilities, that the Sec-  
17                   retary considers appropriate;

18                   (2) on the Internet website of the Department;

19                   and

20                   (3) through other mediums or using such other  
21                   methods, including collaboration with veterans serv-  
22                   ice organizations, as the Secretary considers appro-  
23                   priate.

24           (b) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The information described in  
2 this subsection is the average processing time of the  
3 claims described in paragraph (2).

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

8                   (A) A fully developed claim.

9                   (B) A claim that is not fully developed.

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

13          (c) EXPIRATION OF REQUIREMENTS.—The require-  
14 ments of subsection (a) shall expire on December 31,  
15 2015.

16          (d) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—  
17 In this section, the term “veterans service organization”  
18 means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Vet-  
19 erans Affairs for the representation of veterans under sec-  
20 tion 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

1 **SEC. 627. 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 Com-  
10 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-  
11 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representa-  
12 tives a report on the backlog of claims filed with the De-  
13 partment of Veterans Affairs for compensation that have  
14 not been adjudicated 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  
18 2015, 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  
22 the 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 im-  
2 plementation of initiatives carried out by the  
3 Secretary to address the backlog, including the  
4 expected 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  
15 the 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 im-  
21 plementation of initiatives carried out by the  
22 Secretary to address the backlog, including the  
23 impact of those initiatives on accuracy and  
24 timeliness 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 dock-  
8 eted;

9 (B) the number of cases pending at the  
10 Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the  
11 quarter;

12 (C) the number of cases physically at the  
13 Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the  
14 quarter;

15 (D) the number of notices of disagreement  
16 and appeals filed to the agency of original juris-  
17 diction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of title  
18 38, United States Code; and

19 (E) the number of decisions made by the  
20 Board of Veterans' Appeals and the percentage  
21 of such decisions that were allowed, remanded,  
22 denied, or otherwise disposed of.

23 (c) AVAILABILITY TO PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall  
24 make each report submitted under subsection (a) available  
25 to the public.

1 (d) ON BACKLOG AND PENDING DEFINED.—In this  
2 section, the terms “on backlog” and “pending”, with re-  
3 spect to a claim for compensation received by the Sec-  
4 retary, shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary  
5 for purposes of this section.

6 **SEC. 628. 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  
13 Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and  
14 the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of  
15 Representatives a report on the use of temporary,  
16 intermediate, and provisional rating decisions to ex-  
17 pedite the benefits decisions of the Department of  
18 Veterans Affairs.

19 (2) REPORT ELEMENTS.—The report required  
20 by 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  
4 obstacles that prevent use of existing au-  
5 thorities to issue temporary or inter-  
6 mediate rating decisions.

7 (iii) A description of the Quick Pay  
8 Disability initiative, including the rationale  
9 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 deci-  
24 sions that involved a claim granted in  
25 part 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  
12 claims first initiative—

13 (I) the number that were Cat-  
14 egory 1 claims and received a final  
15 rating 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  
22 forth by number of such claims by Re-  
23 gional Office of the Department, includ-  
24 ing—

1 (I) the number of brokered  
2 claims received by each Regional Of-  
3 fice; and

4 (II) the number of brokered  
5 claims issued by each Regional Office.

6 (vii) The number of provisional rating  
7 decisions issued during the oldest claims  
8 first initiative with respect to which the  
9 veteran requested that the provisional deci-  
10 sion become final in order to appeal.

11 (viii) The number of provisional rating  
12 decisions issued during the oldest claims  
13 first initiative with respect to which the  
14 veteran requested an appeal after the expi-  
15 ration of the 1-year period beginning on  
16 the date of notification of the provisional  
17 rating decision.

18 (ix) An assessment of the accuracy of  
19 provisional rating decisions issued during  
20 the oldest claims first initiative, set forth  
21 by Category 1 claims and Category 2  
22 claims.

23 (C) Such other matters as the Secretary  
24 considers appropriate for purposes of the re-  
25 port.

1           (3) SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION.—If the Sec-  
2           retary continues to obtain information on rating de-  
3           cisions under clauses (vii) and (viii) of paragraph  
4           (2)(B) after the date of the submittal of the report  
5           required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall sub-  
6           mit to the committees of Congress referred to in  
7           paragraph (1) a report on such information that  
8           supplements the information on such clauses in the  
9           report under paragraph (1) when the Secretary com-  
10          pletes accumulation of such information.

11          (b) PLAN FOR INCREASE IN USE OF TEMPORARY OR  
12          INTERMEDIATE RATING DECISIONS.—

13           (1) REPORT ON PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later  
14           than 180 days after the date of the enactment of  
15           this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Com-  
16           mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the  
17           Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of  
18           Representatives a report setting forth a plan to in-  
19           crease the use of temporary or intermediate rating  
20           decisions to expedite benefit decisions of the Depart-  
21           ment when the record contains sufficient evidence to  
22           grant any claim at issue, including service connec-  
23           tion.

24           (2) PLAN ELEMENTS.—The plan required  
25           under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

1           (A) Mechanisms to overcome obstacles to  
2 the use of temporary or intermediate rating de-  
3 cisions, including mechanisms (such as up-  
4 grades) to assure the ability of the Veterans  
5 Benefits Management System to facilitate the  
6 issuance of temporary or intermediate rating  
7 decisions.

8           (B) Mechanisms to ensure that appropriate  
9 claimant populations, such as claimants who file  
10 complex or multi-issue disability compensation  
11 claims, benefit from the availability of tem-  
12 porary or intermediate rating decisions.

13          (C) Mechanisms to provide for the use of  
14 temporary or intermediate rating decisions, in-  
15 cluding mechanisms to resolve whether a re-  
16 quest by a claimant or claimant representative  
17 should trigger use of a temporary or inter-  
18 mediate rating decision depending on the cir-  
19 cumstances of the claimant.

20          (D) Mechanisms to prevent the use of tem-  
21 porary or intermediate rating decisions in lieu  
22 of a final rating decision when a final rating de-  
23 cision could be made with little or no additional  
24 claim development.

1           (E) Such recommendations for legislative  
2           or administrative action as the Secretary con-  
3           siders appropriate to increase the use of tem-  
4           porary or intermediate rating decisions to expe-  
5           dite benefit decisions of the Department.

6 **SEC. 629. REPORTS ON DEPARTMENT DISABILITY MEDICAL**  
7           **EXAMINATIONS AND PREVENTION OF UNNEC-**  
8           **CESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.**

9           (a) REPORT ON DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINA-  
10          TIONS FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-  
11          FAIRS.—

12           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
13          after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
14          retary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Com-  
15          mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the  
16          Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of  
17          Representatives a report on the furnishing of general  
18          medical and specialty medical examinations by the  
19          Department of Veterans Affairs for purposes of ad-  
20          judicating claims for benefits under laws adminis-  
21          tered by the Secretary.

22           (2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under  
23          paragraph (1) shall include the following:

24           (A) The number of general medical exami-  
25          nations furnished by the Department during the

1 period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for  
2 purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits  
3 under laws administered by the Secretary.

4 (B) The number of general medical exami-  
5 nations furnished by the Department during the  
6 period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for  
7 purposes of adjudicating a claim in which a  
8 comprehensive joint examination was conducted,  
9 but for which no disability relating to a joint,  
10 bone, or muscle had been asserted as an issue  
11 in the claim.

12 (C) The number of specialty medical ex-  
13 aminations furnished by the Department during  
14 the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012  
15 for purposes of adjudicating a claim.

16 (D) The number of specialty medical ex-  
17 aminations furnished by the Department during  
18 the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012  
19 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which  
20 one or more joint examinations were conducted.

21 (E) A summary with citations to any med-  
22 ical and scientific studies that provide a basis  
23 for determining that three repetitions is ade-  
24 quate to determine the effect of repetitive use  
25 on functional impairments.

1 (F) The names of all examination reports,  
2 including general medical examinations and  
3 Disability Benefits Questionnaires, used for  
4 evaluation of compensation and pension dis-  
5 ability claims which require measurement of re-  
6 peated ranges of motion testing and the number  
7 of examinations requiring such measurements  
8 which were conducted in fiscal year 2012.

9 (G) The average amount of time taken by  
10 an individual conducting a medical examination  
11 to perform the three repetitions of movement of  
12 each joint.

13 (H) A discussion of whether there are  
14 more efficient and effective scientifically reliable  
15 methods of testing for functional loss on repet-  
16 itive use of an extremity other than the three  
17 time repetition currently used by the Depart-  
18 ment.

19 (I) Recommendations as to the continu-  
20 ation of the practice of measuring functional  
21 impairment by using three repetitions of move-  
22 ment of each joint during the examination as a  
23 criteria for evaluating the effect of repetitive  
24 motion on functional impairment with sup-  
25 porting rationale.

1 (b) REPORT AND PLAN TO PREVENT THE ORDERING  
2 OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
4 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
5 retary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'  
6 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Vet-  
7 erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a re-  
8 port on the efforts of the Secretary in reducing the  
9 necessity for in-person disability examinations and  
10 other efforts to comply with the provisions of section  
11 5125 of title 38, United States Code.

12 (2) CONTENTS.—The report required by para-  
13 graph (1) shall include the following:

14 (A) Criteria used by the Secretary to de-  
15 termine if a claim is eligible for the Acceptable  
16 Clinical Evidence initiative.

17 (B) The number of claims determined to  
18 be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence  
19 initiative during the period beginning on the  
20 date of the initiation of the initiative and end-  
21 ing on the date of the enactment of this Act,  
22 disaggregated—

23 (i) by fiscal year; and

24 (ii) by claims determined eligible  
25 based in whole or in part on medical evi-

1           dence provided by a private health care  
2           provider.

3           (C) The total number of claims determined  
4           to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evi-  
5           dence initiative that required an employee of  
6           the Department to supplement the evidence  
7           with information obtained during a telephone  
8           interview with a claimant or health care pro-  
9           vider.

10          (D) Information on any other initiatives or  
11          efforts, including disability benefits question-  
12          naires, of the Department to further encourage  
13          the use of medical evidence provided by a pri-  
14          vate health care provider and reliance upon re-  
15          ports of a medical examination administered by  
16          a private physician if the report is sufficiently  
17          complete to be adequate for the purposes of ad-  
18          judicating a claim.

19          (E) A plan—

20               (i) to measure, track, and prevent the  
21               ordering of unnecessary medical examina-  
22               tions when the provision by a claimant of  
23               a medical examination administered by a  
24               private physician in support of a claim for  
25               benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of title 38,

1 United States Code, is adequate for the  
2 purpose of making a decision on that  
3 claim; and

4 (ii) that includes the actions the Sec-  
5 retary will take to eliminate any request by  
6 the Department for a medical examination  
7 in the case of a claim for benefits under  
8 chapter 11 or 15 of such title in support  
9 of which a claimant submits medical evi-  
10 dence or a medical opinion provided by a  
11 private health care provider that is com-  
12 petent, credible, probative, and otherwise  
13 adequate for purposes of making a decision  
14 on that claim.

