

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1068

To amend title 5 and title 38, United States Code, to put veteran and military families first and to provide protections for employees, benefits, and programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 13, 2025

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GALLEG0, Mr. KAINE, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KELLY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 5 and title 38, United States Code, to put veteran and military families first and to provide protections for employees, benefits, and programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

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

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Putting Veterans First Act of 2025”.

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

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
 Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—PUTTING VETERAN AND MILITARY FAMILIES FIRST

- Sec. 101. Reinstatement of members of the military community who were Federal employees.
 Sec. 102. Protection for members of the military community who were Federal employees.
 Sec. 103. Report on members of the military community in the civil service.
 Sec. 104. Comptroller General report on military community employment.

TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES

Subtitle A—Protections

- Sec. 201. Limitations on hiring freezes at Department of Veterans Affairs.
 Sec. 202. Limitations on closing offices at Department of Veterans Affairs.
 Sec. 203. Limitations on changes to telework and remote work at Department of Veterans Affairs.
 Sec. 204. Limitations on changes to final job offers at Department of Veterans Affairs.

Subtitle B—Reporting

- Sec. 205. Notice and justification required before reduction in force at Department of Veterans Affairs.
 Sec. 206. Department of Veterans Affairs personnel reporting.
 Sec. 207. Department of Veterans Affairs research personnel reporting.
 Sec. 208. Prohibition on individuals serving as Secretary of Veterans Affairs from also serving as heads of other Federal agencies.
 Sec. 209. Office of Special Counsel.
 Sec. 210. Office of Government Ethics.

Subtitle C—Restoring Accountability and Services

- Sec. 211. Report on effects of removing essential programs, offices, and services from Department of Veterans Affairs.
 Sec. 212. Restoring Department of Veterans Affairs programs, offices, and services affected since the beginning of the second Trump Administration.

TITLE III—PROTECTIONS FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

- Sec. 301. Nominations to Merit Systems Protection Board.
 Sec. 302. Modifications to appeal rights for probationary employees.
 Sec. 303. Authority to retract offers and contracts relating to deferred resignations.
 Sec. 304. Limitation on changes to competitive service categories of positions.

TITLE IV—MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

- Sec. 401. Mental health services.
 Sec. 402. Mental health services for current civil servants.

TITLE V—EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

Sec. 501. Employment assistance.

Sec. 502. Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Labor work on employment opportunities for members of the military community.

TITLE VI—DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Sec. 601. Limitation on access to veteran and department information, systems, and data.

Sec. 602. Limitation on application of certain Executive Orders relating to Department of Government Efficiency at Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 603. Report on compliance with limitation on access to veteran and Department of Veterans Affairs information, systems, and data and Inspector General review.

TITLE VII—FINANCIAL NEEDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Sec. 701. Definition; rule of construction.

Sec. 702. Report on financial effect of the Department of Government Efficiency on the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 703. Reinstatement of contracts and review of mass contract cancellations.

Sec. 704. Limitations on mass contract cancellations.

Sec. 705. Charge card program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE VIII—REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 801. Requirement for Veterans Benefits Administration Monday Morning Workload Report.

Sec. 802. Improvements regarding periodic publication of metrics relating to processing of appeals.

Sec. 803. Publication of wait times for community care from Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 804. Period for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to respond to questions submitted by members of certain congressional committees.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the
4 meaning given that term in section 3330d of title 5,
5 United States Code.

6 (2) CAREGIVER.—The term “caregiver” means
7 an adult family member or other individual who has
8 a significant relationship with, and who provides a

1 broad range of assistance to, a wounded, ill, injured,
2 or disabled member of the Armed Forces or veteran
3 or a dependent of such a member or veteran with a
4 chronic or other health condition, disability, or func-
5 tional limitation.

6 (3) CIVIL SERVICE.—The term “civil service”
7 has the meaning given that term in section 2101 of
8 title 5, United States Code.

9 (4) DEMOTION.—The term “demotion” means
10 a reduction in grade (as defined in section 7511(a)
11 of title 5, United States Code).

12 (5) MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES.—The
13 term “member of the armed forces” has the mean-
14 ing given that term in 315.612(b)(4) of title 5, Code
15 of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto.

16 (6) MILITARY SPOUSE.—The term “military
17 spouse” means—

18 (A) the husband or wife of a member of
19 the armed forces;

20 (B) the husband or wife of a retired, to-
21 tally disabled, or separated member of the
22 armed forces; or

23 (C) the widow or widower of a member of
24 the armed forces killed while performing active

1 duty or who died from a service-connected in-
2 jury or illness.

3 (7) REMOVAL.—The term “removal” means re-
4 moving an individual from the civil service.

5 (8) RESERVE COMPONENT.—The term “reserve
6 component” has the meaning given that term in sec-
7 tion 101 of title 38, United States Code.

8 (9) SUSPENSION.—The term “suspension”
9 means the placing an individual in a temporary sta-
10 tus without duties and pay for a period of longer
11 than 7 days.

12 (10) SURVIVOR.—The term “survivor” means a
13 family member of a member of the armed forces or
14 veteran who died while on active duty or after mili-
15 tary retirement or of a service-connected injury or
16 illness.

17 (11) VETERAN.—

18 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
19 subparagraph (B), the term “veteran” means a
20 person who served on active duty as a member
21 of the armed forces, regardless of length of
22 service, and who was discharged or released
23 therefrom.

24 (B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “veteran”
25 does not include a person who—

- 1 (i) received a dishonorable discharge
 2 from the Armed Forces; or
 3 (ii) was discharged or dismissed from
 4 the Armed Forces by reason of the sen-
 5 tence of a general court-martial.

6 **TITLE I—PUTTING VETERAN**
 7 **AND MILITARY FAMILIES FIRST**

8 **SEC. 101. REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY**
 9 **COMMUNITY WHO WERE FEDERAL EMPLOY-**
 10 **EES.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Any removal, demotion, or sus-
 12 pension of a veteran, military spouse, caregiver, survivor,
 13 or member of a reserve component who was serving in a
 14 position in the civil service that occurred during the period
 15 beginning on January 20, 2025, and ending on the date
 16 of enactment of this Act shall have no force or effect.

17 (b) BACK PAY AND RESUMPTION OF BENEFITS.—
 18 Any person whose removal, demotion, or suspension is ren-
 19 dered without force or effect under subsection (a) shall—

20 (1) receive back pay for any pay not received by
 21 the person during the period beginning on the date
 22 of the removal, suspension, or demotion and ending
 23 on the date of enactment of this Act; and

24 (2) have benefits restored, retroactive to the
 25 date of the removal, demotion, or suspension.

1 (c) ELECTION TO RESIGN.—At the election of a per-
 2 son whose removal, demotion, or suspension is rendered
 3 without force or effect under subsection (a), at any time
 4 after the date of enactment of this Act, the person may
 5 resign from the position of the person in the civil service,
 6 which shall not affect the obligation to provide back pay
 7 or the resumption of benefits with respect to the period
 8 beginning on the date of the removal, demotion, or suspen-
 9 sion and ending on the date of enactment of this Act.

