

113<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# S. 1589

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs has an up-to-date policy on reporting of cases of infectious diseases, to require an independent assessment of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of the Department, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 28, 2013

Mr. BURR introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs has an up-to-date policy on reporting of cases of infectious diseases, to require an independent assessment of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of the Department, 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 “Improving Quality of  
3 Care Within the Department of Veterans Affairs Act of  
4 2013”.

5 **SEC. 2. REQUIREMENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
6 **AFFAIRS POLICY ON REPORTING CASES OF**  
7 **INFECTIOUS DISEASES AT FACILITIES OF**  
8 **THE DEPARTMENT.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73 of  
10 title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the  
11 end the following new section:

12 **“§ 7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases**

13 “(a) REPORTING.—The Secretary shall ensure that  
14 the Department has in effect an up-to-date policy on re-  
15 porting a notifiable infectious disease diagnosed at a facil-  
16 ity under the jurisdiction of the Secretary in accordance  
17 with the provisions of State and local law in effect where  
18 such facility is located.

19 “(b) NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—For pur-  
20 poses of this section, a notifiable infectious disease is any  
21 infectious disease that is—

22 “(1) on the list of nationally notifiable diseases  
23 published by the Council of State and Territorial  
24 Epidemiologists and the Centers for Disease Control  
25 and Prevention; or

1           “(2) covered by a provision of law of a State  
2           that requires the reporting of infectious diseases.

3           “(c) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The Secretary  
4 shall develop performance measures to assess whether and  
5 to what degree the directors of Veterans Integrated Serv-  
6 ice Networks and Department medical centers are com-  
7 plying with the policy required by subsection (a).”.

8           (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
9 at the beginning of chapter 73 of such title is amended  
10 by inserting after the item relating to section 7330A the  
11 following new item:

“7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases.”.

12 **SEC. 3. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE VETERANS IN-**  
13 **TEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS AND MED-**  
14 **ICAL CENTERS OF DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
15 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

16           (a) CONTRACT.—

17           (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans  
18 Affairs shall seek to enter into a contract with an  
19 independent third-party to perform the services cov-  
20 ered by this section.

21           (2) TIMING.—The Secretary shall seek to enter  
22 into the contract described in paragraph (1) not  
23 later than 270 days after the date of the enactment  
24 of this Act.

25           (b) INDEPENDENT STUDY.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—Under a contract between  
2 the Secretary and an independent third-party under  
3 this section, the third party shall carry out a  
4 study—

5           (A) to assess the organizational structures  
6 of medical centers of the Department of Vet-  
7 erans Affairs; and

8           (B) to improve succession planning among  
9 key leadership roles at Veterans Integrated  
10 Service Networks and medical centers of the  
11 Department.

12           (2) MATTERS STUDIED AND PROPOSED.—In  
13 carrying out the study, the third party shall—

14           (A) assess whether organizational structure  
15 of the medical centers of the Department is ef-  
16 fective for the furnishing of medical services,  
17 addressing issues that arise regarding the fur-  
18 nishing of medical services, and addressing  
19 standard business operations;

20           (B) propose one organizational chart for  
21 Department medical centers with a common set  
22 of base position descriptions;

23           (C) propose a base set of medical positions  
24 that should be filled to ensure that the health

1 care provided to veterans by the Department is  
2 of good quality; and

3 (D) identify which key leadership positions  
4 at Veterans Integrated Service Networks and  
5 Department medical centers should have succes-  
6 sion plans and propose how to implement such  
7 plans.

8 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date  
9 on which the third party completes the study under this  
10 section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on  
11 Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Vet-  
12 erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report  
13 on the results of such study.

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