15 **Subtitle D—Board of Veterans’ Ap-**  
16 **peals and Court of Appeals for**  
17 **Veterans Claims**

18 **SEC. 631. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE**  
19 **FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VET-**  
20 **ERANS’ APPEALS.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7107 is amended—

22 (1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “in sub-  
23 section (f)” and inserting “in subsection (g)”;

24 (2) by redesignating subsection (f) as sub-  
25 section (g); and

1           (3) by striking subsections (d) and (e) and in-  
2           serting the following new subsections:

3           “(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a hear-  
4           ing before the Board shall be conducted through picture  
5           and voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in  
6           such a manner that the appellant is not present in the  
7           same location as the members of the Board during the  
8           hearing.

9           “(2)(A) A hearing before the Board shall be con-  
10          ducted in person upon the request of an appellant.

11          “(B) In the absence of a request under subparagraph  
12          (A), a hearing before the Board may also be conducted  
13          in person as the Board considers appropriate.

14          “(e)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board  
15          is to be held as described in subsection (d)(1), the Sec-  
16          retary shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the  
17          Board or other components of the Department to enable  
18          an appellant located at an appropriate facility within the  
19          area served by a regional office to participate as so de-  
20          scribed.

21          “(2) Any hearing conducted as described in sub-  
22          section (d)(1) shall be conducted in the same manner as,  
23          and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hear-  
24          ing.

1       “(f)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board  
2 is to be held as described in subsection (d)(2), the appel-  
3 lant may request that the hearing be held at the principal  
4 location of the Board or at a facility of the Department  
5 located within the area served by a regional office of the  
6 Department.

7       “(2) A hearing to be held within an area served by  
8 a regional office of the Department shall (except as pro-  
9 vided in paragraph (3)) be scheduled to be held in accord-  
10 ance with the place of the case on the docket under sub-  
11 section (a) relative to other cases on the docket for which  
12 hearings are scheduled to be held within that area.

13       “(3) A hearing to be held within an area served by  
14 a regional office of the Department may, for cause shown,  
15 be advanced on motion for an earlier hearing. Any such  
16 motion shall set forth succinctly the grounds upon which  
17 the motion is based. Such a motion may be granted only—

18               “(A) if the case involves interpretation of law of  
19               general application affecting other claims;

20               “(B) if the appellant is seriously ill or is under  
21               severe financial hardship; or

22               “(C) for other sufficient cause shown.”.

23       (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
24 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to cases received  
25 by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals pursuant to notices of

1 disagreement submitted on or after the date of the enact-  
2 ment of this Act.

### 3 **TITLE VII—OUTREACH MATTERS**

#### 4 **SEC. 701. PROGRAM TO INCREASE COORDINATION OF OUT-** 5 **REACH EFFORTS BETWEEN THE DEPART-** 6 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND CERTAIN** 7 **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**

8 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
10 Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasi-  
11 bility and advisability of using eligible entities speci-  
12 fied in paragraph (2)—

13 (A) to increase awareness of veterans re-  
14 garding benefits and services for veterans; and

15 (B) to improve coordination of outreach  
16 activities regarding such benefits and services  
17 between the Secretary and Federal, State, and  
18 local government and nonprofit providers of  
19 health care and benefit services for veterans.

20 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES SPECIFIED.—The eligi-  
21 ble entities specified in this paragraph are the fol-  
22 lowing:

23 (A) State and local government agencies.

24 (B) Nonprofit organizations.

1           (C) The Appalachian Regional Commis-  
2 sion, established under section 14301(a) of title  
3 40, United States Code.

4           (D) The Delta Regional Authority, estab-  
5 lished under section 382B(a) of the Consoli-  
6 dated Farm and Rural Development Act (7  
7 U.S.C. 2009aa-1(a)).

8           (E) The Denali Commission, established  
9 under section 303 of the Denali Commission  
10 Act of 1998 (42 U.S.C. 3121 note; Public Law  
11 105-277).

12           (F) The Northern Great Plains Regional  
13 Authority, established under section 383B(a) of  
14 the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development  
15 Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-1(a)).

16           (G) The Southeast Crescent Regional  
17 Commission, the Southwest Border Regional  
18 Commission, and the Northern Border Regional  
19 Commission established under section 15301(a)  
20 of title 40, United States Code.

21           (H) Entities described in subparagraph (I)  
22 that serve Native Americans, Alaska Natives, or  
23 native Hawaiians (as such terms are defined in  
24 section 3765 of title 38, United States Code),

1           regardless of whether such entities are tribal or-  
2           ganizations (as defined in such section).

3           (I) Commissions and development boards  
4           that are—

5                 (i) not chartered by the Federal Gov-  
6                 ernment;

7                 (ii) selected by the Secretary for pur-  
8                 poses of the program; and

9                 (iii) located in areas that present ex-  
10                traordinary challenges to veterans, as de-  
11                termined by the Secretary, including the  
12                following:

13                         (I) Areas in severe economic dis-  
14                         tress.

15                         (II) Areas with underdeveloped  
16                         infrastructure.

17                         (III) Areas with unusual geo-  
18                         graphic characteristics, such as sepa-  
19                         ration from the mainland.

20           (b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the  
21           program for a two-year period.

22           (c) GRANTS.—

23                 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry  
24                 out the program through the competitive award of  
25                 grants to eligible entities—

1 (A) to increase the awareness of veterans  
2 regarding benefits and services for veterans;  
3 and

4 (B) to improve coordination of outreach  
5 activities regarding such benefits and services  
6 between the Secretary and Federal, State, and  
7 local government and nonprofit providers of  
8 health care and benefit services for veterans.

9 (2) APPLICATION.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seek-  
11 ing a grant under the program shall submit to  
12 the Secretary an application therefor in such  
13 form and in such manner as the Secretary con-  
14 siders appropriate.

15 (B) ELEMENTS.—Each application sub-  
16 mitted under subparagraph (A) shall include  
17 the following:

18 (i) A description of the consultations,  
19 if any, with the Department of Veterans  
20 Affairs 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 great-

1 est extent possible, the outreach activities  
2 of Federal, State, and local government  
3 agencies that provide health care, benefits,  
4 and services for veterans and nonprofit or-  
5 ganizations that provide such care, bene-  
6 fits, and services to enhance the awareness  
7 and availability of such care, benefits, and  
8 services.

9 (iii) An agreement to report to the  
10 Secretary standardized data and other per-  
11 formance measures necessary for the Sec-  
12 retary to evaluate the program and to fa-  
13 cilitate evaluation of projects for which  
14 grants are awarded under the program.

15 (iv) Such other information as the  
16 Secretary may require.

17 (3) CONSIDERATIONS.—

18 (A) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants  
19 under the program to carry out projects, the  
20 Secretary shall consider—

21 (i) where the projects will be carried  
22 out and which populations are targeted;  
23 and

1 (ii) the likelihood that each potential  
2 grantee will successfully carry out the  
3 grant proposal.

4 (B) CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING LOCA-  
5 TION AND TARGET POPULATION.—In taking the  
6 matters specified in subparagraph (A)(ii) into  
7 consideration, the Secretary shall consider in  
8 particular the advisability of awarding grants  
9 for projects—

10 (i) carried out in areas with popu-  
11 lations that have a high proportion of vet-  
12 eran representation;

13 (ii) carried out in a variety of geo-  
14 graphic areas, including urban, rural, and  
15 highly rural areas; and

16 (iii) that target a variety of veteran  
17 populations, including racial and ethnic mi-  
18 norities, low-income populations, and older  
19 populations.

20 (4) USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall estab-  
21 lish appropriate uses of grant amounts received  
22 under the program.

23 (5) OVERSIGHT OF USE OF FUNDS.—The Sec-  
24 retary shall establish appropriate mechanisms for  
25 oversight of the use of grant amounts received under

1 the program, including the evidence grantees must  
2 submit to demonstrate use of grant amounts and  
3 procedures for the recovery of grant amounts that  
4 were improperly used.

5 (6) LIMITATION.—In a fiscal year, not more  
6 than 20 percent of all grant amounts awarded in  
7 that fiscal year may be awarded to a single State en-  
8 tity.

9 (d) STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Sec-  
10 retary may not make a grant to a State under subsection  
11 (c) unless that State agrees that, with respect to the costs  
12 to be incurred by the State in carrying out the program  
13 or projects for which the grant was awarded, the State  
14 will make available (directly or through donations from  
15 public or private entities) non-Federal contributions in an  
16 amount equal to 50 percent of Federal funds provided  
17 under the grant.

18 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
19 hereby authorized to be appropriated to carry out this sec-  
20 tion the following:

21 (1) \$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2015.

22 (2) \$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2016.

23 (f) ANNUAL REPORT.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days  
25 after the completion of the first calendar year begin-

1       ning after the date of the commencement of the pro-  
2       gram, and not less frequently than once every year  
3       thereafter for the duration of the program, the Sec-  
4       retary shall submit to Congress a report evaluating  
5       the program and the projects supported by grants  
6       awarded under the program.

7               (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by para-  
8       graph (1) shall include the following:

9                   (A) The findings and conclusions of the  
10       Secretary with respect to the program.

11                  (B) An assessment of the benefit to vet-  
12       erans of the program.

13                  (C) The performance measures used by the  
14       Secretary for purposes of the program and data  
15       showing the performance of grantees under the  
16       program under such measures.

17                  (D) The recommendations of the Secretary  
18       as to the feasibility and advisability of con-  
19       tinuing or expanding or modifying the program.

20       (g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
21       on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
22       ment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 702. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SEC-**  
 2 **RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND STATES**  
 3 **ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 is amended by insert-  
 5 ing after section 6306 the following new section:

6 **“§ 6306A. Cooperative agreements with States**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into co-  
 8 operative agreements and arrangements with various  
 9 State agencies and State departments to carry out this  
 10 chapter and to otherwise carry out, coordinate, improve,  
 11 or enhance outreach activities of the Department and the  
 12 States.

13 “(b) REPORT.—The Secretary shall include in each  
 14 report submitted under section 6308 of this title a descrip-  
 15 tion of the agreements and arrangements entered into by  
 16 the Secretary under subsection (a).”

17 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
 18 at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting  
 19 after the item relating to section 6306 the following new  
 20 item:

“6306A. Cooperative agreements with States.”

21 **SEC. 703. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH ACTIVI-**  
 22 **TIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
 23 **FAIRS.**

24 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after  
 25 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of

1 Veterans Affairs shall establish an advisory committee on  
2 outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

3 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The advisory committee shall be  
4 composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from  
5 among the following:

6 (1) To the maximum extent practicable, individ-  
7 uals who are eminent in their respective fields of  
8 public relations.

9 (2) Representatives of organizations with offices  
10 that focus on communications and distribute mes-  
11 sages through major media news outlets and social  
12 media.

13 (3) To the maximum extent practicable, individ-  
14 uals with experience communicating financial results  
15 and business strategy for purposes of shaping a con-  
16 fident brand image.

17 (4) To the maximum extent practicable, individ-  
18 uals with experience with consumer and lifestyle im-  
19 aging and creating publicity for a particular product  
20 or service.

21 (5) To the maximum extent practicable, vet-  
22 erans who have experience in press and public rela-  
23 tions.