10 **SEC. 102. PROTECTION FOR MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY**
 11 **COMMUNITY WHO WERE FEDERAL EMPLOY-**
 12 **EES.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Any veteran, military spouse,
 14 caregiver, survivor, or member of a reserve component who
 15 is in a position in the civil service may not be removed,
 16 demoted, or suspended—

17 (1) as a part of a group of more than 5 persons
 18 who are being removed, demoted, or suspended on
 19 the same day by the agency employing the persons;

20 (2) without providing a notification to the di-
 21 rect supervisor of the veteran, military spouse, care-
 22 giver, survivor, or member of a reserve component
 23 not less than 10 business days before the removal,
 24 demotion, or suspension, unless the supervisor ad-

1 vises or approves the removal, demotion, or suspen-
2 sion;

3 (3) on the basis of performance, unless the vet-
4 eran, military spouse, caregiver, survivor, or member
5 of a reserve component has received at least 1 per-
6 formance rating at or below level 2 or minimally sat-
7 isfactory (or a similar equivalent level) during the 1-
8 year period ending on the date of the removal, demo-
9 tion, or suspension; or

10 (4) if the removal, demotion, or suspension
11 would result in a greater than 50 percent vacancy
12 rate for the office or position of the veteran, military
13 spouse, caregiver, survivor, or member of a reserve
14 component or a significant reduction or elimination
15 of the duties being carried out by the veteran, mili-
16 tary spouse, caregiver, survivor, or member of a re-
17 serve component, without approval by the direct su-
18 pervisor of the veteran, military spouse, caregiver,
19 survivor, or member of a reserve component.

20 (b) REVIEW.—Not later than 10 days after the date
21 of the removal, demotion, or suspension of any veteran,
22 military spouse, caregiver, survivor, or member of a re-
23 serve component in a position the civil service, the re-
24 moval, demotion, or suspension shall be referred to the
25 Merit Systems Protection Board or the Office of Special

1 Counsel, unless the individual agrees to waive the right
2 to such a referral.

3 **SEC. 103. REPORT ON MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY COMMU-**
4 **NITY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.**

5 Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment
6 of this Act, and not later than 90 days after the end of
7 each fiscal year thereafter, each agency shall submit to
8 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the Committee on
9 Armed Services, the Committee on Appropriations, and
10 the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental
11 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-
12 fairs, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee
13 on Appropriations, and the Committee on Homeland Secu-
14 rity of the House of Representatives the following informa-
15 tion:

16 (1) The number of veterans, military spouses,
17 caregivers, survivors, and members of a reserve com-
18 ponent who, during the prior fiscal year—

19 (A) were hired by the agency,
20 disaggregated by those who were serving at a
21 different agency immediately before being hired
22 by the agency and those hired from outside the
23 Federal Government;

24 (B) separated from service with the agen-
25 cy, disaggregated by those who were hired by

1 another agency and those who were not hired
2 by another agency; or

3 (C) were removed by the agency.

4 (2) The number of veterans, military spouses,
5 caregivers, survivors, and members of a reserve com-
6 ponent who, as of the end of the prior fiscal year,
7 were employed by the agency.

8 (3) Data regarding any directed efforts or in-
9 centives utilized to recruit or retain veterans, mili-
10 tary spouses, caregivers, survivors, and members of
11 a reserve component during the prior fiscal year.

12 (4) For the second report under this section,
13 and each report thereafter, data on changes to the
14 number of veterans, military spouses, caregivers,
15 survivors, or members of a reserve component hired
16 by, separated from, or were employed by the agency,
17 as compared to the most recent report.

18 **SEC. 104. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON MILITARY**
19 **COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT.**

20 Not later than April 1, 2027, the Comptroller Gen-
21 eral of the United States shall submit to the Committee
22 on Veterans' Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations,
23 the Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee on
24 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-
25 ate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the Com-

1 mittee on Appropriations, the Committee on Armed Serv-
2 ices, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the
3 House of Representatives and publicly issue a report re-
4 garding employment of military community members by
5 the Federal Government, which shall—

6 (1) include a review of employment of veterans,
7 military spouses, caregivers, survivors, and members
8 of a reserve component by the Federal Government
9 during fiscal years 2024 and 2025;

10 (2) review the period of service in positions in
11 the civil service by veterans, military spouses, care-
12 givers, survivors, and members of a reserve compo-
13 nent and the rate of removal, suspension, or demo-
14 tion of veterans, military spouses, caregivers, sur-
15 vivors, and members of a reserve component from
16 positions in the civil service, as compared to other
17 individuals in positions in the civil service; and

18 (3) describe any changes in employment of vet-
19 erans, military spouses, caregivers, survivors, and
20 members of a reserve component across agencies be-
21 tween the end of fiscal year 2024 and the end of fis-
22 cal year 2025.

1 **TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF**
2 **VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES**
3 **Subtitle A—Protections**

4 **SEC. 201. LIMITATIONS ON HIRING FREEZES AT DEPART-**
5 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) LIMITATION.—Neither a position nor an employee
7 at the Department of Veterans Affairs may be subject to
8 a hiring freeze, hiring prohibition, or similar policy—

9 (1) unless the Secretary determines that un-
10 filled positions or lack of staff subject to such a
11 freeze will not result in increased costs to the De-
12 partment; and

13 (2) until the date that is 90 days after the date
14 that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs submits a re-
15 port regarding the hiring freeze pursuant to sub-
16 section (b).

17 (b) REPORT.—Before issuing any hiring freeze, hir-
18 ing prohibition, or similar policy, the Secretary of Vet-
19 erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'
20 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-
21 fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the hir-
22 ing strategy of the Secretary and budgetary proof that
23 such a freeze, hiring prohibition, or similar policy will not
24 cause increased costs to the Department.

1 **SEC. 202. LIMITATIONS ON CLOSING OFFICES AT DEPART-**
2 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

3 (a) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
4 fairs may not remove, close, or realign any office or pro-
5 gram of the Department of Veterans Affairs except pursu-
6 ant to a provision of law that specifically authorizes such
7 removal, closure, or realignment.

8 (b) NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Whenever the Sec-
9 retary removes, closes, or realigns an office or program
10 of the Department, the Secretary shall, not later than 1
11 year before the date on which the Secretary commences
12 such removal, closure, or realignment, submit to the Com-
13 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-
14 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representa-
15 tives notice of the intent of the Secretary to carry out such
16 removal, closure, or realignment.

17 (c) ASSISTANCE FOR DISPLACED EMPLOYEES.—In
18 any case in which an employee of the Department is dis-
19 placed by the removal, closure, or realignment of an office
20 or program of the Department, the Secretary shall make
21 a significant effort to find another employment oppor-
22 tunity for the employee within the Department.

1 **SEC. 203. LIMITATIONS ON CHANGES TO TELEWORK AND**
2 **REMOTE WORK AT DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
3 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

4 (a) NOTICE REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans
5 Affairs may not take any action to change to a telework
6 or remote work policy of the Department of Veterans Af-
7 fairs until after the date that is 1 year after the date on
8 which the Secretary—

9 (1) submits to the Committee on Veterans' Af-
10 fairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans'
11 Affairs of the House of Representatives notice of the
12 intent of the Secretary to take such action or make
13 such change; and

14 (2) transmits notice of such intent to the fol-
15 lowing:

16 (A) Labor organizations that represent em-
17 ployees of the Department.

18 (B) The employees of the Department who
19 would be affected by such action or change.

20 (b) ENFORCEMENT.—A violation of subsection (a)
21 against an employee of the Department of Veterans Af-
22 fairs shall be treated, under section 505 of the Rehabilita-
23 tion Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794a), as a violation of sec-
24 tion 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C.
25 791) against an aggrieved employee described in sub-
26 section (a) of that section.

