

VR&E-eligible veterans. The amount of assistance would be capped at the same level of funding that is currently provided to SAH-eligible veterans.

This is a solution that puts the right VA employee in charge of assisting a disabled veteran to adapt their home. This will also reduce the workload on VR&E counselors, allowing them to spend more time helping veterans with employment services.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is the type of legislation that I am proud members of our committee continue to bring forward. While it is not as flashy as the GI Bill package we passed earlier this year or Care in the Community legislation we are working on later this week, this bill gets to the core of what this Congress should be about: making it easier for disabled veterans to receive the benefits they have earned.

I commend Mr. ARRINGTON and Mr. O'ROURKE for looking at a challenge and working with the administration and veterans groups to craft this important bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3562.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3562, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3562.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

VA MANAGEMENT ALIGNMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 1066) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report regarding the organizational structure of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1066

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "VA Management Alignment Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report (including recommendations for legislation the Secretary considers appropriate) regarding the roles, responsibility, and accountability of elements and individuals of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) MATTERS INCLUDED.—In creating the report under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) utilize the results of—

(A) the Independent Assessment of the Health Care Delivery Systems and Management Process of the Department of Veterans Affairs established by section 201 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146);

(B) any study or report by the Commission on Care established by section 202 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146); and

(C) other studies or reports, including a report titled "Task Force on Improving Effectiveness of VHA Governance: Report to the VHA Under Secretary for Health", dated February 28, 2015; and

(2) specify clearly delineated roles and responsibilities to optimize the organizational effectiveness and accountability of each—

(A) Administration, staff office, or staff organization;

(B) subordinate organization of each Administration, staff office, or staff organization; and

(C) key leader of the Department in relation to any Administration, staff office, or staff organization, Veteran Integrated Service Network, or medical facility.

(c) DEFINITION.—In this Act, the term "key leader of the Department" includes—

(1) the Secretary;

(2) the Deputy Secretary;

(3) each Under Secretary;

(4) each Assistant Secretary;

(5) each Deputy Assistant Secretary;

(6) the Chief Financial Officer;

(7) the Chief Information Officer;

(8) the General Counsel;

(9) the Inspector General;

(10) the Director of Construction and Facilities Management;

(11) the Chief of Staff;

(12) the Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals;

(13) the Vice Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals;

(14) the Director of each Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

(15) the Director of each medical facility.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman

from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1066.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in just a few days, Americans will once again take time to remember and honor the sacrifices of the very few of our fellow Americans who have sworn a solemn oath to defend this great Nation.

As an Army Medical Corps veteran myself, I am proud that, with the support of leadership and Members of both sides, we will pass a series of bills today and tomorrow that improve the delivery of healthcare and enhance the benefits available to America's veterans.

On our first bill, H.R. 1066, the VA Management Alignment Act, issues with the organization and management of the Veterans Health Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs, in general, are nothing new. In 2015, the independent assessment found VA's organizational structure to be unnecessarily complex, rampant with mistrust and risk aversion, confused about priorities and strategic direction, and hampered by a workforce that was losing motivation and a leadership team that was overwhelmed by crisis management. In 2016, the Commission on Care found VA to have one of the lowest organizational health scores in all of the Federal Government and lacking effective national policies and a rational organizational structure.

Similar findings have been made by veterans, veterans service organizations, VA employees, the Government Accountability Office, the VA inspector general, and others in countless reports and testimony and stories over the last several years. They have also been common themes in the recent oversight hearings and site visits.

In order to improve the care, benefits, and services that VA provides to our Nation's veterans and increase accountability for poor-performing employees, VA must first clarify and rationalize the Department's organizational structure and the roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority for supervisors, managers, and employees.

H.R. 1066 would jump-start that effort by requiring the VA to use the work the independent assessment, the Commission on Care, and others have already done to create a report on how the Department is to be structured—to include clearly defined roles and responsibilities of key leaders across all

levels—and submit it to Congress for review.