1       (c) DUTIES.—The advisory committee shall advise  
2 the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental  
3 Affairs—

4           (1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans  
5 Affairs is strategically and effectively—

6           (A) engaging the public and Department  
7 stakeholders to increase awareness nationally  
8 regarding all benefits and services furnished by  
9 the Department;

10          (B) explaining new or changing policies of  
11 the Department;

12          (C) improving the image and reputation of  
13 the Department; and

14          (D) coordinating and collaborating with  
15 national community-based organizations, non-  
16 profits, and State and local government agen-  
17 cies;

18       (2) to assist the Secretary in conducting such  
19 other press or public relations activities relating to  
20 outreach activities of the Department as the Sec-  
21 retary and the Assistant Secretary for Public and  
22 Intergovernmental Affairs consider appropriate; and

23       (3) to ensure coordination and collaboration on  
24 efforts within the Department for the development,

1 implementation, and review of local outreach with  
2 respect to benefits that include the following:

3 (A) Compensation and pension benefits.

4 (B) Insurance benefits.

5 (C) Burial and memorial benefits.

6 (D) Education benefits.

7 (E) Vocational rehabilitation and employ-  
8 ment benefits.

9 (F) Readjustment counseling benefits.

10 (G) Loan guarantee benefits.

11 (H) Such other benefits as the Secretary  
12 considers appropriate.

13 (d) LOCATION OF MEETINGS.—Each meeting of the  
14 advisory committee shall take place at a location that is  
15 property of the Department and shall, to the maximum  
16 extent practicable, use teleconference technology.

17 (e) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult  
18 with and seek the advice of the advisory committee not  
19 less frequently than quarterly on matters relating to the  
20 duties of the advisory committee under subsection (c).

21 (f) REPORTS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than  
23 once every 90 days for the first year and semiannu-  
24 ally thereafter, the advisory committee shall submit

1 to Congress and to the Secretary a report on out-  
2 reach activities of the Department.

3 (2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Each report sub-  
4 mitted under paragraph (1) shall include such rec-  
5 ommendations for legislative and administrative ac-  
6 tion as the advisory committee considers appropriate  
7 to improve the press and public relations of the De-  
8 partment relating to outreach.

9 (g) TERMINATION.—The advisory committee shall  
10 terminate on October 1, 2015, and the requirements and  
11 authorities under this section shall terminate on such date.

12 (h) OUTREACH DEFINED.—In this section, the term  
13 “outreach” has the meaning given the term in section  
14 6301 of title 38, United States Code.

15 **SEC. 704. ADVISORY BOARDS ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF**  
16 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RELAT-**  
17 **ING TO HEALTH CARE.**

18 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—For each entity described in  
20 paragraph (2), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
21 shall, acting through the director of that entity, es-  
22 tablish not later than 180 days after the effective  
23 date specified in subsection (h) an advisory board at  
24 that entity on matters relating to outreach activities

1 of the Department of Veterans Affairs at that enti-  
2 ty.

3 (2) ENTITY DESCRIBED.—An entity described  
4 in this paragraph is—

5 (A) a healthcare system of the Depart-  
6 ment; or

7 (B) a Veterans Integrated System Net-  
8 work, if such Veterans Integrated System Net-  
9 work does not contain a healthcare system.

10 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each advisory board estab-  
12 lished under subsection (a)(1) shall be, to the max-  
13 imum extent practicable, composed of individuals se-  
14 lected by the Secretary from among the following:

15 (A) Individuals who are eminent in their  
16 respective fields of public relations.

17 (B) Representatives of organizations with  
18 offices that focus on communications and dis-  
19 tribute messages through major media news  
20 outlets and social media.

21 (C) Individuals with experience commu-  
22 nicating financial results and business strategy  
23 for purposes of shaping a confident brand  
24 image.

1 (D) Individuals with experience with con-  
2 sumer and lifestyle imaging and creating pub-  
3 licity for a particular product or service.

4 (E) Employees of the Department who are  
5 involved in press and public relations strategy  
6 for an entity described in subsection (a)(2).

7 (F) To the maximum extent practicable,  
8 veterans who have experience in press and pub-  
9 lic relations.

10 (2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The partici-  
11 pation of an individual selected under paragraph (1)  
12 shall be at the election of the individual.

13 (c) DUTIES.—Each advisory board established under  
14 subsection (a)(1) at an entity described in subsection  
15 (a)(2) shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and  
16 Intergovernmental Affairs—

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  
21 regarding 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;

3 (D) coordinating and collaborating with  
4 national community-based organizations, non-  
5 profits, and State and local government agen-  
6 cies; and

7 (E) coordinating and collaborating on ef-  
8 forts within the Department for the develop-  
9 ment, implementation, and review of local out-  
10 reach with respect to benefits that include—

11 (i) compensation and pension benefits;

12 (ii) insurance benefits;

13 (iii) burial and memorial benefits;

14 (iv) education benefits;

15 (v) vocational rehabilitation and em-  
16 ployment benefits;

17 (vi) readjustment counseling benefits;

18 (vii) loan guarantee benefits; and

19 (viii) such other benefits as the Sec-  
20 retary considers appropriate; and

21 (2) to assist the director of that entity in con-  
22 ducting such other press or public relations activities  
23 relating to outreach activities of the Department as  
24 that advisory board considers appropriate.

25 (d) MEETING LOCATION.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—If teleconference technology  
2           is not used, meetings of each advisory board estab-  
3           lished under subsection (a)(1) shall be held at a lo-  
4           cation that is property of the Department.

5           (2) TELECONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY.—Each  
6           advisory board shall use, to the maximum extent  
7           practicable, teleconference technology.

8           (e) CONSULTATION.—Each director of an entity de-  
9           scribed in subsection (a)(2) shall consult with and seek  
10          the advice of the advisory board established at such entity  
11          not less frequently than once every two months on matters  
12          relating to the duties of the advisory board under sub-  
13          section (c).

14          (f) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than  
15          each year, each advisory board established under sub-  
16          section (a)(1) shall submit to the Secretary a report with  
17          such information as may be beneficial to the Secretary in  
18          preparing the reports required by section 6308 of title 38,  
19          United States Code.

20          (g) TERMINATION.—Each advisory board established  
21          under subsection (a)(1) and the authorities and require-  
22          ments of this section shall terminate three years after the  
23          effective date specified in subsection (h).

1 (h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
2 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
3 ment of this Act.

4 **SEC. 705. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC**  
5 **REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON OUTREACH AC-**  
6 **TIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
7 **FAIRS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6308 is amended—

9 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “even-num-  
10 bered”; and

11 (2) in subsection (b)—

12 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “bien-  
13 nial”;

14 (B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “for leg-  
15 islative and administrative action” after “Rec-  
16 ommendations”; and

17 (C) by adding at the end the following new  
18 paragraph:

19 “(3) Recommendations that such administrative  
20 actions as may be taken—

21 “(A) to maximize resources for outreach  
22 activities of the Department; and

23 “(B) to focus outreach efforts on activities  
24 that are proven to be more effective.”.

25 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

1           (1) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for sec-  
2           tion 6308 is amended by striking “**Biennial**” and  
3           inserting “**Annual**”.

4           (2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections  
5           at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by strik-  
6           ing the item relating to section 6308 and inserting  
7           the following new item:

“6308. Annual report to Congress.”.

8   **SEC. 706. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY FOR OUTREACH ACTIVI-**  
9                           **TIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**  
10                          **FAIRS.**

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

13   **“§ 6309. Budget transparency**

14          “(a) BUDGET REQUIREMENTS.—In the budget jus-  
15          tification materials submitted to Congress in support of  
16          the Department budget for a fiscal year (as submitted  
17          with the budget of the President under section 1105(a)  
18          of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate state-  
19          ment of the amount requested for such fiscal year for ac-  
20          tivities of the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Af-  
21          fairs as follows:

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

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

1       “(b) PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTIVE COORDINATION  
2 AND COLLABORATION.—(1) Not later than 180 days after  
3 the date of the enactment of the Restoring Veterans Trust  
4 Act of 2014, the Secretary shall establish and maintain  
5 procedures for the Office of Public and Intergovernmental  
6 Affairs to ensure the effective coordination and collabora-  
7 tion of outreach activities of the Department between and  
8 among the following:

9           “(A) Office of the Secretary.

10          “(B) Veterans Health Administration.

11          “(C) Veterans Benefits Administration.

12          “(D) National Cemetery Administration.

13       “(2) The Secretary shall—

14           “(A) beginning after the date on which the Sec-  
15 retary establishes procedures under paragraph (1),  
16 not less frequently than once every two years con-  
17 duct a review of the procedures established and  
18 maintained under paragraph (1) to ensure that such  
19 procedures meet the requirements of such para-  
20 graph;

21           “(B) make such modifications to such proce-  
22 dures as the Secretary considers appropriate based  
23 upon reviews conducted under subparagraph (A) in  
24 order to better meet such requirements; and

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

4           (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
5           at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting  
6           after the item relating to section 6308 the following new  
7           item:

          “6309. Budget transparency.”.

8           **TITLE VIII—ENHANCEMENT OF**  
9           **RIGHTS UNDER SERVICE-**  
10           **MEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT**

11           **SEC. 801. MODIFICATION OF PERIOD DETERMINING WHICH**  
12                           **ACTIONS ARE COVERED UNDER STAY OF**  
13                           **PROCEEDINGS AND ADJUSTMENT OF OBLI-**  
14                           **GATION PROTECTIONS CONCERNING MORT-**  
15                           **GAGES AND TRUST DEEDS OF MEMBERS OF**  
16                           **UNIFORMED SERVICES.**

17           (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 303(b) of the  
18           Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 533(b))  
19           is amended by striking “filed” and inserting “pending”.

20           (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 710(d) of  
21           the Honoring America’s Veterans and Caring for Camp  
22           Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154; 126  
23           Stat. 1208) is amended—

24                           (1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the  
25                           following new paragraph (1):

1 “(1) SUNSET AND REVIVAL.—

2 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subsections (b) and  
3 (c) of section 303 of the Servicemembers Civil  
4 Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 533), as amended  
5 by subsections (a) and (b) of this section, are  
6 amended by striking ‘within one year’ each  
7 place it appears and inserting ‘within 90 days’.

8 “(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments  
9 made by subparagraph (A) shall take effect on  
10 January 1, 2015.”; and

11 (2) by striking paragraph (3).

12 **SEC. 802. PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED**  
13 **SERVICES REGARDING PROFESSIONAL LI-**  
14 **CENSES.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Servicemembers  
16 Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 701 et seq.) is amended  
17 by adding at the end the following new section:

18 **“SEC. 707. PROFESSIONAL LICENSES.**

19 “(a) EXPIRATION DURING PERIOD IN WHICH  
20 SERVICEMEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR HOSTILE FIRE OR  
21 IMMINENT DANGER SPECIAL PAY.—If a license issued by  
22 a State or local licensing authority to a servicemember  
23 would otherwise expire during a period in which such serv-  
24 icemember is eligible for hostile fire or imminent danger  
25 special pay under section 310 of title 37, United States

1 Code, such State or local licensing authority shall delay  
 2 the expiration of such license until not earlier than the  
 3 date that is 180 days after the date on which such period  
 4 of eligibility ends.