1 **SEC. 204. LIMITATIONS ON CHANGES TO FINAL JOB OF-**
2 **FERS AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
3 **FAIRS.**

4 (a) LIMITATIONS.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
5 fairs may not rescind or make any change to a final offer
6 of employment with the Department of Veterans Affairs
7 for any reason that is not directly related to an action
8 or quality of the individual to whom the offer of employ-
9 ment was extended.

10 (b) REMEDIES.—A rescission or change made in vio-
11 lation of subsection (a) may be appealed to the Merit Sys-
12 tems Protection Board in accordance with the procedures
13 under section 7701 of title 5, United States Code.

14 **Subtitle B—Reporting**

15 **SEC. 205. NOTICE AND JUSTIFICATION REQUIRED BEFORE**
16 **REDUCTION IN FORCE AT DEPARTMENT OF**
17 **VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days before
19 commencing any effort to carry out a reduction in force,
20 or similar action under a different name, at the Depart-
21 ment of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Veterans Af-
22 fairs shall submit a justification for the reduction in force
23 or similar action to the following:

24 (1) The Committee on Veterans' Affairs and
25 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

1 (2) The Committee on Veterans' Affairs and
2 the Committee on Appropriations of the House of
3 Representatives.

4 (3) The labor organizations that represent em-
5 ployees of the Department.

6 (4) Each employee of the Department who will
7 be affected by the reduction in force or similar ac-
8 tion.

9 (b) CONTENTS.—Each justification submitted pursu-
10 ant to subsection (a) for a reduction in force or similar
11 action shall include the following:

12 (1) For each employee or position that will be
13 terminated pursuant to the reduction in force or
14 similar action, the following:

15 (A) Documentation and analysis used to
16 determine that the termination will not reduce
17 or negatively affect delivery of care or benefits
18 for veterans.

19 (B) Documentation and analysis used to
20 determine that the termination will not cost the
21 Department or the Federal Government more
22 than if the Department were to retain the posi-
23 tion or employee.

24 (C) Cost estimate, strategic plan, analysis,
25 and any other relevant information or docu-

1 mentation the Secretary used to determine the
2 need to terminate the employee or position.

3 (2) The planned timeline for the reduction in
4 force or similar action and the methodology the Sec-
5 retary will use to track the actual effects of the re-
6 duction in force or similar action.

7 (3) Options for changing the plans of the Sec-
8 retary and a strategy should an unexpected negative
9 impact to veterans occur from the planned actions.

10 **SEC. 206. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PER-**
11 **SONNEL REPORTING.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 505 of the John S.
13 McCain III, Daniel K. Akaka, and Samuel R. Johnson VA
14 Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Inte-
15 grated Outside Networks Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–
16 182; 38 U.S.C. 301 note) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (a)—

18 (A) in paragraph (1)—

19 (i) in the matter before subparagraph
20 (A), by striking “information,” and all
21 that follows through “facility:” and insert-
22 ing “information:”;

23 (ii) in subparagraph (B)—

24 (I) by inserting “(i)” before “The
25 number”; and

1 (II) by adding at the end the fol-
2 lowing new clause:

3 “(ii) Information made available under this
4 subparagraph shall be updated not less fre-
5 quently than once each quarter to account for
6 delays in data processing and shall reflect the
7 most recently available data.”;

8 (iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking
9 “vacancies, by occupation.” and inserting
10 “positions currently undergoing a recruit-
11 ment action, disaggregated by occupation
12 and by stage of recruitment, including
13 Manager Request Initiation Stage, recruit-
14 ment stage, onboarding stage, and waiting
15 to start stage, or successor stages if modi-
16 fied.”;

17 (iv) in subparagraph (E)(iii), by strik-
18 ing “potential hires or”; and

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

21 “(F) The number of positions vacated dur-
22 ing the quarter for which the Department has
23 not initiated a recruitment action, including the
24 date the position was vacated, disaggregated by
25 occupation.”;

1 (B) by redesignating paragraph (5) as
2 paragraph (6);

3 (C) by inserting after paragraph (4) the
4 following new paragraph (5):

5 “(5) DISPLAY OF INFORMATION.—The display
6 of information made publicly available on an internet
7 website of the Department pursuant to paragraph
8 (1), shall be disaggregated—

9 “(A) by departmental component;

10 “(B) in the case of information relating to
11 Veterans Health Administration positions, by
12 medical facility; and

13 “(C) in the case of information relating to
14 Veterans Benefits Administration positions, by
15 regional office.”; and

16 (D) in paragraph (6), as redesignated by
17 subparagraph (B), by striking “shall” and all
18 that follows and inserting “shall—

19 “(A) review the administration of the
20 website required under paragraph (1);

21 “(B) develop recommendations relating to
22 the improvement of such administration; and

23 “(C) submit to the Committee on Vet-
24 erans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee

1 on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Represent-
2 atives a report containing—

3 “(i) the findings of the Inspector Gen-
4 eral with respect to the most recent review
5 conducted under subparagraph (A); and

6 “(ii) the recommendations most re-
7 cently developed under subparagraph
8 (B).”; and

9 (2) by amending subsection (b) to read as fol-
10 lows:

11 “(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Each year, the Secretary
12 shall submit to Congress an annual report that includes
13 the following:

14 “(1) A description of the steps the Department
15 is taking to achieve full staffing capacity.

16 “(2) A description of the actions the Depart-
17 ment is taking to improve the onboard timeline for
18 facilities of the Department, including—

19 “(A) in the case of facilities of the Vet-
20 erans Health Administration, for facilities for
21 which the duration of the onboarding process
22 exceeds the metrics laid out in the Time to Hire
23 Model of the Veterans Health Administration,
24 or successor model; and

1 “(B) in the case of the Veterans Benefits
2 Administration, for regional offices that exceed
3 the time-to-hire target of the Office of Per-
4 sonnel Management.

5 “(3) The amount of additional funds necessary
6 to enable the Department to reach full staffing ca-
7 pacity.

8 “(4) Such recommendations for legislative or
9 administrative action as the Secretary may have in
10 order to achieve full staffing capacity at the Depart-
11 ment.”.

12 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
13 subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of the enact-
14 ment of this Act and shall apply with respect to the first
15 update under section 505(a)(3) of such Act beginning
16 after the date of the enactment of this Act and each up-
17 date thereafter.

18 **SEC. 207. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH**
19 **PERSONNEL REPORTING.**

20 Not later than 30 days after the date of the enact-
21 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall
22 submit to Congress a report that includes—

23 (1) the number of Department of Veterans Af-
24 fairs research employees who were terminated from
25 the Department since January 20, 2025;

1 (2) the number of Department research employ-
 2 ees who had their term limits shortened since Janu-
 3 ary 20, 2025; and

4 (3) a list of the research studies the employees
 5 described in paragraphs (1) and (2) were working
 6 on.

7 **SEC. 208. PROHIBITION ON INDIVIDUALS SERVING AS SEC-**
 8 **RETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FROM ALSO**
 9 **SERVING AS HEADS OF OTHER FEDERAL**
 10 **AGENCIES.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 303 of title 38, United
 12 States Code, is amended—

13 (1) by striking “There is” and inserting the fol-
 14 lowing:

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—There is”; and

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

18 “(b) PROHIBITION.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other
 20 provision of law, including any provision of sub-
 21 chapter III of chapter 33 of title 5, an individual
 22 who is serving as the Secretary, regardless of wheth-
 23 er such service is pursuant to an appointment made
 24 by and with the advice and consent of the Senate or
 25 such service is in an acting capacity, may not serve

1 as the head of any other Executive agency, either
 2 pursuant to an appointment made by and with the
 3 advice and consent of the Senate or in an acting ca-
 4 pacity, while serving as the Secretary.

