

Title I – Extensions of Authority

Subtitle A - Health Care Matters

Sec. 101. Extension of authority for collection of copayments for hospital care and nursing home care: This provision would extend VA's authority to collect copayments from certain veterans through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 102. Extension of requirement to provide nursing home care to certain veterans with service-connected disabilities: This provision would extend VA's nursing home care program through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 103. Removal of authorization of appropriations to provide assistance and support services for caregivers: Under current law, the statute authorizing VA to provide caregiver assistance and support authorizes \$839.8M for FY2019. With the recent expansion of the caregiver program in the VA MISSION Act, it is clear this program has become permanent. This provision would amend Section 1720G by striking the annual authorization level.

Sec. 104. Making permanent authority for recovery from third parties of cost of care and services furnished to veterans with health-plan contracts for non-service connected disability: Under current law, VA's authority to recover reasonable charges from private health insurers for non-service connected care expires on September 30, 2019. This provision would make VA's authority permanent.

Sec. 105. Extension of authority for transfer of real property: Under current law, VA has authority to transfer real property to another department, a state, tribe, or public or private entity for fair market compensation. This provision would extend VA's authority to transfer real property through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 106. Extension of authority for pilot program on assistance for child care for certain veterans receiving health care: Public Law 111-163 created a pilot program to provide child care for veterans receiving health care. The House passed H.R. 95 to make this program permanent but it has not passed the Senate. This provision would authorize appropriations for the pilot program through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 107. Extension of authority to make grants to veteran service organizations for transportation of highly rural veterans: This provision would extend VA's grant program supporting VSOs that provide highly rural veterans transportation to VA facilities through 2020.

Sec. 108. Extension of authority for pilot program on counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service: Public Law 111-163 created a pilot program to counsel recently separating women veterans in retreat settings. The House passed H.R. 91 to make this program permanent but it has not passed the Senate. This provision would authorize appropriations for the pilot program through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 109. Extension of temporary expansion of payments and allowances for beneficiary travel in connection with veterans receiving care from vet centers: Public Law 112-154 authorized VA to pay travel allowances to and from Vet Centers for veterans who live in highly rural areas. This provision would authorize appropriations for the pilot program through September 30, 2019.

Subtitle B – Benefits Matters

Sec. 121. Making permanent authority for temporary expansion of eligibility for Specially Adapted Housing Assistance for certain veterans with disabilities: Under current law, VA is authorized to assist certain veterans adapt their home to accommodate for service-connected disabilities. In 2012, Congress created a pilot program to provide home adaptation for certain post-9-11 veterans in recognition that modern medicine was saving more limbs that do not always meet VA’s “permanent and total” standard. Adaptions under the post-9-11 program are capped at 30 per fiscal year. This provision would make the program permanent.

Sec. 122. Extension of authority for Specially Adapted Housing Assistive Technology Grant Program: This program provides grants to research and create new adaptive housing technologies. The provision would extend the VA’s authority to provide grants through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 123. Making permanent authority to guarantee payment of principal and interest on certificates or other securities: VA has authority to guarantee pooled mortgages of foreclosed properties. This provision would make VA’s authority to guarantee the payment of principal and interest permanent.

Sec. 124. Making permanent authority for calculating new value of real property at time of foreclosure: Net value is determined by taking the fair market value of the home minus the costs the VA would incur if VA acquired the loan and disposed of the property. This provision would make the VA’s ability to calculate net values at time of foreclosure permanent.

Sec. 125. Making permanent authority relating to vendee loans: Under current law, VA is authorized to provide direct loans to buyers of VA-owned residences that the VA has pooled together through September 30, 2018. This provision would make VA’s authority permanent.

Sec. 126. Making permanent authority to provide rehabilitation and vocational benefits to members of the Armed Forces with severe injuries or illnesses: Current law authorizes service members with severe injury or illness to access VA vocational and rehabilitation services prior to discharge. VA’s authority to provide such services expires on September 30, 2018. This provision would make the VA’s authority permanent.

Sec. 127. Extension of authority to enter into agreement with the National Academy of Sciences regarding associations between diseases and exposure to Dioxin and other chemical compounds in herbicides: This provision would extend the requirement that the VA contract with the National Academies of Science for biennial review of literature on health effects of Agent Orange exposure through September 30, 2019.

Subtitle C - Homeless Veterans Matters

Sec. 141. Extension of authority for Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs (HVRP):

This provision would extend the U.S. Department of Labor's employment and training grant program for homeless veteran service providers through 2020.

Sec. 142. Extension of Authority for Homeless Women Veterans and Homeless Veterans with Children Reintegration Program:

This provision would extend the U.S. Department of Labor's authority to provide grants to organizations that provide employment and training programs that serve homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children through 2020.

Sec. 143. Extension of authority for referral and counseling services for veterans at risk of homelessness transitioning from certain institutions:

This provision would extend the U.S. Department of Labor's authority to provide employment services to incarcerated veterans or veterans who are in a long-term care institution for mental illness who are at risk of becoming homeless when they leave these institutions through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 144. Extension of authority for treatment and rehabilitation services for seriously mentally ill and homeless veterans:

This provision would extend VA's authority to offer care to veterans with mental illness and/or who are homeless through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 145. Extension of authority for financial assistance for supportive services for very low-income veteran families in permanent housing:

The Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) program provides grants to organizations that provide supportive services to eligible veteran families that promote housing stability. This provision would increase the FY18 authorization to \$340M to match the FY18 appropriated level and would increase SSVF authorization to \$380M for FY19 which reflects the FY19 appropriated level. *See* H.Rpt. 115-929.

Sec. 146. Extension of authority for grant program for homeless veterans with special needs:

This provision would extend VA's authority to provide grants in support of homeless veterans with special needs through 2020.

