117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7153

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a plan to modernize the information technology systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 18, 2022

Mr. BOST introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a plan to modernize the information technology systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration, and for other purposes.

1   *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*

2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4   This Act may be cited as the "Department of Vet-

5 erans Affairs Principles of Benefits Automation Act".

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7   It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Vet-

8 erans Affairs should increase automation in the processing

1 of claims for benefits under the laws administered by the

2 Secretary in accordance with the following principles:

3   (1) The purpose of automation should be to in-

4   crease the speed and accuracy of claims processing

5   decisions.

6   (2) Automation should be conducted in a man-

7   ner that enhances the productivity of employees of

8   the Department of Veterans Affairs.

9   (3) Automation should be carried out in a man-

10   ner that achieves greater consistency in the proc-

11   essing and rating of claims by relying on patterns of

12   similar evidence in claim files.

13   (4) To the greatest extent possible, automation

14   should be carried out by drawing from information

15   in the possession of the Department, other Govern-

16   ment agencies, and applicants for benefits.

17   (5) Automation of any claims analysis or deter-

18   mination process should not be end-to-end or lack

19   intermediation.

20   (6) Employees of the Department should con-

21   tinue to make decisions with respect to the approval

22   of claims and the granting of benefits.

23   (7) Automation should not be carried out in a

24   manner that reduces or infringes upon—

1   (A) the due process rights of applicants for

2   benefits under the laws administered by the

3   Secretary; or

4   (B) the duties of the Secretary to assist

5   and notify claimants.

6 **SEC. 3. PLAN FOR MODERNIZATION OF VETERANS BENE-**

7   **FITS ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION TECH-**

8   **NOLOGY SYSTEMS.**

9   (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the

10 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-

11 erans Affairs shall submit to appropriate congressional

12 committees a plan for the modernization of the informa-

13 tion technology systems of the Veterans Benefits Adminis-

14 tration. The plan shall cover the first fiscal year that be-

15 gins after the date of the enactment of this Act and the

16 subsequent four fiscal years and shall include each of the

17 following:

18   (1) An identification of any information system

19   to be modernized or retired, if applicable, during the

20   period covered by the plan.

21   (2) A description of how the Secretary intends

22   to incorporate the principles referred to in section 2

23   into the modernization of such information systems.

24   (3) An identification of targets, for each fiscal

25   year, by which the Secretary intends to complete the

1 modernization of each information system or major

2 component or functionality of such system identified

3 under paragraph (1).

4   (4) Cost estimates for the modernization of

5 each information system identified under paragraph

6 (1) for each fiscal year covered by the plan and in

7 total.

8   (b) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—

9 In this section, the term "appropriate congressional com-

10 mittees" means—

11   (1) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the

12 Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans'

13 Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on

14 Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

15   (2) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the

16 Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans'

17 Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on

18 Appropriations of the Senate.

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