5 “(2) EFFECT OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—

6 “(A) REMOVAL FROM OFFICE.—An indi-
 7 vidual serving as the Secretary who is not in
 8 compliance with subsection (a) is hereby re-
 9 moved from the position of Secretary.

10 “(B) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN AC-
 11 TIONS.—An individual removed from the posi-
 12 tion of Secretary by subparagraph (A) may not
 13 issue orders, guidance, direct any people or re-
 14 sources, or in any other manner carry out any
 15 of the functions of the Secretary.

16 “(C) TREATMENT OF ORDERS, GUIDANCE,
 17 AND DIRECTION.—Any order, guidance, or di-
 18 rection of people or resources or any other lead-
 19 ership action issued by an individual who was
 20 removed from the position of Secretary by sub-
 21 paragraph (A) and that was issued on or after
 22 the date of such removal shall be considered un-
 23 lawful.

24 “(c) DEFINITION OF EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—In this
 25 section, the term ‘Executive agency’ has the meaning

1 given such term in section 105 of title 5 and includes the
2 Office of Government Ethics and the Office of Special
3 Counsel, but does not include any advisory committee (as
4 such term is defined in section 1001 of title 5).”.

5 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (b) and (c) of
6 section 303 of such title, as added by subsection (a), shall
7 take effect on the date that is 7 days after the date of
8 the enactment of this Act.

9 (c) REPORT.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after
11 the date specified in subsection (b), the most senior
12 career individual in the Office of the General Coun-
13 sel of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall sub-
14 mit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the
15 Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of
16 the House of Representatives a report on compliance
17 with the provisions of this Act.

18 (2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted pursu-
19 ant to paragraph (1) shall include the following:

20 (A) Documentation as to whether the Sec-
21 retary of Veterans Affairs is in compliance with
22 section 303(b) of title 38, United States Code,
23 as added by subsection (a).

24 (B) A description of the procedures in ef-
25 fect to reestablish firewalls, conflict of interest

1 protections, and independence requirements at
2 the Department of Veterans Affairs.

3 (C) An affirmation that the Department of
4 Veterans Affairs will comply with and respect
5 the independent oversight and investigative
6 power of the Office of Special Counsel, the Of-
7 fice of Government Ethics, the Merit Systems
8 Protection Board, the Government Account-
9 ability Office, the Office of Inspector General of
10 the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Fed-
11 eral Labor Relations Board, and all other rel-
12 evant investigatory and audit bodies.

13 **SEC. 209. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL.**

14 Section 1211(b) of title 5, United States Code, is
15 amended by striking the sixth sentence and inserting the
16 following: “The Special Counsel, including any individual
17 serving as the Special Counsel in an acting capacity, may
18 not hold another office or position in the Government of
19 the United States while serving as the Special Counsel.
20 Notwithstanding any provision of subchapter III of chap-
21 ter 33, if the Special Counsel dies, resigns, or is otherwise
22 unable to perform the functions and duties of the office,
23 the most senior career attorney serving in the Office of
24 General Counsel of the Office of Special Counsel, as of
25 the date of the death, resignation, or beginning of inability

1 to serve, shall serve as the Special Counsel until an indi-
 2 vidual is appointed by the President as the Special Coun-
 3 sel in accordance with this subsection.”.

4 **SEC. 210. OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS.**

5 Section 13121(b) of title 5, United States Code, is
 6 amended—

7 (1) by striking “There shall” and inserting the
 8 following:

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall”; and

10 (2) by adding at the end the following:

11 “(2) REMOVAL OR TRANSFER.—The Director
 12 may only be removed from office by the President
 13 for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in
 14 office.

15 “(3) RESTRICTION ON HOLDING OTHER OF-
 16 FICES.—The Director, including any individual serv-
 17 ing as the Director in an acting capacity, may not
 18 hold another office or position in the Government of
 19 the United States while serving as the Director.

20 “(4) ABSENCE OR UNAVAILABILITY OF DIREC-
 21 TOR.—Notwithstanding any provision of subchapter
 22 III of chapter 33, if the Director dies, resigns, or is
 23 otherwise unable to perform the function and duties
 24 of the office, the most senior career individual serv-
 25 ing in the office of the Chief of Staff of the Office

1 of Government Ethics, as of the date of the death,
 2 resignation, or beginning of inability to serve, shall
 3 serve as the Director until an individual is appointed
 4 by the President as the Director in accordance with
 5 this subsection.”.

6 **Subtitle C—Restoring** 7 **Accountability and Services**

8 **SEC. 211. REPORT ON EFFECTS OF REMOVING ESSENTIAL** 9 **PROGRAMS, OFFICES, AND SERVICES FROM** 10 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

11 (a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 30 days
 12 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
 13 shall submit to Congress a report on the effects of remov-
 14 ing essential programs, offices, and services from the De-
 15 partment of Veterans Affairs during the period beginning
 16 on January 20, 2025, and ending on the date of the enact-
 17 ment of this Act.

18 (b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted pursuant to
 19 subsection (a) shall include, for the period covered by the
 20 report, the following:

- 21 (1) A description of all offices or programs ei-
 22 ther reorganized, renamed, shut down, or reduced.
- 23 (2) Position titles of individuals either termi-
 24 nated or placed on leave, disaggregated by which of-
 25 fice they were housed in.

1 (3) A list of all websites, pamphlets, fliers, re-
2 ports, photographs, or other public-facing documents
3 removed.

4 (4) A detailed description of how accessibility of
5 Department facilities and websites has been affected,
6 for both veterans and Department employees.

7 (5) A list of any Department research projects
8 cancelled or postponed.

9 (6) A list of all Department employee-facing
10 documents or trainings removed from intranet sites.

11 (7) A list of all events cancelled or postponed
12 by the Department.

13 (8) For each of paragraphs (1) through (7), a
14 justification for why each action was taken.

15 **SEC. 212. RESTORING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
16 **FAIRS PROGRAMS, OFFICES, AND SERVICES**
17 **AFFECTED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE**
18 **SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION.**

19 (a) RESTORING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-
20 FAIRS.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—Any removal, demotion, or
22 suspension of a Department of Veterans Affairs em-
23 ployee during the period beginning on January 20,
24 2025, and ending on the date of the enactment of
25 this Act shall be considered null and void.

1 (2) BACKPAY AND RESUMPTION OF BENE-
2 FITS.—A person subject to a removal, demotion, or
3 suspension described in paragraph (1) shall be eligi-
4 ble for backpay and resumption of benefits.

5 (3) RESIGNATIONS.—A person described in
6 paragraph (2) who does not wish to be restored to
7 a position from which the person was removed, de-
8 moted, or suspended as described in paragraph (1)
9 may resign from the position as they so choose.

10 (b) PUBLICATION OF CERTAIN MATERIALS AND
11 WEBSITES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall com-
12 mence publishing all materials and websites described in
13 section 211(b).

14 (c) NULLIFICATION OF CANCELLATION OR POST-
15 PONEMENT OF CERTAIN RESEARCH PROJECTS.—The
16 cancellation or postponement of any research projects dur-
17 ing the period beginning on January 20, 2025, and ending
18 on the date of the enactment of this Act shall be consid-
19 ered null and void.

20 (d) WITHDRAWAL OF CERTAIN DIRECTIVE RELAT-
21 ING TO FLAGS.—The Secretary shall withdraw the Feb-
22 ruary 12, 2025 directive of the Secretary entitled “Public
23 Display or Depiction of Flags throughout Department of
24 Veterans Affairs (VA) Facilities”.

