

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2344

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the vocational rehabilitation programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 14, 2015

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

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the vocational rehabilitation programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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 Vocational
5 Rehabilitation and Employment Improvement Act of
6 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION AND**
2 **TRAINING FOR PURPOSES OF THE VOCA-**
3 **TIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM OF THE**
4 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3104(b) of title 38,
6 United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the
7 following new sentence: “To the maximum extent prac-
8 ticable, a course of education or training may be pursued
9 by a veteran as part of a rehabilitation program under
10 this chapter only if the course is approved for purposes
11 of chapter 30 or 33 of this title. The Secretary may waive
12 the requirement under the preceding sentence to the ex-
13 tent the Secretary determines appropriate.”.

14 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
15 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a course of edu-
16 cation or training pursued by a veteran who first begins
17 a program of rehabilitation under chapter 31 of title 38,
18 United States Code, on or after the date that is one year
19 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

20 **SEC. 3. ELIGIBILITY OF CERTAIN VETERANS ENROLLED IN**
21 **VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS**
22 **FOR SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING PRO-**
23 **VIDED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AF-**
24 **FAIRS.**

25 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2101(a)(2)(A) of title 38,
26 United States Code, is amended—

1 (1) in clause (i), by striking “or” at the end;

2 (2) in clause (ii), by striking the period and in-
3 sserting “; or”; and

4 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
5 paragraph:

6 “(iii) has a disability for which the veteran
7 is eligible for a rehabilitation program under
8 chapter 31 of this title and is referred for as-
9 sistance under this section pursuant to section
10 2107 of this title.”.

11 (b) AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—Section 2102(d) of
12 such title is amended—

13 (1) in paragraph (1)—

14 (A) by striking “The aggregate” and in-
15 sserting “(A) Except as provided in subpara-
16 graph (B), the aggregate”; and

17 (B) by inserting at the end the following
18 new subparagraph:

19 “(B) The Secretary may waive the limitation in sub-
20 paragraph (A) in the case of a veteran described in section
21 2101(a)(2)(A)(iii).”; and

22 (2) by adding at the end the following new
23 paragraph:

24 “(4) The Secretary shall submit to the Committees
25 on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Rep-

1 representatives a biennial report on the use of the waiver au-
2 thority under paragraph (1)(B).”.

3 (c) BAR TO DUAL ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME ADAPTA-
4 TION SERVICES.—Section 3102 of such title is amended
5 by adding at the end the following new subsection:

6 “(c) BAR TO DUAL ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME ADAPTA-
7 TION SERVICES.—A person who receives adaptive housing
8 assistance by reason of section 2101(a)(2)(A)(iii) of this
9 title may not also receive home adaptation services under
10 this chapter.”.

11 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
12 this section shall take effect on the date that is 180 days
13 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

14 **SEC. 4. AUTHORITY TO PRIORITIZE VOCATIONAL REHA-**
15 **BILITATION SERVICES BASED ON NEED.**

16 Section 3104 of title 38, United States Code, as
17 amended by section 3, is further amended by adding at
18 the end the following new subsection:

19 “(c)(1) The Secretary shall have the authority to ad-
20 minister this chapter by prioritizing the provision of serv-
21 ices under this chapter based on need, as determined by
22 the Secretary. In evaluating need for purposes of this sub-
23 section, the Secretary shall consider disability ratings, the
24 severity of employment handicaps, qualification for a pro-

1 gram of independent living, income, and any other factor
2 the Secretary determines appropriate.

3 “(2) Not later than 90 days before making any
4 changes to the prioritization of the provision of services
5 under this chapter as authorized under paragraph (1), the
6 Secretary shall submit to Congress a plan describing such
7 changes.”.

8 **SEC. 5. REDUCTION IN REDUNDANCY AND INEFFICIENCIES**
9 **IN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CLAIMS**
10 **PROCESSING.**

11 (a) VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CLAIMS.—The
12 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall reduce redundancy and
13 inefficiencies in the use of information technology to proc-
14 ess claims for rehabilitation programs under chapter 31
15 of title 38, United States Code, by—

16 (1) ensuring that all payments for and on be-
17 half of veterans participating in a rehabilitation pro-
18 gram under such chapter are only processed and
19 paid out of one corporate information technology
20 system, in order to eliminate the redundancy of mul-
21 tiple information technology payment systems; and

22 (2) enhancing the information technology sys-
23 tem supporting veterans participating in such a pro-
24 gram to support more accurate accounting of serv-
25 ices and outcomes for such veterans.

1 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans
3 Affairs for fiscal year 2016 \$10,000,000 to carry out this
4 section.

5 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
6 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans
7 Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the changes
8 made pursuant to subsection (a).

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