Sec. 147. Extension of authority for the Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans:

This provision would extend the VA Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans through September 30, 2022.

Subtitle D - Other Matters

Sec. 161 Extension of authority for transportation of individuals to and from Department of Veterans Affairs facilities:

VA has authority to transport individuals to or from a VA facility in connection with a vocational rehabilitation or counseling under Chapters 34 or 35, or examination or treatment. This provision would extend the authority through September 30, 2020.

Sec. 162. Extension of authority for operation of the Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office in Manila, the Republic of the Philippines: VA operates a regional office in Manila that provides services to World War II veterans who reside in the Philippines. This provision would extend the authority to operate that office through September 30, 2019.

Sec. 163. Extension of authority for monthly assistance allowances under the Office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events: VA pays per diem to disabled veterans residing in US Olympic Committee facilities while training for the Paralympics. This provision would extend the authority through 2020.

Sec. 164. Extension of requirement to provide reports to Congress regarding equitable relief in the case of administrative error: Current law requires VA to submit an annual report to Congress regarding cases where the VA disbursed money to compensate beneficiaries adversely impacted by administrative error. This provision would extend the reporting requirement through December 31, 2020.

Sec. 165. Extension of authorization of appropriations for adaptive sports programs for disabled veterans and members of the Armed Forces: This provision would extend the \$8M authorization of appropriation for grants to fund the VA's adaptive sports program through 2020.

Sec. 166. Extension of authority for Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans: The Advisory Committee advises the Secretary on the VA's administration of healthcare, benefits, and services to minority veterans. This provision would extend the advisory committee through September 30, 2022.

Title II – Improvement of Health Care from Department of Veterans Affairs

Sec. 201. Treatment of modifications of contracts under Veterans Community Care program. This provision would clarify that the requirement for VA to enter into consolidated, competitively bid contracts for purposes of establishing community care networks does not restrict VA's authority to modify such contracts after they are awarded.

Sec. 202. Modification of provision requiring recognition and acceptance, on an interim basis, of credentials and qualifications of health care providers under Community Care Program. This provision would adjust the period in which third-party administrators (TPA) operating under the MISSION ACT would have to recognize the credentials of network providers under a previous TPA.

Sec. 203. Expansion of coverage of Veterans Care Agreements. This provision would clarify that VA is authorized to furnish care through provider agreements to individuals who are not veterans (such as employees and veteran family members or survivors) but who are authorized to be cared for by VA.

Sec. 204. Modification of authority for deduction of overpayments for health care. As currently written, the MISSION Act appears to limit VA's ability to correct overpayments to deductions only. This provision would clarify that VA is authorized to utilize a range of authorized means to correct or recover overpayments.

Sec. 205. Modification of eligibility of former members of the Armed Forces for mental and behavioral health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs. This provision would change the eligibility for former members of the Armed Forces to receive mental and behavioral health care from VA from those who are not otherwise eligible to enroll in the VA healthcare system to those who are not enrolled in the VA healthcare system.

Sec. 206. Access of health care providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs to drug monitoring programs that do not participate in the national network. This provision would clarify that, if providing care in a State that does not participate in a national PDMP, the provider shall query, and is protected when querying, a State-based or regional PDMP.

Sec. 207. Elimination of report on activities and proposals involving contracting for performance by contractor personnel of work previously performed by Department employees. This provision would eliminate the requirement for VA to report on activities and proposals involving contracting for performance by contractor personnel of work previously performed by VA employees.

Sec. 208. Additional report on increased availability of opioid receptor antagonists. This provision would amend the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (CARA) to require a report one year after enactment on the availability of opioid receptor antagonists.

Sec. 209. Expansion of health care assessment to include all territories of the United States and the assessment of extended care services. This provision would amend the requirement for VA to submit a report to Congress on the care provided to veterans in Pacific territories to include Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in addition to the American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands and extend the timeline for VA to submit such report from 180 days after enactment to 270 days after enactment.

Sec. 210. Authorization of major medical facility project at Department of Veterans Affairs West Los Angeles Medical Center. Current law requires congressional approval for major medical facility projects that cost more than \$20M. This provision would authorize \$35M for the construction of a new food services facility on the West LA campus. Congress has already appropriated funds for this project.

Sec. 211. Technical amendments to VA MISSION Act of 2018 and amendments made by that Act. This provision would make several non-substantive technical changes to the MISSION Act.

Title III – Other Matters

Sec. 301. Approval of courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education for purposes of training and rehabilitation for veterans with service-connected disabilities conditional on in-state tuition rate for veterans: Current law requires public schools offer in-state tuition to newly separated student veterans in order to be eligible to be approved for GI Bill benefits. This section would extend this requirement to students at public schools using VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits to pay for their education. This is an FY2019 budget request that generates mandatory savings that will offset other portions of this package.

Sec. 302. Corrective action for certain Department of Veterans Affairs employees for conflicts of interest with educational institutions operated for profit: Under current law, VA is authorized to take corrective and disciplinary action against an employee who has a conflict of interest with a for-profit school related to their work regulating the schools or adjudicating VA educational benefits. This provision would clarify the rules and procedures and update the provision to include newer educational programs.

Sec. 303. Modification of compliance requirements for particular leases relating to Department of Veterans Affairs West Los Angeles Campus. The West LA Leasing Act of 2016 prohibits VA from entering into or renewing any lease or sharing agreement if the Inspector General (IG) finds that VA is not in compliance with all federal laws relating to leases and land use. VA is concerned that an adverse IG report would prevent it from moving forward with any project. This provision clarifies that no new leases or land-sharing agreements may be entered into if not in compliance with applicable laws.