5 “(b) CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS DUR-  
 6 ING PERIOD IN WHICH SERVICEMEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE  
 7 FOR HOSTILE FIRE OR IMMINENT DANGER SPECIAL  
 8 PAY.—If a State or local licensing authority otherwise re-  
 9 quires a servicemember to meet any continuing education  
 10 requirements to maintain a license for a trade or profes-  
 11 sion during a period in which such servicemember is eligi-  
 12 ble for hostile fire or imminent danger special pay under  
 13 section 310 of title 37, United States Code, such State  
 14 or local licensing authority shall delay such continuing  
 15 education requirement until not earlier than the date that  
 16 is 180 days after the date on which such period of eligi-  
 17 bility ends.”.

18 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents  
 19 in section 1(b) of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501(b)) is  
 20 amended by inserting after the item relating to section  
 21 706 the following new item:

“Sec. 707. Professional licenses and certifications.”.

22 **SEC. 803. PROHIBITION ON DENIAL OF CREDIT BECAUSE**  
 23 **OF ELIGIBILITY FOR PROTECTION.**

24 Section 108 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act  
 25 (50 U.S.C. App. 518) is amended—

1           (1) by striking “Application by” and inserting  
2 the following:

3           “(a) APPLICATION OR RECEIPT.—Application by”;  
4 and

5           (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
6 section:

7           “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—

8           “(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the protec-  
9 tions under subsection (a), an individual who is enti-  
10 tled to any right or protection provided under this  
11 Act may not be denied or refused credit or be sub-  
12 ject to any other action described under paragraphs  
13 (1) through (6) of subsection (a) solely by reason of  
14 such entitlement.

15           “(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sub-  
16 section shall be construed to prohibit a lender from  
17 considering all relevant factors, other than the enti-  
18 tlement of an individual to a right or protection pro-  
19 vided under this Act, in making a determination as  
20 to whether it is appropriate to extend credit.”.

1 **SEC. 804. INTEREST RATE LIMITATION ON DEBT ENTERED**  
2 **INTO DURING MILITARY SERVICE TO CON-**  
3 **SOLIDATE OR REFINANCE STUDENT LOANS**  
4 **INCURRED BEFORE MILITARY SERVICE.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 207 of  
6 the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 527)  
7 is amended—

8 (1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “ON DEBT  
9 INCURRED BEFORE SERVICE” after “LIMITATION TO  
10 6 PERCENT”;

11 (2) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as  
12 paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively;

13 (3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-  
14 lowing new paragraph (2):

15 “(2) LIMITATION TO 6 PERCENT ON DEBT IN-  
16 CURRED DURING SERVICE TO CONSOLIDATE OR RE-  
17 FINANCE STUDENT LOANS INCURRED BEFORE SERV-  
18 ICE.—An obligation or liability bearing interest at a  
19 rate in excess of 6 percent per year that is incurred  
20 by a servicemember, or the servicemember and the  
21 servicemember’s spouse jointly, during military serv-  
22 ice to consolidate or refinance one or more student  
23 loans incurred by the servicemember before such  
24 military service shall not bear an interest at a rate  
25 in excess of 6 percent during the period of military  
26 service.”;

1 (4) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by para-  
2 graph (2) of this subsection, by inserting “or (2)”  
3 after “paragraph (1)”; and

4 (5) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated, by  
5 striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraph  
6 (3)”.

7 (b) IMPLEMENTATION OF LIMITATION.—Subsection  
8 (b) of such section is amended—

9 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “the interest  
10 rate limitation in subsection (a)” and inserting “an  
11 interest rate limitation in paragraph (1) or (2) of  
12 subsection (a)”; and

13 (2) in paragraph (2)—

14 (A) in the paragraph heading, by striking  
15 “AS OF DATE OF ORDER TO ACTIVE DUTY”; and

16 (B) by inserting before the period at the  
17 end the following: “in the case of an obligation  
18 or liability covered by subsection (a)(1), or as of  
19 the date the servicemember (or servicemember  
20 and spouse jointly) incurs the obligation or li-  
21 ability concerned under subsection (a)(2)”.

22 (c) STUDENT LOAN DEFINED.—Subsection (d) of  
23 such section is amended by adding at the end the following  
24 new paragraph:

1           “(3) STUDENT LOAN.—The term ‘student loan’  
2 means the following:

3           “(A) A Federal student loan made, in-  
4           sured, or guaranteed under title IV of the  
5           Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070  
6           et seq.).

7           “(B) A private student loan as that term  
8           is defined in section 140(a) of the Truth in  
9           Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1650(a)).”.

10 **SEC. 805. TERMINATION OF RESIDENTIAL LEASES AFTER**  
11 **ASSIGNMENT OR RELOCATION TO QUARTERS**  
12 **OF UNITED STATES OR HOUSING FACILITY**  
13 **UNDER JURISDICTION OF UNIFORMED SERV-**  
14 **ICE.**

15 (a) TERMINATION OF RESIDENTIAL LEASES.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 305 of the  
17 Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App.  
18 535) is amended—

19 (A) in subsection (a)(1)—

20 (i) in subparagraph (A), by striking  
21 “or” at the end;

22 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking  
23 the period at the end and inserting “; or”;  
24 and

1 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-  
2 lowing new subparagraph:

3 “(C) in the case of a lease described in  
4 subsection (b)(1) and subparagraph (C) of such  
5 subsection, the date the lessee is assigned to or  
6 otherwise relocates to quarters or a housing fa-  
7 cility as described in such subparagraph.”; and

8 (B) in subsection (b)(1)—

9 (i) in subparagraph (A), by striking  
10 “or” at the end;

11 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking  
12 the period at the end and inserting “; or”;  
13 and

14 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-  
15 lowing new subparagraph:

16 “(C) the lease is executed by or on behalf  
17 of a person who thereafter and during the term  
18 of the lease is assigned to or otherwise relocates  
19 to quarters of the United States or a housing  
20 facility under the jurisdiction of a uniformed  
21 service (as defined in section 101 of title 37,  
22 United States Code), including housing pro-  
23 vided under the Military Housing Privatization  
24 Initiative.”.

1           (2) MANNER OF TERMINATION.—Subsection  
2 (c)(1) of such section is amended—

3           (A) in subparagraph (A)—

4           (i) by inserting “in the case of a lease  
5 described in subsection (b)(1) and sub-  
6 paragraph (A) or (B) of such subsection,”  
7 before “by delivery”; and

8           (ii) by striking “and” at the end;

9           (B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as  
10 subparagraph (C); and

11           (C) by inserting after subparagraph (A)  
12 the following new subparagraph (B):

13           “(B) in the case of a lease described in  
14 subsection (b)(1) and subparagraph (C) of such  
15 subsection, by delivery by the lessee of written  
16 notice of such termination, and a letter from  
17 the servicemember’s commanding officer indi-  
18 cating that the servicemember has been as-  
19 signed to or is otherwise relocating to quarters  
20 of the United States or a housing facility under  
21 the jurisdiction of a uniformed service (as de-  
22 fined in section 101 of title 37, United States  
23 Code), to the lessor (or the lessor’s grantee), or  
24 to the lessor’s agent (or the agent’s grantee);  
25 and”.

1 (b) DEFINITION OF MILITARY ORDERS AND CONTI-  
2 NENTAL UNITED STATES FOR PURPOSES OF ACT.—

3 (1) TRANSFER OF DEFINITIONS.—Such Act is  
4 further amended by transferring paragraphs (1) and  
5 (2) of section 305(i) (50 U.S.C. App. 535(i)) to the  
6 end of section 101 (50 U.S.C. App. 511) and redesi-  
7 gnating such paragraphs, as so transferred, as  
8 paragraphs (10) and (11).

9 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such Act is  
10 further amended—

11 (A) in section 305 (50 U.S.C. App. 535),  
12 as amended by paragraph (1), by striking sub-  
13 section (i); and

14 (B) in section 705 (50 U.S.C. App. 595),  
15 by striking “or naval” both places it appears.

16 **SEC. 806. PROTECTION OF SURVIVING SPOUSE WITH RE-**  
17 **SPECT TO MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Servicemembers  
19 Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 531 et seq.) is amended  
20 by inserting after section 303 (50 U.S.C. App. 533) the  
21 following new section:

22 **“SEC. 303A. PROTECTION OF SURVIVING SPOUSE WITH RE-**  
23 **SPECT TO MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE.**

24 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), with  
25 respect to a servicemember who dies while in military serv-

1 ice and who has a surviving spouse who is the  
2 servicemember's successor in interest to property covered  
3 under section 303(a), section 303 shall apply to the sur-  
4 viving spouse with respect to that property during the one-  
5 year period beginning on the date of such death in the  
6 same manner as if the servicemember had not died.

7 “(b) NOTICE REQUIRED.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To be covered under this  
9 section with respect to property, a surviving spouse  
10 shall submit written notice that such surviving  
11 spouse is so covered to the mortgagee, trustee, or  
12 other creditor of the mortgage, trust deed, or other  
13 security in the nature of a mortgage with which the  
14 property is secured.

15 “(2) TIME.—Notice provided under paragraph  
16 (1) shall be provided with respect to a surviving  
17 spouse anytime during the one-year period beginning  
18 on the date of death of the servicemember with re-  
19 spect to whom the surviving spouse is to receive cov-  
20 erage under this section.

21 “(3) ADDRESS.—Notice provided under para-  
22 graph (1) with respect to property shall be provided  
23 via e-mail, facsimile, standard post, or express mail  
24 to facsimile numbers and addresses, as the case may  
25 be, designated by the servicer of the mortgage, trust

1 deed, or other security in the nature of a mortgage  
2 with which the property is secured.

3 “(4) MANNER.—Notice provided under para-  
4 graph (1) shall be provided in writing by using a  
5 form designed under paragraph (5) or submitting a  
6 copy of a Department of Defense or Department of  
7 Veterans Affairs document evidencing the military  
8 service-related death of a spouse while in military  
9 service.

10 “(5) OFFICIAL FORMS.—The Secretary of De-  
11 fense shall design and distribute an official Depart-  
12 ment of Defense form that can be used by an indi-  
13 vidual to give notice under paragraph (1).”.

14 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 303A of such Act,  
15 as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to  
16 deaths that occur on or after the date of the enactment  
17 of this Act.

18 (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents  
19 in section 1(b) of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501) is  
20 amended by inserting after the item relating to section  
21 303 the following new item:

“Sec. 303A. Protection of surviving spouse with respect to mortgage fore-  
closure.”.