1 **TITLE III—PROTECTIONS FOR**
 2 **CIVIL SERVANTS**

3 **SEC. 301. NOMINATIONS TO MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION**
 4 **BOARD.**

5 Subchapter I of chapter 12 of title 5, United States
 6 Code, is amended in section 1202, by adding at the end
 7 the following:

8 “(e) Not later than 30 days after the date on which
 9 a vacancy on the Merit Systems Protection Board occurs
 10 (whether before or at the end of a term of office of a mem-
 11 ber), the President shall appoint an individual to fill that
 12 vacancy.”.

13 **SEC. 302. MODIFICATIONS TO APPEAL RIGHTS FOR PROBA-**
 14 **TIONARY EMPLOYEES.**

15 Section 7701(a) of title 5, United States Code, is
 16 amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by in-
 17 serting “(including, notwithstanding any other provision
 18 of law, an employee who is in a probationary period)”.

19 **SEC. 303. AUTHORITY TO RETRACT OFFERS AND CON-**
 20 **TRACTS RELATING TO DEFERRED RESIGNA-**
 21 **TIONS.**

22 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—Any offer or contract relating to
 23 deferred resignation commitment accepted or entered into
 24 by an employee in a position in the civil service may be
 25 nullified by the employee (without penalty) at any time

1 until the close of business on the last day of the employ-
 2 ment of the employee by the agency employing the em-
 3 ployee.

4 (b) REMEDY.—A violation of subsection (a) may be
 5 appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board in ac-
 6 cordance with the procedures under section 7701 of title
 7 5, United States Code, or challenged in a court of com-
 8 petent jurisdiction.

9 **SEC. 304. LIMITATION ON CHANGES TO COMPETITIVE**
 10 **SERVICE CATEGORIES OF POSITIONS.**

11 (a) LIMITATION.—A position in the civil service may
 12 not be shifted, realigned, or removed from a competitive
 13 service category to an excepted service category—

14 (1) unless—

15 (A) the employee who current fills the posi-
 16 tion agrees to such a shift; or

17 (B) the position is vacant; or

18 (2) until the date that is 2 years after the date
 19 on which the head of the agency employing the em-
 20 ployee has given notice to the employee and sub-
 21 mitted to Congress notice of such a shift, realign-
 22 ment, or removal.

23 (b) REMEDY.—A violation of subsection (a) may be
 24 appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board in ac-
 25 cordance with the procedures under section 7701 of title

1 5, United States Code, or reviewed by a court of com-
2 petent jurisdiction.

3 **TITLE IV—MENTAL HEALTH**
4 **CARE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS**

5 **SEC. 401. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.**

6 The agency that currently employs, or most recently
7 employed, a veteran, military spouse, caregiver, survivor,
8 or member of a reserve component serving in a position
9 in the civil service who is removed, demoted, or suspended
10 on or after January 20, 2025, shall reimburse the veteran,
11 military spouse, caregiver, survivor, or member of a re-
12 serve component for the cost of all mental health services
13 provided during the 90-day period beginning on the date
14 of the removal, demotion, or suspension.

15 **SEC. 402. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CURRENT CIVIL**
16 **SERVANTS.**

17 (a) VET CENTERS.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
18 fairs shall deploy a mobile Vet Center to the office of any
19 agency that, on or after January 20, 2025, removes, sus-
20 pends, or demotes a group of more than 5 veterans, mili-
21 tary spouses, caregivers, survivors, or members of a re-
22 serve component on any day, for use by any current or
23 former employees of the agency who are a veteran, mili-
24 tary spouse, caregiver, survivor, or member of a reserve
25 component.

(b) FUNDING.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, until February 1, 2030, an agency may not reduce the amount of funds spent, contracts, staff, or programming related to mental health counseling services, financial and legal services, dependent care services, workplace conflict resolution services, cultural competency services, substance use treatment services, crisis intervention services, or employee assistance programs below the levels as of January 5, 2025.

TITLE V—EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

SEC. 501. EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE.

The President shall order measures to provide employment assistance and opportunities for veterans, military spouses, caregivers, survivors, and members of a reserve component who are removed, demoted, or suspended from civil service on or after January 20, 2025.

SEC. 502. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WORK ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY COMMUNITY.

The Director of the Office of Personnel Management and the Secretary of Labor shall—

(1) work with the heads of other agencies to expand and facilitate the use of Federal programs, hir-

ing and training opportunities, and retention incentives for veterans, military spouses, caregivers, survivors, and members of a reserve component;

(2) seek to develop partnerships with firms in the private sector to enhance employment opportunities for veterans, military spouses, caregivers, survivors, and members of a reserve component, including to provide for improved job portability for such individuals;

(3) work with the United States Chamber of Commerce and other appropriate private-sector entities to facilitate the formation of such partnerships; and

(4) examine and seek ways for incorporating hiring preferences for veterans, military spouses, caregivers, survivors, and members of a reserve component into contracts between an agency and 1 or more private sector entities.

TITLE VI—DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

SEC. 601. LIMITATION ON ACCESS TO VETERAN AND DEPARTMENT INFORMATION, SYSTEMS, AND DATA.

(a) LIMITATIONS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter
2 57 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by
3 adding at the end of the following new section:

4 **“§ 5729. Limitations on access to certain information,**
5 **systems, and data**

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may not allow any
7 individual to use, exercise administrative control over, or
8 otherwise access any Department information technology
9 system, health or benefits data repository, contracting in-
10 formation, financial system, record system, or other rel-
11 evant system, or any data from any such system, unless—

12 “(1) such individual is an officer, employee, or
13 contractor of the Department; and

14 “(2) in the case of an individual not described
15 in paragraph (1)—

16 “(A) such individual holds a security clear-
17 ance at the appropriate level with respect to
18 such system or data and such clearance was
19 granted pursuant to the procedures established
20 under section 801 of the National Security Act
21 of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3161);

22 “(B) such individual’s access to such sys-
23 tem or data, or use thereof, does not constitute
24 a violation of section 208 of title 18 (deter-
25 mined after the application of subsection (b));

1 “(C) such individual is not a special Gov-
2 ernment employee (as defined in section 202 of
3 title 18);

4 “(D) such individual’s current continuous
5 service in the civil service (as that term is de-
6 fined in section 2101 of title 5) as of the date
7 of such access is for a period of not less than
8 one year;

9 “(E) such individual has completed any re-
10 quired training or compliance procedures with
11 respect to privacy laws, cybersecurity regula-
12 tions, national security regulations, and best
13 practices; and

14 “(F) has signed a written ethics agreement
15 with either the senior career Designated Agency
16 Ethics Official of the Department, or the most
17 senior career official within the Office of Gov-
18 ernment Ethics.

19 “(b) TREATMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT
20 OFFICERS OR EMPLOYEES OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF
21 FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—(1) Any individual who ac-
22 cesses any system or data described in subsection (a) who
23 is not otherwise an officer or employee of the executive
24 branch of the Federal Government shall be treated as an

1 employee of the executive branch of the United States
2 Government for purposes of section 208 of title 18.

3 “(2) For purposes of such section 208, exercise of
4 administrative control or stopping, canceling, adjusting,
5 holding, rejecting, changing, or otherwise impacting any
6 payment or data in any Department system, data reposi-
7 tory, or other similar location, shall be considered personal
8 and substantial participation as a Government officer or
9 employee in a particular matter.

