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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To provide for certain limitations to the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs rate of payment or reimbursement provided for transportation of veterans and other eligible individuals on special modes of transportation, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BOST introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on _____

A BILL

To provide for certain limitations to the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs rate of payment or reimbursement provided for transportation of veterans and other eligible individuals on special modes of transportation, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “VA Emergency Trans-
3 portation Access Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. AUTHORITY FOR CHANGES TO DEPARTMENT OF**
5 **VETERANS AFFAIRS RATE OF PAYMENT OR**
6 **REIMBURSEMENT PROVIDED FOR TRANS-**
7 **PORTATION OF VETERANS AND OTHER ELIGI-**
8 **BLE INDIVIDUALS ON SPECIAL MODES OF**
9 **TRANSPORTATION.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
11 may not change the rate of payment or reimbursement
12 provided for the transportation of a veteran or other eligi-
13 ble individual on a special mode of transportation, as in
14 effect on January 1, 2023, unless—

15 (1) such change would increase the rate of such
16 payment or reimbursement; or

17 (2) before the effective date of such change, the
18 Secretary—

19 (A) conducts a thorough review and anal-
20 ysis of—

21 (i) the economic effect of the change
22 on the Department of Veterans Affairs;

23 (ii) the economic effect of the change
24 on the industry associated with the special
25 mode of transportation that would be af-
26 fected by the change; and

1 (iii) the effect of the change on access
2 to care for veterans;

3 (B) develops a formal process to ensure
4 that any change made to such rate does not re-
5 duce the access to care for veterans; and

6 (C) ensures that the new rate reflects, at
7 a minimum, the actual cost of such transpor-
8 tation.

9 (b) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary
10 shall carry out any review under subsection (a)(2)(A) and
11 develop any process under subsection (a)(2)(B) in con-
12 sultation with a committee made up of each of the fol-
13 lowing, who shall be appointed by the Secretary:

14 (1) Relevant industry experts.

15 (2) Representatives of the Centers for Medicare
16 and Medicaid Services.

17 (3) Department employees with subject matter
18 expertise in transportation, access to care, inte-
19 grated veteran care, rural veterans, Native American
20 veterans, and other matters determine appropriate
21 by the Secretary.

22 (4) Representatives of veteran service organiza-
23 tions.

24 (c) TEMPLATE AND PROCESS FOR AFFECTED CON-
25 TRACTS.—Not later than two years before the effective

1 date of any change made to the rate of payment or reim-
2 bursement for special modes of transportation pursuant
3 to subsection (a) that affects the rate payable under any
4 contract of the Department, the Secretary shall—

5 (1) establish a template and a standardized
6 process for entering into and making changes to
7 rates in effect under such contract;

8 (2) issue guidance about the use of such tem-
9 plate and process within the Department and across
10 the industry associated with special modes of trans-
11 portation; and

12 (3) submit to Congress a report that includes a
13 description of the template and process.

14 (d) SPECIAL MODE OF TRANSPORTATION.—In this
15 section, the term “special mode of transportation”—

16 (1) means an ambulance, ambulette, air ambu-
17 lance, wheelchair van, or other mode of transpor-
18 tation specially designed to transport disabled per-
19 sons; and

20 (2) does not include—

21 (A) a mode of transportation not specifi-
22 cally designed to transport disabled persons,
23 such as a bus, subway, taxi, train, or airplane;
24 or

1 (B) a modified, privately-owned vehicle,
2 with special adaptive equipment or that is capa-
3 ble of transporting disabled persons.