1 **SEC. 807. IMPROVED PROTECTION OF MEMBERS OF UNI-**  
2 **FORMED SERVICES AGAINST DEFAULT JUDG-**  
3 **MENTS.**

4 (a) **MODIFICATION OF PLAINTIFF AFFIDAVIT FILING**  
5 **REQUIREMENT.**—Paragraph (1) of section 201(b) of the  
6 Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 521(b))  
7 is amended—

8 (1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and  
9 (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indent-  
10 ing such clauses two ems to the right;

11 (2) in the matter before clause (i), as redesign-  
12 nated by paragraph (1), by striking “In any” and  
13 inserting the following:

14 “(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In any”; and

15 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
16 paragraph (B):

17 “(B) **DUE DILIGENCE.**—Before filing the  
18 affidavit, the plaintiff shall conduct a diligent  
19 and reasonable investigation to determine  
20 whether or not the defendant is in military  
21 service, including a search of available records  
22 of the Department of Defense and any other in-  
23 formation reasonably available to the plaintiff.  
24 The affidavit shall set forth all steps taken to  
25 determine the defendant’s military status and  
26 shall have attached copies of the records on

1           which the plaintiff relied in drafting the affi-  
2           davit.”.

3           (b) APPOINTMENT OF ATTORNEY TO REPRESENT  
4 DEFENDANT IN MILITARY SERVICE.—Paragraph (2) of  
5 such section (50 U.S.C. App. 521(b)) is amended—

6           (1) by striking “If in an action” and inserting  
7           the following:

8                   “(A) IN GENERAL.—If in an action”;

9           (2) in subparagraph (A), as designated by para-  
10          graph (1), by striking “If an attorney” and inserting  
11          the following:

12                   “(C) LIMITATIONS ON APPOINTED ATTOR-  
13          NEY.—If an attorney”;

14          (3) by inserting after subparagraph (A), as des-  
15          ignated by paragraph (1), the following new sub-  
16          paragraph:

17                   “(B) DUE DILIGENCE.—If the court ap-  
18          points an attorney to represent the defendant—

19                           “(i) the attorney shall conduct a dili-  
20                           gent and reasonable investigation to deter-  
21                           mine whether or not the defendant is in  
22                           military service, including a search of  
23                           available records of the Department of De-  
24                           fense and any other information reasonably  
25                           available to the attorney; and

1                   “(ii) the plaintiff shall submit to the  
 2                   attorney such information as the plaintiff  
 3                   may have concerning the whereabouts or  
 4                   identity of the defendant.”; and

5                   (4) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
 6                   paragraph:

7                   “(D) TREATMENT OF ATTORNEYS FEES.—  
 8                   The reasonable fees of an attorney appointed to  
 9                   represent a servicemember shall be treated as  
 10                  costs of court for court cost purposes, unless  
 11                  the creditor seeks relief from such charges from  
 12                  the court.”.

13 **SEC. 808. CLARIFICATION REGARDING APPLICATION OF**  
 14                   **ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY OF ATTORNEY**  
 15                   **GENERAL AND PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION**  
 16                   **UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF**  
 17                   **ACT.**

18                  Sections 801 and 802 of the Servicemembers Civil  
 19                  Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 597 and 597a) shall apply as  
 20                  if such sections were included in the enactment of the Sol-  
 21                  diers’ and Sailors’ Civil Relief Act of 1940 (54 Stat. 1178,  
 22                  chapter 888) and included in the restatement of such Act  
 23                  in Public Law 108–189.

1 **SEC. 809. CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The heading for section 305 of  
 3 the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 535)  
 4 is amended by striking “**RESIDENTIAL OR MOTOR VE-**  
 5 **HICLE LEASES**” and inserting “**LEASES OF PREMISES**  
 6 **OCCUPIED AND MOTOR VEHICLES USED**”.

7 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in  
 8 section 1(b) of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501(b)) is  
 9 amended by striking the item relating to section 305 and  
 10 inserting the following new item:

“Sec. 305. Termination of leases of premises occupied and motor vehicles  
 used.”.

11 **TITLE IX—OTHER MATTERS**

12 **SEC. 901. REPEAL OF CERTAIN REDUCTIONS MADE BY BI-**  
 13 **PARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.**

14 (a) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section  
 15 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law  
 16 113–67) is repealed as of the date of the enactment of  
 17 such Act.

18 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

19 (1) APPLICABILITY TO DISABILITY AND SUR-  
 20 VIVOR BENEFITS.—Title X of the Department of  
 21 Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of  
 22 Public Law 113–76) is repealed.

1           (2) APPLICABILITY TO MEMBERS OF THE  
2           ARMED FORCES WHO JOINED AFTER JANUARY 1,  
3           2014.—Section 2 of Public Law 113–82 is repealed.

4 **SEC. 902. CONSIDERATION BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS**  
5                   **AFFAIRS OF RESOURCES DISPOSED OF FOR**  
6                   **LESS THAN FAIR MARKET VALUE BY INDIVID-**  
7                   **UALS APPLYING FOR PENSION.**

8           (a) VETERANS.—Section 1522 is amended—

9                   (1) in subsection (a)—

10                           (A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-  
11                           retary”; and

12                           (B) by adding at the end the following new  
13                           paragraph:

14                   “(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment  
15                   of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or the  
16                   spouse of such veteran disposes of covered resources for  
17                   less than fair market value on or after the look-back date  
18                   described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny  
19                   or discontinue the payment of pension to such veteran  
20                   under section 1513 or 1521 of this title, as the case may  
21                   be, for months during the period beginning on the date  
22                   described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number  
23                   of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

24                   “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
25                   source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of

1 the estate of the veteran or, if the veteran has a spouse,  
2 the corpus of the estates of the veteran and of the vet-  
3 eran's spouse, that the Secretary considers that under all  
4 the circumstances, if the veteran or spouse had not dis-  
5 posed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the  
6 resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed  
7 for the veteran's maintenance.

8       “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
9 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Sec-  
10 retary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a  
11 transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial  
12 instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource  
13 for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces  
14 the amount in the corpus of the estate of the veteran or,  
15 if the veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of  
16 the veteran and of the veteran's spouse, that the Secretary  
17 considers, under all the circumstances, would be reason-  
18 able to be consumed for the veteran's maintenance.

19       “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause  
20 is a date that is 36 months before the date described in  
21 clause (ii).

22       “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
23 which the veteran applies for pension under section 1513  
24 or 1521 of this title or, if later, the date on which the

1 veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) disposes of covered  
2 resources 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  
6 and which does not occur in any other period of ineligi-  
7 bility under this paragraph.

8 “(E) The number of months calculated under this  
9 subparagraph shall be equal to—

10 “(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value  
11 of the portion of covered resources so disposed of by  
12 the veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) on or  
13 after the look-back date described in subparagraph  
14 (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reason-  
15 ably have been consumed for the veteran’s mainte-  
16 nance; divided by

17 “(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension  
18 that is payable to a veteran under section 1513 or  
19 1521 of this title, including the maximum amount of  
20 increased pension payable under such sections on ac-  
21 count of family members, but not including any  
22 amount of pension payable under such sections be-  
23 cause a veteran is in need of regular aid and attend-  
24 ance or is permanently housebound,

1 rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest  
2 whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36  
3 months.”;

4 (2) in subsection (b)—

5 (A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-  
6 retary”; and

7 (B) by adding at the end the following new  
8 paragraph:

9 “(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment  
10 of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f)  
11 of section 1521 of this title on account of a child, the  
12 spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered re-  
13 sources for less than fair market value on or after the  
14 look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Sec-  
15 retary shall deny or discontinue payment of such increased  
16 pension for months during the period beginning on the  
17 date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the num-  
18 ber of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

19 “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
20 source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of  
21 the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that  
22 under all the circumstances, if the veteran, the spouse of  
23 the veteran, or the child had not disposed of such resource,  
24 it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion  
25 of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

1       “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
2 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Sec-  
3 retary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a  
4 transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial  
5 instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource  
6 for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces  
7 the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that  
8 the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances,  
9 would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s mainte-  
10 nance.

11       “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause  
12 is a date that is 36 months before the date described in  
13 clause (ii).

14       “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
15 which the veteran applies for payment of increased pen-  
16 sion under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521  
17 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the date  
18 on which the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the  
19 child disposes of covered resources for less than fair mar-  
20 ket value.

21       “(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the  
22 first day of the first month in or after which covered re-  
23 sources were disposed of for less than fair market value  
24 and which does not occur in any other period of ineligi-  
25 bility under this paragraph.

1       “(E) The number of months calculated under this  
2 subparagraph shall be equal to—

3               “(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value  
4 of the portion of the covered resources so disposed  
5 of by the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the  
6 child on or after the look-back date described in sub-  
7 paragraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines  
8 would reasonably have been consumed for the child’s  
9 maintenance; divided by

10              “(ii) the maximum amount of increased month-  
11 ly pension that is payable to a veteran under sub-  
12 section (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this  
13 title on account of a child,

14 rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest  
15 whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36  
16 months.”; and

17              (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
18 section:

19       “(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or dis-  
20 continue payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521  
21 of this title or payment of increased pension under sub-  
22 section (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title  
23 on account of a child by reason of the application of sub-  
24 section (a)(2) or (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of  
25 resources by an individual—

1           “(i) if—

2                   “(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the  
3           Secretary (in accordance with regulations pro-  
4           mulgated by the Secretary) that all resources  
5           disposed of for less than fair market value have  
6           been returned to the individual who disposed of  
7           the resources; or

8                   “(II) the Secretary determines, under pro-  
9           cedures established by the Secretary in accord-  
10          ance with subparagraph (B), that the denial or  
11          discontinuance of payment would work an  
12          undue hardship; or

13           “(ii) to the extent that any portion of the re-  
14          sources disposed of for less than fair market value  
15          have been returned to the individual who disposed of  
16          the resources.

17          “(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial  
18          or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subpara-  
19          graph (A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment  
20          would deprive the individual during the period of denial  
21          or discontinuance—

22                   “(i) of medical care such that the individual’s  
23          life or health would be endangered;

24                   “(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other ne-  
25          cessities of life; or

1           “(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall  
2           specify in the procedures required by subparagraph  
3           (A)(i)(II).

4           “(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that  
5           would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of  
6           the application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) is denied or  
7           discontinued only in part by reason of the return of re-  
8           sources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period  
9           of the denial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to  
10          subparagraph (E) of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2), as appli-  
11          cable, shall be recalculated to take into account such re-  
12          turn of resources.

13          “(2) At the time a veteran applies for pension under  
14          section 1513 or 1521 of this title or increased pension  
15          under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of  
16          this title on account of a child, and at such other times  
17          as the Secretary considers appropriate, the Secretary  
18          shall—

19                 “(A) inform such veteran of the provisions of  
20                 subsections (a)(2) and (b)(2) providing for a period  
21                 of ineligibility for payment of pension under such  
22                 sections for individuals who make certain disposi-  
23                 tions of resources for less than fair market value, in-  
24                 cluding the exception for hardship from such period  
25                 of ineligibility;

1           “(B) obtain from such veteran information  
2           which may be used in determining whether or not a  
3           period of ineligibility for such payments would be re-  
4           quired by reason of such subsections; and

5           “(C) provide such veteran a timely process for  
6           determining whether or not the exception for hard-  
7           ship shall apply to such veteran.”.