10 “(c) DEFINITION OF OTHER RELEVANT SYSTEM.—
11 In this section, the term ‘other relevant system’ means any
12 data, system, connection, database, repository, or any
13 other tangible thing of the Department that stores infor-
14 mation of the Department, veterans, surviving spouses,
15 caregivers, or other recipients of health care or benefits
16 under laws administered by the Secretary, including
17 health data, personally identifiable information, protected
18 health information, burial data information, contract data,
19 the Corporate Data Warehouse of the Department, data
20 regarding benefits provided to veterans, financial trans-
21 action and bank information, Department of Veterans Af-
22 fairs Integrated Enterprise Workflow Solution system and
23 data, payroll information, research and development data,
24 and data that is part of the Million Veteran Program.”.

1 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
2 tions at the beginning of chapter 57 of such title is
3 amended by inserting after section 5728 the fol-
4 lowing new section:

“5729. Limitations on access to certain information, systems, and data.”.

5 (b) DELETION OF IMPROPERLY OBTAINED DATA.—
6 In any action brought against the Department of Veterans
7 Affairs or a recipient agency or other recipient in a court
8 of competent jurisdiction for a violation of subsection (b)
9 or (e) of section 552a of title 5, United States Code, the
10 court may order the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the re-
11 cipient agency, or other recipient to delete records improp-
12 erly disclosed or maintained in a system of records in vio-
13 lation of the rules and regulations set out pursuant to such
14 section.

15 (c) REMOVAL OF CONNECTIONS.—Not later than 15
16 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
17 retary of Veterans Affairs shall remove any information
18 technology connection between the Department and any
19 entity not in compliance with the provisions of this section
20 or section 5729 of title 38, United States Code, as added
21 by subsection (a).

1 **SEC. 602. LIMITATION ON APPLICATION OF CERTAIN EXEC-**
2 **UTIVE ORDERS RELATING TO DEPARTMENT**
3 **OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AT DEPART-**
4 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 Executive Order 14158 (90 Fed. Reg. 8441; relating
6 to establishing and implementing the President's Depart-
7 ment of Government Efficiency), Executive Order 14210
8 (90 Fed. Reg. 9669; relating to implementing the Presi-
9 dent's "Department of Government Efficiency" workforce
10 optimization initiative), Executive Order 14219 (90 Fed.
11 Reg. 10583; relating to ensuring lawful governance and
12 implementing the President's "Department of Govern-
13 ment Efficiency" deregulatory initiative), and Executive
14 Order 14222 (90 Fed. Reg. 11095; relating to imple-
15 menting the President's "Department of Government Effi-
16 ciency" cost efficiency initiative) shall not apply as it re-
17 lates to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Depart-
18 ment of Veterans Affairs.

19 **SEC. 603. REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH LIMITATION ON**
20 **ACCESS TO VETERAN AND DEPARTMENT OF**
21 **VETERANS AFFAIRS INFORMATION, SYSTEMS,**
22 **AND DATA AND INSPECTOR GENERAL RE-**
23 **VIEW.**

24 (a) REPORT ON COMPLIANCE.—Not later than 30
25 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
26 retary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee

1 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on
2 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report
3 on the compliance of the Department of Veterans Affairs
4 with the provisions of this section and section 5729 of title
5 38, United States Code, as added by section 601(a), in-
6 cluding with respect to removal of connections pursuant
7 to section 601(c) and the removal of relevant employees
8 and their credentials from all Department systems, prem-
9 ises, and networks consistent with the such sections.

10 (b) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—

11 (1) REVIEW.—Not later than 10 days of after
12 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector
13 General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall
14 initiate a review on any instance of unauthorized use
15 or other access of systems described in section
16 5729(a) of title 38, United States Code, as added by
17 section 601(a), that has occurred during the period
18 beginning on November 6, 2024, and ending on the
19 date of the enactment of this Act.

20 (2) PRELIMINARY BRIEFING.—Not later than
21 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,
22 the Inspector General shall provide the Committee
23 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-
24 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-
25 resentatives a preliminary briefing on the findings of

1 the Inspector General with respect to the review ini-
2 tiated pursuant to paragraph (1).

3 (3) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days
4 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the In-
5 spector General shall submit to the Committee on
6 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee
7 on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives
8 a final report on—

9 (A) the findings of the Inspector General
10 with respect to the review initiated pursuant to
11 paragraph (1); and

12 (B) such recommendations for administra-
13 tive or legislative action as the Inspector Gen-
14 eral may have as a result of such findings.

15 (4) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under
16 this subsection shall include the following:

17 (A) a detailed description of the unauthor-
18 ized use or access, including any actions the in-
19 dividual or individuals carried out;

20 (B) a risk assessment of any threat to pri-
21 vacy, contracting and financial information,
22 protected veteran health and disability informa-
23 tion, national security, cybersecurity, or the in-
24 tegrity of the applicable system as a result of
25 such unauthorized use or access; and

1 (C) a detailed description of any stopped
2 benefits, health care delivery, or other services
3 of the Department of Veterans Affairs during
4 the unauthorized use or access.

5 **TITLE VII—FINANCIAL NEEDS**
6 **OF THE DEPARTMENT OF**
7 **VETERANS AFFAIRS**

8 **SEC. 701. DEFINITION; RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

9 (a) MASS CONTRACT CANCELLATION DEFINED.—In
10 this title, the term “mass contract cancellation” means the
11 termination by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of—

12 (1) five or more contracts in a single business
13 day; or

14 (2) ten or more contracts in a five-business-day
15 period.

16 (b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this title
17 shall be construed to prevent the Secretary of Veterans
18 Affairs from cancelling individual contracts for poor per-
19 formance, fraud, breach of contract, or other reasons in
20 accordance with applicable law, including the Federal Ac-
21 quisition Regulation.

1 **SEC. 702. REPORT ON FINANCIAL EFFECT OF THE DEPART-**
2 **MENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ON THE**
3 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once
5 each quarter until September 30, 2029, the Secretary of
6 Veteran Affairs shall submit to the appropriate commit-
7 tees of Congress a report detailing the estimated costs as-
8 sociated with or attributed to policy changes prompted by
9 the Department of Government Efficiency or the Presi-
10 dent since January 20, 2025.

11 (b) COSTS.—Each report required by subsection (a)
12 shall account for the following:

13 (1) The cancellation of any contracts and po-
14 tential litigation to resolve related matters.

15 (2) The wrongful termination of employees and
16 any settlements.

17 (3) The need to hire contracted providers or
18 staff to backfill vacant roles.

19 (4) Such other matters as the Secretary of Vet-
20 erans Affairs considers appropriate.

21 (c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DE-
22 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate commit-
23 tees of Congress” means—

24 (1) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the
25 Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

1 (2) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the
 2 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
 3 resentatives.

4 **SEC. 703. REINSTATEMENT OF CONTRACTS AND REVIEW OF**
 5 **MASS CONTRACT CANCELLATIONS.**

6 (a) REINSTATEMENT; PAUSE; REVIEW.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
 8 Affairs—

9 (A) shall reinstate each contract cancelled
 10 in a mass contract cancellation during the pe-
 11 riod beginning on January 20, 2025, and end-
 12 ing on the date of the enactment of this Act;

13 (B) shall pause any mass contract can-
 14 cellation in progress as of the date of the enact-
 15 ment of this Act; and

16 (C) shall not commence any mass contract
 17 cancellation unless—

18 (i) each condition described in para-
 19 graph (2) is met; and

20 (ii) the requirements of section 704
 21 are fulfilled.

