

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1862

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct outreach to veterans regarding the effect of delayed payments of claims for emergency medical care furnished by non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical providers by the Chief Business Office and to direct the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report regarding such delayed payments.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 16, 2015

Mr. BOUSTANY (for himself and Mr. ABRAHAM) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct outreach to veterans regarding the effect of delayed payments of claims for emergency medical care furnished by non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical providers by the Chief Business Office and to direct the Secretary to submit to Congress an annual report regarding such delayed payments.

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 “Veterans’ Credit Pro-
5 tection Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. OUTREACH TO VETERANS REGARDING EFFECT OF**
2 **CERTAIN DELAYED PAYMENTS BY DEPART-**
3 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CHIEF BUSI-**
4 **NESS OFFICE.**

5 (a) OUTREACH.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 shall conduct outreach, including through national and
7 local veterans service organizations, to inform veterans of
8 how to resolve credit issues caused by delayed payment
9 of a claim for emergency hospital care, medical services,
10 or other emergency health care furnished through a non-
11 Department of Veterans Affairs provider. The Secretary
12 shall establish a toll-free telephone number for veterans
13 to report such credit issues to the Chief Business Office
14 of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

15 (b) ANNUAL REPORT.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
17 Affairs shall annually submit to Congress a report
18 on the effectiveness of the Chief Business Office in
19 providing timely payment of proper invoices for
20 emergency hospital care, medical services, or other
21 emergency health care furnished through non-De-
22 partment of Veterans Affairs providers by the re-
23 quired payment date during both the five-year period
24 preceding the date of the report and the one-year pe-
25 riod preceding such date. For any part of the period
26 covered by a report under this subsection that oc-

1 curred before October 1, 2014, the report shall
2 evaluate the provision of such payments by the Vet-
3 erans Integrated Service Networks.

4 (2) MATTERS INCLUDED.—The reports under
5 paragraph (1) shall include, for each period covered
6 by the report, the following:

7 (A) The number of veterans who contacted
8 the Secretary regarding a delayed payment that
9 negatively affected, or will potentially negatively
10 affect, the credit of the veteran.

11 (B) The total amount of interest penalties
12 paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under
13 section 3902 of title 31, United States Code, by
14 reason of a delayed payment.

15 (C) The number of proper invoices sub-
16 mitted, listed in a table for each quarter and
17 fiscal year of each such period that includes—

18 (i) the total amount owed by the Sec-
19 retary under the proper invoices;

20 (ii) the payment status of each proper
21 invoice, as of the date of the report; and

22 (iii) the period that elapsed until each
23 proper invoice was paid, including an ex-
24 planation of any delayed payment.

1 (D) Any comments regarding delayed pay-
2 ments made by medical providers.

3 (E) A description of the best practices that
4 the Chief Business Office can carry out to pro-
5 vide timely payment of a proper invoice, includ-
6 ing a plan to improve such timely payments.

7 (c) QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PENDING CLAIMS.—
8 The Chief Business Office of the Department of Veterans
9 Affairs shall submit to Congress quarterly reports on the
10 number of pending claims for reimbursement for emer-
11 gency hospital care, medical services, and other emergency
12 health care furnished through non-Department of Vet-
13 erans Affairs providers. Each such report shall include
14 each of the following:

15 (1) The total number of such pending claims
16 for each hospital system of the Department, as of
17 the last day of the quarter covered by the report.

18 (2) The total number of veterans who sub-
19 mitted such a pending claim in each State, as of
20 such day.

21 (3) The aggregate amount of all such pending
22 claims in each State, as of such day.

23 (4) As of such day—

24 (A) the number of such pending claims
25 that have been pending for 30 days or longer;

1 (B) the number of such pending claims
2 that have been pending for 90 days or longer;
3 and

4 (C) the number of such pending claims
5 that have been pending for 365 days or longer.

6 (5) For each hospital system, for the quarter
7 covered by the report—

8 (A) the number of claims for reimburse-
9 ment for emergency hospital care, medical serv-
10 ices, and other emergency health care furnished
11 through non-Department of Veterans Affairs
12 providers approved during such quarter;

13 (B) the number of such claims denied dur-
14 ing such quarter; and

15 (C) the number of such claims denied list-
16 ed by each denial reason group.

17 (d) COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of
19 the United States shall conduct a study that evalu-
20 ates the effectiveness of the Chief Business Office in
21 providing timely payment of a proper invoice for
22 emergency hospital care, medical services, or other
23 emergency health care furnished through non-De-
24 partment of Veterans Affairs providers by the re-
25 quired payment date.

1 (2) SUBMITTAL.—The Comptroller General
2 shall submit to Congress a report on the study con-
3 ducted under paragraph (1), including the total
4 amount of interest penalties paid by the Secretary of
5 Veterans Affairs under section 3902 of title 31,
6 United States Code, by reason of a delayed payment.

7 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) The term “delayed payment” means a prop-
9 er invoice that is not paid by the Secretary of Vet-
10 erans Affairs until after the required payment date.

11 (2) The term “proper invoice” has the meaning
12 given that term in section 3901(a) of title 31,
13 United States Code.

14 (3) The term “required payment date” means
15 the date that payment is due for a contract pursu-
16 ant to section 3903(a) of title 31, United States
17 Code.

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