8           (b) SURVIVING SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.—Section  
9           1543 is amended—

10           (1) in subsection (a)—

11                   (A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as  
12                   paragraph (3);

13                   (B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the  
14                   following new paragraph (2):

15           “(2)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for  
16           payment of pension under section 1541 of this title dis-  
17           poses of covered resources for less than fair market value  
18           on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph  
19           (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the pay-  
20           ment of pension to such surviving spouse under section  
21           1541 of this title for months during the period beginning  
22           on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to  
23           the number of months calculated as provided in subpara-  
24           graph (E).

1           “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
2 source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of  
3 the estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary con-  
4 siders that under all the circumstances, if the surviving  
5 spouse had not disposed of such resource, it would be rea-  
6 sonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource)  
7 be consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.

8           “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
9 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Sec-  
10 retary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a  
11 transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial  
12 instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource  
13 for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces  
14 the amount in the corpus of the estate of the surviving  
15 spouse that the Secretary considers, under all the cir-  
16 cumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the  
17 surviving spouse’s maintenance.

18           “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause  
19 is a date that is 36 months before the date described in  
20 clause (ii).

21           “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
22 which the surviving spouse applies for pension under sec-  
23 tion 1541 of this title or, if later, the date on which the  
24 surviving spouse disposes of covered resources for less  
25 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  
4 and which does not occur in any other period of ineligi-  
5 bility under this paragraph.

6       “(E) The number of months calculated under this  
7 subparagraph shall be equal to—

8           “(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value  
9 of the portion of the covered resources so disposed  
10 of by the surviving spouse on or after the look-back  
11 date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Sec-  
12 retary determines would reasonably have been con-  
13 sumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance; di-  
14 vided by

15           “(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension  
16 that is payable to a surviving spouse under section  
17 1541 of this title, including the maximum amount of  
18 increased pension payable under such section on ac-  
19 count of a child, but not including any amount of  
20 pension payable under such section because a sur-  
21 viving spouse 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  
25 months.”; and

1 (C) by adding at the end the following new  
2 paragraph:

3 “(4)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for  
4 payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d),  
5 or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child  
6 or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair  
7 market value on or after the look-back date described in  
8 subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or dis-  
9 continue payment of such increased pension for months  
10 during the period beginning on the date described in sub-  
11 paragraph (D) and equal to the number of months cal-  
12 culated as provided in subparagraph (E).

13 “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
14 source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of  
15 the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that  
16 under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse or the  
17 child had not disposed of such resource, it would be rea-  
18 sonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource)  
19 be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

20 “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
21 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Sec-  
22 retary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a  
23 transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial  
24 instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource  
25 for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces

1 the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that  
2 the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances,  
3 would be reasonable to be consumed for the child's mainte-  
4 nance.

5 “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause  
6 is a date that is 36 months before the date described in  
7 clause (ii).

8 “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
9 which the surviving spouse applies for payment of in-  
10 creased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section  
11 1541 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the  
12 date on which the surviving spouse (or the child) disposes  
13 of covered resources for less than fair market value.

14 “(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the  
15 first day of the first month in or after which covered re-  
16 sources were disposed of for less than fair market value  
17 and which does not occur in any other period of ineligi-  
18 bility under this paragraph.

19 “(E) The number of months calculated under this  
20 clause shall be equal to—

21 “(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value  
22 of the portion of the covered resources so disposed  
23 of by the surviving spouse (or the child) on or after  
24 the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i)  
25 that the Secretary determines would reasonably have

1       been consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided  
2       by

3               “(ii) the maximum amount of increased month-  
4       ly pension that is payable to a surviving spouse  
5       under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of  
6       this title on account of a child,

7 rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest  
8 whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36  
9 months.”;

10               (2) in subsection (b)—

11                       (A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Sec-  
12               retary”; and

13                       (B) by adding at the end the following new  
14               paragraph:

15       “(2)(A) If a child otherwise eligible for payment of  
16 pension under section 1542 of this title or any person with  
17 whom such child is residing who is legally responsible for  
18 such child’s support disposes of covered resources for less  
19 than fair market value on or after the look-back date de-  
20 scribed in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny  
21 or discontinue the payment of pension to such child under  
22 section 1542 of this title for months during the period be-  
23 ginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and  
24 equal to the number of months calculated as provided in  
25 subparagraph (E).

1           “(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered re-  
2 source is any resource that was a part of the corpus of  
3 the estate of the child or the corpus of the estate of any  
4 person with whom such child is residing who is legally re-  
5 sponsible for such child’s support that the Secretary con-  
6 siders that under all the circumstances, if the child or per-  
7 son had not disposed of such resource, it would be reason-  
8 able that the resource (or some portion of the resource)  
9 be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

10           “(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary  
11 may consider, in accordance with regulations the Sec-  
12 retary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a  
13 transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial  
14 instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource  
15 for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces  
16 the amount in the corpus of the estate described in clause  
17 (i) that the Secretary considers, under all the cir-  
18 cumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the  
19 child’s maintenance.

20           “(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause  
21 is a date that is 36 months before the date described in  
22 clause (ii).

23           “(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on  
24 which the child applies for pension under section 1542 of  
25 this title or, if later, the date on which the child (or person

1 described in subparagraph (B)) disposes of covered re-  
2 sources for less than fair market value.

3 “(D) The date described in this clause is the first  
4 day of the first month in or after which covered resources  
5 were disposed of for less than fair market value and which  
6 does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under  
7 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  
12 of by the child (or person described in subparagraph  
13 (B)) on or after the look-back date described in sub-  
14 paragraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines  
15 would reasonably have been consumed for the child’s  
16 maintenance; divided by

17 “(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension  
18 that is payable to a child under section 1542 of this  
19 title,

20 rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest  
21 whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36  
22 months.”; and

23 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
24 section:

1       “(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or dis-  
2 continue payment of pension under section 1541 or 1542  
3 of this title or payment of increased pension under sub-  
4 section (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on ac-  
5 count of a child by reason of the application of subsection  
6 (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of  
7 resources by an individual—

8           “(i) if—

9           “(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the  
10 Secretary (in accordance with regulations pro-  
11 mulgated by the Secretary) that all resources  
12 disposed of for less than fair market value have  
13 been returned to the individual who disposed of  
14 the resources; or

15           “(II) the Secretary determines, under pro-  
16 cedures established by the Secretary in accord-  
17 ance with subparagraph (B), that the denial or  
18 discontinuance of payment would work an  
19 undue hardship; or

20           “(ii) to the extent that any portion of the re-  
21 sources disposed of for less than fair market value  
22 have been returned to the individual who disposed of  
23 the resources.

24       “(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial  
25 or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subpara-

1 graph (A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment  
2 would deprive the individual during the period of denial  
3 or discontinuance—

4 “(i) of medical care such that the individual’s  
5 life or health would be endangered;

6 “(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other ne-  
7 cessities of life; or

8 “(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall  
9 specify in the procedures required by subparagraph  
10 (A)(i)(II).

11 “(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that  
12 would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of  
13 the application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) is  
14 denied or discontinued only in part by reason of the return  
15 of resources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the pe-  
16 riod of the denial or discontinuance as determined pursu-  
17 ant to subparagraph (E) of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or  
18 (b)(2), as applicable, shall be recalculated to take into ac-  
19 count such return of resources.

20 “(2) At the time a surviving spouse or child applies  
21 for pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title or  
22 increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of sec-  
23 tion 1541 of this title on account of a child, and at such  
24 other times as the Secretary considers appropriate, the  
25 Secretary shall—

1           “(A) inform such surviving spouse or child of  
2           the provisions of subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), and  
3           (b)(2), as applicable, providing for a period of ineli-  
4           gibility for payment of pension or increased pension  
5           under such sections for individuals who make certain  
6           dispositions of resources for less than fair market  
7           value, including the exception for hardship from  
8           such period of ineligibility;

9           “(B) obtain from such surviving spouse or child  
10          information which may be used in determining  
11          whether or not a period of ineligibility for such pay-  
12          ments would be required by reason of such sub-  
13          sections; and

14          “(C) provide such surviving spouse or child a  
15          timely process for determining whether or not the  
16          exception for hardship shall apply to such surviving  
17          spouse or child.”.

18          (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (a)(2), (b)(2),  
19          and (c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code,  
20          as added by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4),  
21          (b)(2), and (c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by  
22          subsection (b), shall take effect on the date that is one  
23          year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall  
24          apply with respect to payments of pension and increased  
25          pension applied for after such date and to payments of

1 pension and increased pension for which eligibility is rede-  
2 termined after such date, except that no reduction in pen-  
3 sion shall be made under such subsections because of any  
4 disposal of covered resources made before such date.

5 (d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 months  
7 after the date of the enactment of this Act and not  
8 less frequently than once each year thereafter  
9 through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
10 shall submit to the appropriate committees of Con-  
11 gress a report on the administration of subsections  
12 (a)(2), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1522 of title 38,  
13 United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and  
14 subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and (c) of section  
15 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b), dur-  
16 ing the most recent 12-month period.

17 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under  
18 paragraph (1) shall include the following, for the pe-  
19 riod covered by the report:

20 (A) The number of individuals who applied  
21 for pension under chapter 15 of such title.

22 (B) The number of individuals who re-  
23 ceived pension under such chapter.

24 (C) The number of individuals with respect  
25 to whom the Secretary denied or discontinued

1 payment of pension under the subsections re-  
 2 ferred to in paragraph (1).

3 (D) A description of any trends identified  
 4 by the Secretary regarding pension payments  
 5 that have occurred as a result of the amend-  
 6 ments made by this section.

7 (E) Such other information as the Sec-  
 8 retary considers appropriate.

9 (3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS  
 10 DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appro-  
 11 priate committees of Congress” means—

12 (A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
 13 and the Special Committee on Aging of the  
 14 Senate; and

15 (B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of  
 16 the House of Representatives.

17 **SEC. 903. EXTENSION OF REDUCED PENSION FOR CERTAIN**  
 18 **VETERANS COVERED BY MEDICAID PLANS**  
 19 **FOR SERVICES FURNISHED BY NURSING FA-**  
 20 **CILITIES.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d)(7) of section 5503  
 22 is amended by striking “November 30, 2016” and insert-  
 23 ing “September 30, 2023”.

24 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

1           (1) SECTION HEADING.—The section heading of  
 2 such section is amended to read as follows: “**Re-**  
 3 **duced pension for certain hospitalized**  
 4 **veterans and certain veterans receiving**  
 5 **domiciliary, nursing home, or nursing fa-**  
 6 **cility care”.**

7           (2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections  
 8 at the beginning of chapter 55 is amended by strik-  
 9 ing the item relating to section 5503 and inserting  
 10 the following new item:

“5503. Reduced pension for certain hospitalized veterans and certain veterans  
 receiving domiciliary, nursing home, or nursing facility care.”.