22 (2) CONDITIONS.—The conditions described in
 23 this paragraph are the following:

24 (A) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs has
 25 reviewed all contracts cancelled or proposed to

1 be cancelled during the period beginning on
2 January 20, 2025 and ending on April 30,
3 2025.

4 (B) The Secretary has submitted to Con-
5 gress a report on the reviews conducted under
6 subparagraph (A), including, for each contract
7 reviewed, a certification by the Secretary and
8 career head of each relevant administration or
9 office of the Department of Veterans Affairs
10 that canceling the contract has not or will not
11 affect any of the following:

12 (i) The delivery of health care, bene-
13 fits, and memorial services to veterans.

14 (ii) Safety and cleanliness of any facil-
15 ity of the Department, including surgical
16 suites.

17 (iii) The ability of the Department to
18 prevent and detect waste, fraud, and
19 abuse.

20 (iv) Medical research carried out by
21 the Department.

22 (v) Cyber and information security.

23 (vi) Planning, delivery, and mainte-
24 nance for infrastructure, leasing, and con-
25 struction.

- 1 (vii) Homelessness services, including
- 2 prevention and housing.
- 3 (viii) Cancer research and care.
- 4 (ix) Memorial services.
- 5 (x) Claims processing and retrieval
- 6 and digitization of records.
- 7 (xi) Veteran-directed care.
- 8 (xii) Payments and program oversight
- 9 for educational assistance under laws ad-
- 10 ministered by the Secretary of Veterans
- 11 Affairs.
- 12 (xiii) Medical supplies.
- 13 (xiv) Mental health and suicide pre-
- 14 vention.
- 15 (xv) Implementation of the Sergeant
- 16 First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our
- 17 Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics
- 18 Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–168) (com-
- 19 monly known as the “PACT Act”).
- 20 (xvi) Radiology services.
- 21 (xvii) Pharmacy services.
- 22 (xviii) Prosthetics services.
- 23 (xix) The Transition Assistance Pro-
- 24 gram.

1 (xx) The Home Loan Guaranty Pro-
2 gram of the Department.

3 (xxi) Police and security services pro-
4 vided by the Department.

5 (xxii) Emergency response, including
6 the “Fourth Mission” of the Department.

7 (xxiii) Veterans employment.

8 (xxiv) The disposal of waste, including
9 hazardous waste.

10 (xxv) Any other critical service, func-
11 tion, or operation of the Department, in-
12 cluding those required by statute.

13 (C) The Secretary has submitted to Con-
14 gress a report that sets forth a day-by-day
15 timeline of how the effort to carry out mass
16 contract cancellations was initiated, led, and
17 unfolded, including the following:

18 (i) An identification of each of the fol-
19 lowing:

20 (I) Who directed the effort to
21 begin and the date on which such di-
22 rection took place.

23 (II) The parameters of the effort.

24 (III) Whether the Department
25 was provided with a dollar number

1 target to meet for “savings” or wheth-
2 er officials of the Department deter-
3 mined the amount of savings desired.

4 (IV) The search terms used to
5 select contracts for cancellation.

6 (V) Who led the contract review
7 process.

8 (VI) The specific individuals who
9 reviewed the justifications to defend
10 the merits of each contract.

11 (VII) The data and fact-based
12 criteria used to decide which contracts
13 should be cancelled based on the re-
14 view of the defense of those contracts
15 prepared by career officials.

16 (VIII) Whether any contracts
17 were removed from the initial list of
18 contracts to be cancelled prior to that
19 list being finalized.

20 (IX) The criteria used to develop
21 the list of contracts announced for
22 termination on March 3, 2025.

23 (ii) An estimate developed by the
24 Chief Financial Officer or the Assistant
25 Secretary for Management of the Depart-

1 ment of the cost expended by employees of
2 the Department to respond to data calls
3 and contract justification exercises during
4 the period beginning on January 20, 2025
5 and ending on April 30, 2025.

6 (iii) A list of contracts cancelled dur-
7 ing the period described in clause (ii) that
8 were subsequently restored, and any costs
9 paid by the Department to the contractor
10 to mitigate the temporary cancellation, in-
11 cluding legal fees.

12 (iv) For each contract that was can-
13 celled, an estimated cost for the work to be
14 performed by government personnel and an
15 identification of the part of the Depart-
16 ment those personnel will come from con-
17 sidering the ongoing partial hiring freeze
18 and reduction in force efforts of the De-
19 partment, including those outlined in the
20 Departmental memorandum dated March
21 4, 2025, and entitled “Department of Vet-
22 erans Affairs Agency Reduction in Force
23 (RIF) and Reorganization Plan (ARRP)”.

24 (b) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—Not later than
25 one year after the date on which the reports required by

1 subsection (a) are submitted to Congress, the Inspector
2 General of the Department shall—

3 (1) review the reports for accuracy and com-
4 pleteness; and

5 (2) submit to Congress and make publicly avail-
6 able a report that includes—

7 (A) findings regarding whether the process
8 for mass contract cancellations was consistent
9 with public statements of Department officials;

10 (B) recommendations for areas for im-
11 provement for future contract management and
12 oversight; and

13 (C) such other matters as the Inspector
14 General considers appropriate, including actions
15 the Department may take to improve oversight
16 and use of Federal resources in order to im-
17 prove efficiency in contracting by the Depart-
18 ment and prevent and detect waste, fraud, and
19 abuse.

20 **SEC. 704. LIMITATIONS ON MASS CONTRACT CANCELLA-**
21 **TIONS.**

22 (a) SUBMISSION REQUIRED.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—After the conditions de-
24 scribed in section 703(a)(2) are met, if the Secretary
25 of Veterans Affairs decides to carry out a mass con-

1 tract cancellation, the Secretary shall, before car-
2 rying out such cancellation, submit to the Committee
3 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-
4 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Rep-
5 resentatives the following:

6 (A) A list of contracts proposed for can-
7 cellation.

8 (B) For each contract included in the list
9 described in subparagraph (A), a certification
10 described in section 703(a)(2)(B).

11 (C) The number of contracts included in
12 such list that are held by a service-disabled vet-
13 eran-owned small business or a veteran-owned
14 small business.

15 (D) A description of how the work pro-
16 posed to be cancelled would be absorbed by the
17 existing workforce of the Department or wheth-
18 er hiring of additional staff will be needed to
19 perform that work, and a cost benefit analysis
20 comparing the contracting and staffing ap-
21 proaches.

22 (2) LIMITATION.—The Secretary of Veterans
23 Affairs shall not commence a mass contract cancella-
24 tion until the date that is 30 days after the date on
25 which the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the

1 Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of
2 the House of Representatives receive the submission
3 for such cancellation under paragraph (1).

4 (b) REPORT.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 7 business
6 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
7 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Com-
8 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the
9 Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of
10 Representatives a report that includes the following:

11 (A) A list of the contracts cancelled or pro-
12 posed for cancellation developed by the Depart-
13 ment and announced by the Secretary of Vet-
14 erans Affairs on February 25, 2025, and, for
15 each contract included in such list—

16 (i) the justification for the need for
17 the contract, if submitted, as written by
18 career employees of the Department; and

19 (ii) an indication of whether the entity
20 holding the contract is a service-disabled
21 veteran-owned small business or a veteran-
22 owned small business.