I am grateful to Representative KILMER for sponsoring this legislation. I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1066, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1066, the VA Management Alignment Act of 2017, as introduced by my colleague from Washington, the most excellent Representative, DEREK KILMER. His advocacy and hard work on behalf of veterans is commendable.

This bipartisan measure will require the VA Secretary to report to Congress on the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of employees within VA.

This oversight is sorely needed. Last Congress, in testimony before the Veterans' Affairs Committee, the bipartisan co-chairs of the Commission on Care both highlighted how little attention is paid to the VA's human resources to ensure the Department is functioning efficiently. Representative KILMER's legislation will help lead to a VA that more effectively meets veterans' needs.

I have enjoyed working with Representative KILMER to advance this legislation through committee and truly appreciate his work on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER).

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Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have a responsibility to ensure that military veterans have access to the benefits and services that they have earned. These men and women have had our backs, and we need to have theirs.

We can't stand by as they endure challenges seeing doctors or getting treatment because of management failures and unnecessary bureaucratic barriers. Taxpayers have spent millions of dollars, tens of millions of dollars, to identify how the VA is broken and to identify opportunities to fix it.

The Government Accountability Office has raised specific suggestions related to management issues, but, unfortunately, the VA has implemented few, if any, of these solutions, and that cannot stand.

How can our Nation's veterans expect to get what they have earned if the leaders and components of the VA are not expected to cooperate with one another? How can they expect to see medical providers if the VA cannot bring in or maintain talented medical professionals?

The VA Management Alignment Act is a bipartisan effort to address these

and other management problems that have real consequences on the delivery of care to our friends, our neighbors, and to our loved ones.

Representative NEWHOUSE and I drafted this bill with input from the Government Accountability Office to bring an end to this disjointed and inefficient system. The bill would require the Secretary to outline the roles, responsibilities, and accountability measures of senior leaders and branches of the VA and to provide Congress with a series of legislative options to assist the Secretary in realizing positive change.

The goal of this bill is to help Congress and the administration work together to fix these problems. The goal of this bill is to make sure veterans get the care and the benefits that they have earned.

I would like to thank Chairman ROE and Ranking Member WALZ for their leadership and support in moving this bill forward. I would like to thank my colleague from California (Mr. TAKANO) for his help as well.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to help us align the VA into a system that can deliver on our Nation's responsibilities to our military veterans.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1066, the VA Management Alignment Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1066.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

VETERANS CARE FINANCIAL PROTECTION ACT OF 2017

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3122) to protect individuals who are eligible for increased pension under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the basis of need of regular aid and attendance from dishonest, predatory, or otherwise unlawful practices, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3122

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Care Financial Protection Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NOTICE OF DISHONEST, PREDATORY, OR OTHERWISE UNLAWFUL PRACTICES TARGETING INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR INCREASED PENSION ON BASIS OF NEED FOR REGULAR AID AND ATTENDANCE.

(a) NOTICE REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include on the internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs a warning to veterans relating to dishonest, predatory, or otherwise unlawful practices targeting individuals who are eligible for increased pension under chapter 15 of title 38, United States Code, on the basis of need for regular aid and attendance.

(b) GAO STUDY.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete a study on financial exploitation of veterans. Such study shall include—

(A) an analysis of the types of standards used by Federal and State agencies intended to protect vulnerable populations from financial exploitation; and

(B) an analysis of the types of financial exploitation facing veterans who are eligible for increased pension under chapter 15 of title 38, United States Code, on the basis of need for regular aid and attendance and any gaps in efforts to address these issues.

(2) REPORTS.—

(A) PRELIMINARY REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a preliminary report on the study required under paragraph (1).

(B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a final report on such study.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3122, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3122, as amended, the Veterans Care Financial Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, VA offers an additional pension benefit called Aid and Attendance, or A&A, to some disabled or elderly veterans who need help with activities of daily living such as dressing or bathing.

It may come as a shock to many Americans, but there are people out there who actually take advantage of elderly and disabled veterans by charging them money to help them apply for A&A benefits when the application process is free. If veterans need help