11 **SEC. 904. CONDITIONS ON AWARD OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS**  
 12 **BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR**  
 13 **PROVISION OF HOUSING OR SERVICES TO**  
 14 **HOMELESS VETERANS.**

15 (a) CONDITION.—

16           (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2012(c)(1) is  
 17 amended by striking “unless the facilities” and all  
 18 that follows through “may specify.” and inserting  
 19 the following: “unless the Secretary certifies the fol-  
 20 lowing:

21           “(A) That the building where the grant recipi-  
 22 ent or eligible entity provides housing or services for  
 23 which the grant recipient or eligible entity would re-  
 24 ceive such payment is in compliance with the codes

1 relevant to the operations and level of care provided,  
2 including applicable provisions of the most recently  
3 published version of the Life Safety Code of the Na-  
4 tional Fire Protection Association or such other  
5 comparable fire and safety requirements as the Sec-  
6 retary may specify.

7 “(B) That such building and such housing or  
8 services are in compliance with licensing require-  
9 ments, fire and safety requirements, and any other  
10 requirements in the jurisdiction in which the build-  
11 ing is located regarding the condition of the building  
12 and the provision of such housing or services.”.

13 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made  
14 by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to an ap-  
15 plication for a per diem payment under section 2012  
16 of title 38, United States Code, submitted on or  
17 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

18 (b) ANNUAL INSPECTIONS REQUIRED.—Section  
19 2012 is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting  
20 the following new subsection (b):

21 “(b)(1) Not less frequently than once each fiscal year,  
22 the Secretary shall inspect each facility of each grant re-  
23 cipient or entity eligible for payments under subsection (a)  
24 at which the recipients and entities provide services under  
25 section 2011 of this title or this section.

1       “(2) Except as provided in paragraph (1), inspections  
2 made under such paragraph shall be made at such times  
3 as the Secretary considers necessary.

4       “(3) An inspection of a facility of a recipient or entity  
5 described in paragraph (1) made under such paragraph  
6 may be made with or without prior notice to the recipient  
7 or entity, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

8       “(4) No per diem payment may be provided to a  
9 grant recipient or eligible entity under this section unless  
10 the facilities of the grant recipient or eligible entity meet  
11 such standards as the Secretary shall prescribe.”.

12       (c) REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION AUTHORIZED.—  
13 Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

14             (1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as  
15 paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively;

16             (2) in paragraph (1), as amended by subsection  
17 (a)(1), by striking “in paragraph (2)” and inserting  
18 “in paragraph (4)”; and

19             (3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the fol-  
20 lowing new paragraph (2):

21       “(2) The Secretary may revoke any certification  
22 made under paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines  
23 that such certification is no longer accurate.”.

24       (d) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION OF TERMI-  
25 NATION OF PER DIEM REQUIRED.—Such subsection is

1 further amended by inserting after paragraph (2) the fol-  
2 lowing new paragraph (3):

3       “(3) Not later than 30 days after the date on which  
4 the Secretary terminates provision of per diem payment  
5 under this section to a grant recipient or an eligible entity,  
6 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’  
7 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Af-  
8 fairs of the House of Representatives notice of such termi-  
9 nation if such termination were made because a facility  
10 of the grant recipient or eligible entity did not comply  
11 with—

12           “(A) an applicable provision of the most re-  
13 cently published version of the Life Safety Code of  
14 the National Fire Protection Association or such  
15 other comparable fire and safety requirement as the  
16 Secretary has specified; or

17           “(B) a licensing requirement, fire or safety re-  
18 quirement, or another requirement in the jurisdic-  
19 tion in which the facility is located regarding the  
20 condition of the facility.”.

21       (e) TREATMENT OF CURRENT RECIPIENTS OF PER  
22 DIEM PAYMENTS.—

23           (1) ASSESSMENT.—In the case of the recipient  
24 of a per diem payment under section 2012 of title  
25 38, United States Code, that receives such a pay-

1       ment during the year in which this Act is enacted  
2       for the provision of housing or services, the Sec-  
3       retary of Veterans Affairs shall assess whether the  
4       building where such housing or services are provided  
5       is and whether the housing and services are in com-  
6       pliance as required by section 2012(c)(1) of such  
7       title, as amended by subsection (a)(1).

8           (2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—In the case de-  
9       scribed in paragraph (1), if the Secretary does not  
10      certify the compliance of the building and the hous-  
11      ing or services under such section before the date  
12      that is two years after the date of the enactment of  
13      this Act, the Secretary may not make any additional  
14      per diem payments to the recipient for the provision  
15      of such housing or services under section 2012 of  
16      such title until the Secretary certifies that such  
17      building is and such housing or services are in com-  
18      pliance.

19      (f) CONFORMING CONDITION ON AWARD OF GRANTS  
20      BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR COMPREHEN-  
21      SIVE SERVICE PROGRAMS.—Section 2011(b)(5)(A) is  
22      amended by inserting “, including housing and building  
23      codes,”.

1 **SEC. 905. EXCEPTION TO CERTAIN RECAPTURE REQUIRE-**  
2 **MENTS AND TREATMENT OF CONTRACTS AND**  
3 **GRANTS WITH STATE HOMES WITH RESPECT**  
4 **TO CARE FOR HOMELESS VETERANS.**

5 (a) EXCEPTION TO CERTAIN RECAPTURE REQUIRE-  
6 MENTS.—Section 8136(b) is amended by inserting “, or  
7 the provision of services or conduct of a program pursuant  
8 to a contract or grant issued or awarded by the Secretary  
9 under subchapter II of chapter 20 or section 2031(a)(2)  
10 of this title,” after “outpatient clinic”.

11 (b) CONSTRUCTION.—The amendment made by sub-  
12 section (a) may not be construed to authorize the Sec-  
13 retary of Veterans Affairs to enter into a contract with  
14 a State home or award a grant to a State home for the  
15 furnishing of residential care for a veteran without—

- 16 (1) identifying a substantial need for such care;  
17 and  
18 (2) determining that the State home is the  
19 most appropriate provider of such care.

20 **SEC. 906. EXTENDED PERIOD FOR SCHEDULING OF MED-**  
21 **ICAL EXAMS FOR VETERANS RECEIVING TEM-**  
22 **PORARY DISABILITY RATINGS FOR SEVERE**  
23 **MENTAL DISORDERS.**

24 Section 1156(a)(3) is amended by striking “six  
25 months” and inserting “18 months”.

1 **SEC. 907. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE VETERANS ID CARDS.**

2 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—

3 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans  
4 Affairs may issue a card to a veteran that identifies  
5 the veteran as a veteran and includes a photo of the  
6 veteran and the name of the veteran.

7 (2) **NO REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT OR**  
8 **RECEIPT OF BENEFITS.**—The Secretary may issue a  
9 card under paragraph (1) to a veteran, whether or  
10 not such veteran is—

11 (A) enrolled in the system of annual pa-  
12 tient enrollment established under section  
13 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code; or

14 (B) in receipt of educational assistance,  
15 compensation, or pension under laws adminis-  
16 tered by the Secretary.

17 (3) **DESIGNATION.**—A card issued under para-  
18 graph (1) may be known as a “Veterans ID Card”.

19 (b) **RECOGNITION OF VETERANS ID CARDS FOR RE-**  
20 **DUCED PRICING OF PHARMACEUTICALS, CONSUMER**  
21 **PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES.**—The Secretary may work  
22 with national retail chains that offer reduced prices on  
23 pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services to vet-  
24 erans to ensure that such retail chains recognize cards  
25 issued under subsection (a)(1) for purposes of offering re-

1 duced prices on pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and  
2 services.

3 (c) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term  
4 “veteran” has the meaning given the term in section 101  
5 of title 38, United States Code.

6 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
7 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
8 ment of this Act.

9 **SEC. 908. HONORING AS VETERANS CERTAIN PERSONS**  
10 **WHO PERFORMED SERVICE IN THE RESERVE**  
11 **COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.**

12 Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of  
13 title 10, United States Code, to retired pay for nonregular  
14 service or, but for age, would be entitled under such chap-  
15 ter to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored  
16 as a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by  
17 reason of this honor.

18 **SEC. 909. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF**  
19 **VETERANS AFFAIRS TO OBTAIN INFORMA-**  
20 **TION FROM SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY**  
21 **AND COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SECURITY**  
22 **FOR INCOME VERIFICATION PURPOSES.**

23 Section 5317(g) is amended by striking “September  
24 30, 2016” and inserting “September 30, 2018”.

1 **SEC. 910. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF**  
2 **VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ISSUE AND GUAR-**  
3 **ANTEE CERTAIN LOANS.**

4 Section 3729(b)(2) is amended—

5 (1) in subparagraph (A)—

6 (A) in clause (iii), by striking “October 1,  
7 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;  
8 and

9 (B) in clause (iv), by striking “October 1,  
10 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

11 (2) in subparagraph (B)—

12 (A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1,  
13 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;  
14 and

15 (B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1,  
16 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

17 (3) in subparagraph (C)—

18 (A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1,  
19 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;  
20 and

21 (B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1,  
22 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;  
23 and

24 (4) in subparagraph (D)—

1 (A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1,  
2 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;  
3 and

4 (B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1,  
5 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”.

6 **SEC. 911. ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERMENT IN NATIONAL**  
7 **CEMETERIES FOR CERTAIN NATURALIZED IN-**  
8 **DIVIDUALS.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2402(a) is amended by  
10 adding at the end the following new paragraph:

11 “(10) Any individual—

12 “(A) who—

13 “(i) was naturalized pursuant to sec-  
14 tion 2(1) of the Hmong Veterans’ Natu-  
15 ralization Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–  
16 207; 8 U.S.C. 1423 note); and

17 “(ii) at the time of the individual’s  
18 death resided in the United States; or

19 “(B) who—

20 “(i) the Secretary determines served  
21 with a special guerrilla unit or irregular  
22 forces operating from a base in Laos in  
23 support of the Armed Forces of the United  
24 States at any time during the period begin-

1                   ning February 28, 1961, and ending May  
2                   7, 1975; and

3                   “(ii) at the time of the individual’s  
4                   death—

5                   “(I) was a citizen of the United  
6                   States or an alien lawfully admitted  
7                   for permanent residence in the United  
8                   States; and

9                   “(II) resided in the United  
10                  States.”.

11               (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
12 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to an individual  
13 dying on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

14 **SEC. 912. CANADIAN FORCES BASE GAGETOWN INDE-**  
15 **PENDENT STUDY AND REGISTRY.**

16               (a) INDEPENDENT STUDY.—

17               (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
18 Affairs shall provide for a study on the potential ex-  
19 posure of individuals to toxic substances or environ-  
20 mental hazards related to service at Canadian  
21 Forces Base Gagetown, New Brunswick, Canada, at  
22 any time during the period beginning on January 1,  
23 1956, and ending on December 31, 2006.

24               (2) ELEMENTS.—The study required by para-  
25 graph (1) shall—

1 (A) assess the health risks associated with  
2 the exposure of individuals to toxic substances  
3 or environmental hazards described in para-  
4 graph (1); and

5 (B) determine if a registry of individuals  
6 who were exposed to toxic substances or envi-  
7 ronmental hazards during service at Canadian  
8 Forces Base Gagetown would be advisable as an  
9 effective tool to assess such health risks.