23 (B) A list of contracts announced for can-
24 cellation by the Department of Veterans Affairs

1 on March 3, 2025, and, for each contract in-
 2 cluded in such list—

3 (i) the justification for the need for
 4 the contract, if submitted, as written by
 5 career employees of the Department; and

6 (ii) an indication of whether the entity
 7 holding the contract is a service-disabled
 8 veteran-owned small business or a veteran-
 9 owned small business.

10 (2) DATA FIELDS.—Each list described in para-
 11 graph (1) shall contain, at a minimum, the following
 12 fields:

13 (A) Contract/Order #/PIID.

14 (B) Vendor.

15 (C) Category of contract using relevant
 16 North American Industry Classification System
 17 (NAICS) terminology.

18 (D) Contract description.

19 (E) Date of termination or contract action.

20 (F) Contracting Unique Entity Identifier.

21 (G) The headquarters city and State of the
 22 vendor.

1 **SEC. 705. CHARGE CARD PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT**
2 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days before
4 making any change to the charge card program of the De-
5 partment of Veterans Affairs, including any change reduc-
6 ing the total number of charge cards authorized for use,
7 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall notify the Com-
8 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-
9 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representa-
10 tives in writing of the proposed change.

11 (b) ELEMENTS.—Any notification required by sub-
12 section (a) shall include the following:

- 13 (1) The justification for the change concerned.
14 (2) The timeline for the change to occur.
15 (3) A description of how the Secretary of Vet-
16 erans Affairs intends to monitor for any negative ef-
17 fects on health care or benefits delivery.

18 (c) SUNSET.—This section shall terminate on the
19 date on which President Trump is no longer President.

TITLE VIII—REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

SEC. 801. REQUIREMENT FOR VETERANS BENEFITS ADMIN- ISTRATION MONDAY MORNING WORKLOAD REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 53 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 5322. Monday Morning Workload Report

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once each week, the Under Secretary for Benefits shall publish on a publicly available website of the Department, a report providing a snapshot of the workload of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

“(b) CONTENTS.—Each report published pursuant to subsection (a) shall include the following:

“(1) National totals for pending and backlogged compensation, pension, appeals, and education workloads of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

“(2) National, district, and regional office-level data, disaggregated by the following:

“(A) Station of jurisdiction.

“(B) Station of origination.

“(C) State.

1 “(D) National Work Queue, or successor
2 queue, including—

3 “(i) the number of claims pending at
4 stage of the claims life cycle; and

5 “(ii) average time claims are pending
6 at each stage of a life cycle.

7 “(3) Data for groups of claims, disaggregated
8 by national, district, and regional office or State
9 level, including non-rating bundle, entitlement bundle,
10 award adjustments bundle, program review bundle,
11 other bundle, burial claims, accrued claims, appeals,
12 number of claims and appeals with duty to assist errors,
13 and such other groups as the Secretary
14 considers appropriate.

15 “(4) National level data on claim and appeal inventories,
16 disaggregated by end product code.

17 “(5) Regional office level data on claim and appeal inventories,
18 disaggregated by traditional aggregate groups.

19 “(6) National level data on the future volume of
20 work of which the Under Secretary is aware.

21 “(7) Average age of claims that have maintained continuous pursuit.

22 “(8) Factors contributing to the increase or decrease in workload and the claims backlog.

1 “(9) Such additional data as the Under Sec-
2 retary considers appropriate.

3 “(c) PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT.—Each report
4 published pursuant to subsection (a) in a week shall be
5 published on the Monday of that week, except as follows:

6 “(1) In a case in which the Monday of the week
7 of publication is a Federally recognized holiday, the
8 report shall be published on the Tuesday of that
9 week.

10 “(2) In a case in which the Secretary is pub-
11 lishing the report required by subsection (a) more
12 than once in a single week, any publication after the
13 first publication may be made on any day of the
14 week at the discretion of the Under Secretary.”.

15 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
16 at the beginning of chapter 53 of such title is amended
17 by adding after the item relating to section 5321 the fol-
18 lowing new item:

“5322. Monday Morning Workload Report.”.

19 **SEC. 802. IMPROVEMENTS REGARDING PERIODIC PUBLICA-**
20 **TION OF METRICS RELATING TO PROC-**
21 **ESSING OF APPEALS.**

22 Section 5 of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and
23 Modernization Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–55) is
24 amended by adding at the end the following new para-
25 graph:

1 “(4) A summary of the outcome of appeals
 2 under the new appeals system, including appeals re-
 3 viewed by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals,
 4 disaggregated by—

5 “(A) the type of review;

6 “(B) station of origination;

7 “(C) type of appeal; and

8 “(D) diagnostic codes.”.

9 **SEC. 803. PUBLICATION OF WAIT TIMES FOR COMMUNITY**
 10 **CARE FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
 11 **FAIRS.**

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 publish on a publicly accessible website
 15 of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Af-
 16 fairs the wait times for scheduling an appointment for a
 17 veteran to receive care from a non-Department provider
 18 in the community for that medical center and each of the
 19 clinics of the Department in the catchment area of that
 20 medical center.

21 (b) DATA TO BE INCLUDED.—The Secretary shall
 22 include in the publication under subsection (a) wait times
 23 for the following care:

24 (1) Primary care.

25 (2) Specialty care.

1 (3) Inpatient care.

2 (4) Mental health care.

3 (5) Such other types of care as the Secretary
4 considers appropriate.

5 (c) UPDATE.—The Secretary shall update the wait
6 times published under subsection (a) not less frequently
7 than weekly.

8 (d) METRICS USED.—The Secretary shall calculate
9 the wait times published under subsection (a) based on
10 similar metrics as the metrics used to calculate wait times
11 for care at facilities of the Department.

12 **SEC. 804. PERIOD FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**
13 **TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY**
14 **MEMBERS OF CERTAIN CONGRESSIONAL**
15 **COMMITTEES.**

16 (a) REQUIREMENT.—To the maximum extent prac-
17 ticable, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide—

18 (1) an answer to a question submitted for the
19 record to the Department of Veterans Affairs by a
20 member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of
21 the Senate or the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of
22 the House of Representatives, on or before the date
23 that is 45 business days after the date on which the
24 Department receives the question;

1 (2) an answer to a request for information sub-
2 mitted by a member of the staff of the Committee
3 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate or the Committee
4 on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives
5 or a member of either committee, on or before the
6 date that is 15 business days after the date on
7 which the Department receives the request from the
8 member of the staff or the member of the com-
9 mittee, as the case may be; and

10 (3) an answer to a letter sent by a member of
11 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate or
12 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of
13 Representatives, on or before the date that is 15
14 business days after the date on which the Depart-
15 ment receives the letter.

16 (b) DELAYED RESPONSES.—

17 (1) NOTICE REQUIRED.—If the Secretary an-
18 ticipates being unable to provide an answer to a
19 question, request for information, or letter described
20 in subsection (a) that was submitted to the Depart-
21 ment by the date specified in such subsection, the
22 Secretary shall, before such date, submit to the
23 member and the relevant Committee a notice that
24 the Secretary anticipates being unable to provide the
25 answer by such date.

1 (2) CONTENTS.—Notice submitted under para-
2 graph (1) shall include the following:

3 (A) A justification for the inability of the
4 Secretary to meet the deadline set forth in sub-
5 section (a).

6 (B) An estimate of when an answer will be
7 provided by the Secretary to the question, re-
8 quest for information, or letter submitted.

9 (C) A description of the steps the Sec-
10 retary needs to take in order to provide the re-
11 sponse, including steps required to obtain any
12 information required of another Federal agency.

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