10 (3) INDEPENDENT ENTITY.—The study re-  
11 quired by paragraph (1) shall be carried out by an  
12 entity that—

13 (A) has experience conducting studies with  
14 respect to the exposure of individuals to toxic  
15 substances or environmental hazards; and

16 (B) is not affiliated with the Department.

17 (4) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.—The study  
18 required by paragraph (1) shall be completed not  
19 later than 540 days after the date of the enactment  
20 of this Act.

21 (b) REGISTRY.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—If the entity that carries out  
23 the independent study provided for under paragraph  
24 (1) of subsection (a) determines pursuant to para-  
25 graph (2)(B) of such subsection that a registry de-

1 scribed in such paragraph (2)(B) would be an effective  
2 tive tool as described in such paragraph (2)(B), the  
3 Secretary may establish and maintain a registry to  
4 be known as the “Canadian Forces Base Gagetown  
5 Health Registry” (in this subsection referred to as  
6 the “Registry”).

7 (2) CONTENTS.—The Registry shall include the  
8 following information:

9 (A) A list containing the name of each individual  
10 who—

11 (i) while serving as a member of the  
12 Armed Forces, was stationed at or underwent  
13 training at Canadian Forces Base  
14 Gagetown at any time during the period  
15 beginning on January 1, 1956, and ending  
16 on December 31, 2006; and

17 (ii)(I) applies for care or services from  
18 the Department of Veterans Affairs under  
19 chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code;

20 (II) files a claim for compensation  
21 under chapter 11 of such title on the basis  
22 of any disability that may be associated  
23 with such service; or

24 (III) dies and is survived by a spouse,  
25 child, or parent who files a claim for de-

1           pendency and indemnity compensation  
2           under chapter 13 of such title on the basis  
3           of such service.

4           (B) Relevant medical data relating to the  
5           health status of, and other information that the  
6           Secretary considers relevant and appropriate  
7           with respect to, each individual described in  
8           subparagraph (A) who—

9                   (i) grants to the Secretary permission  
10                  to include such information in the Reg-  
11                  istry; or

12                   (ii) at the time the name of the indi-  
13                  vidual is added to the Registry, is de-  
14                  ceased.

15           (3) CONSULTATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES.—

16           The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall consult with  
17           the Secretary of Defense and the heads of other  
18           agencies as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs con-  
19           siders necessary to establish and maintain the Reg-  
20           istry.

21 **SEC. 913. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERV-**

22 **ICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.**

23           (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-  
24           fairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and  
25           such military historians as the Secretary of Defense rec-

1 omends, shall review the process used to determine  
2 whether a covered individual served in support of the  
3 Armed Forces of the United States during World War II  
4 in accordance with section 1002(d) of title X of Division  
5 A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of  
6 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) for pur-  
7 poses of determining whether such covered individual is  
8 eligible for payments described in such section.

9 (b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—In this section, a cov-  
10 ered individual is any individual who timely submitted a  
11 claim for benefits under subsection (c) of section 1002 of  
12 title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Rein-  
13 vestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107  
14 note) based on service as described in subsection (d) of  
15 that section.

16 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date  
17 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans  
18 Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs  
19 of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of  
20 the House of Representatives a report detailing any find-  
21 ings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative ac-  
22 tion with respect to the review conducted under subsection  
23 (a).

24 (d) PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING  
25 CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS PURSUANT TO RE-

1 VIEW.—If pursuant to the review conducted under sub-  
2 section (a) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines  
3 to establish a new process for the making of payments  
4 as described in that subsection, the process shall include  
5 mechanisms to ensure that individuals are not treated as  
6 covered individuals for purposes of such payments if such  
7 individuals engaged in any disqualifying conduct during  
8 service described in that subsection, including collabora-  
9 tion with the enemy or criminal conduct.

10 **SEC. 914. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERV-**  
11 **ICE OF MERCHANT MARINERS DURING**  
12 **WORLD WAR II.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-  
14 fairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the  
15 Secretary of Homeland Security and such military histo-  
16 rians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall re-  
17 view the process used to determine whether an individual  
18 performed service under honorable conditions that satis-  
19 fies the requirements of a coastwise merchant seaman who  
20 is recognized pursuant to section 401 of the GI Bill Im-  
21 provement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–202; 38 U.S.C.  
22 106 note) as having performed active duty service.

23 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date  
24 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans  
25 Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

1 of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of  
2 the House of Representatives a report detailing any find-  
3 ings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative ac-  
4 tion with respect to the review conducted under subsection  
5 (a).

6 **SEC. 915. REPORT ON PRACTICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF**  
7 **VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ADEQUATELY PRO-**  
8 **VIDE SERVICES TO VETERANS WITH HEAR-**  
9 **ING LOSS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the  
11 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
12 erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'  
13 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-  
14 fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the ac-  
15 tions taken by the Secretary to implement the findings  
16 and recommendations included in the 2006 report by the  
17 Institute of Medicine of the National Academies entitled  
18 “Noise and Military Service: Implications for Hearing  
19 Loss and Tinnitus” that was prepared pursuant to section  
20 104 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2002 (Public Law  
21 107–330; 116 Stat. 2822).

22 (b) EFFECT OF DUTY MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL  
23 SPECIALTY NOISE EXPOSURE LISTING ON RECEIPT OF  
24 BENEFITS BY VETERANS.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall include  
2           in the report required by subsection (a) an evalua-  
3           tion of the extent to which veterans who had a mili-  
4           tary occupational specialty during service as a mem-  
5           ber of the Armed Forces that is not included on the  
6           Duty Military Occupational Specialty Noise Expo-  
7           sure Listing (in this subsection referred to as the  
8           “MOS List”) are precluded from receiving benefits  
9           related to hearing loss from the Department of Vet-  
10          erans Affairs.

11          (2) DATA.—The Secretary shall include in the  
12          evaluation required by paragraph (1) the following:

13                (A) With respect to veterans who had a  
14                military occupational specialty included on the  
15                MOS List—

16                   (i) the number of claims for benefits  
17                   related to hearing loss from the Depart-  
18                   ment of Veterans Affairs that were grant-  
19                   ed; and

20                   (ii) the number of claims for benefits  
21                   related to hearing loss from the Depart-  
22                   ment that were denied.

23                (B) With respect to veterans who had a  
24                military occupational specialty not included on  
25                the MOS List—

1 (i) the number of claims for benefits  
2 related to hearing loss from the Depart-  
3 ment that were granted;

4 (ii) the number of claims for benefits  
5 related to hearing loss from the Depart-  
6 ment that were denied;

7 (iii) of the number of denied claims  
8 under clause (ii), the number of those  
9 claims that were appealed; and

10 (iv) of the number of appealed claims  
11 under clause (iii), the number of those ap-  
12 pealed claims that were successfully ap-  
13 pealed.

14 (c) ADDITIONAL MATTERS.—The Secretary shall in-  
15 clude in the report required by subsection (a) the fol-  
16 lowing:

17 (1) In the case of a veteran with unilateral  
18 hearing loss, an explanation of the scientific basis  
19 for the practice of the Department of determining a  
20 disability rating level with respect to hearing based  
21 on an examination of that veteran's healthy ear in-  
22 stead of the injured ear.

23 (2) An analysis of the reduction in earning ca-  
24 pacity for veterans as a result of unilateral hearing  
25 loss, with a focus on the ability of those veterans—

1 (A) to detect the direction of sound; and

2 (B) to understand speech.

3 (3) An explanation of the rationale for the prac-  
4 tice of the Department of not issuing a compensable  
5 rating for hearing loss at certain levels that are se-  
6 vere enough to require the use of hearing aids.

7 (4) A survey of the audiologists that conduct  
8 compensation and pension examinations for the De-  
9 partment to assess the implementation of the most  
10 recent edition of the best practices manual for hear-  
11 ing loss and tinnitus examinations that includes the  
12 following:

13 (A) A description of the training received  
14 by those audiologists compared to the methods  
15 described in the most recent edition of the best  
16 practices manual for hearing loss and tinnitus  
17 examinations.

18 (B) An assessment of how those audiol-  
19 ogists have complied with that training.

20 (C) Whether those audiologists are using a  
21 range of tones up to 8000 hertz to test the  
22 hearing of veterans.

23 (d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be  
24 construed to authorize or require the Secretary to defer,  
25 delay, or replace the ongoing efforts of the Secretary to

1 update the schedule of ratings required by section 1155  
2 of title 38, United States Code.

3 (e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
4 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
5 ment of this Act.

6 **SEC. 916. REPORT ON JOINT PROGRAMS OF DEPARTMENT**  
7 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT**  
8 **OF DEFENSE WITH RESPECT TO HEARING**  
9 **LOSS OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES**  
10 **AND VETERANS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the  
12 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-  
13 erans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of  
14 Defense, submit to Congress a report that identifies the  
15 following:

16 (1) Goals for the Department of Veterans Af-  
17 fairs and the Department of Defense for the preven-  
18 tion, early detection, and treatment of hearing loss  
19 by the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory  
20 Research of the Department of Veterans Affairs and  
21 the Hearing Center of Excellence of the Department  
22 of Defense.

23 (2) Resources of the Department of Veterans  
24 Affairs that could be made available to assist the  
25 Department of Defense in conducting audiometric

1 tests and tinnitus screenings for members of the  
2 Armed Forces.

3 (3) Barriers to information being added to the  
4 Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Registry  
5 required under section 721(c)(1) of the Duncan  
6 Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fis-  
7 cal Year 2009 (Public Law 110–417; 122 Stat.  
8 4506).

9 (4) Recommendations for any legislative or ad-  
10 ministrative actions necessary with respect to the  
11 Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Reg-  
12 istry—

13 (A) to assist in achieving the goals speci-  
14 fied in paragraph (1);

15 (B) to improve the adjudication of claims  
16 for benefits with respect to hearing loss; and

17 (C) to further the research objectives of  
18 the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory  
19 Research of the Department of Veterans Affairs  
20 and the Hearing Center of Excellence of the  
21 Department of Defense.

22 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect  
23 on the date that is one year after the date of the enact-  
24 ment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 917. DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CIT-**  
2 **IES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
4 shall designate at least one city in the United States each  
5 year as an “American World War II City”.

6 (b) CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.—After the des-  
7 ignation made under subsection (c), the Secretary, in con-  
8 sultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall make each  
9 designation under subsection (a) based on the following  
10 criteria:

11 (1) Contributions by a city to the war effort  
12 during World War II, including those related to de-  
13 fense manufacturing, bond drives, service in the  
14 Armed Forces, and the presence of military facilities  
15 within the city.

16 (2) Efforts by a city to preserve the history of  
17 the city’s contributions during World War II, includ-  
18 ing through the establishment of preservation orga-  
19 nizations or museums, restoration of World War II  
20 facilities, and recognition of World War II veterans.

21 (c) FIRST AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITY.—The  
22 city of Wilmington, North Carolina, is designated as an  
23 “American World War II City”.

1       (d) EXPIRATION OF AUTHORITY.—The requirements  
2 of subsections (a) and (b) shall terminate on the date that  
3 is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

○