

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 698

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report biennially on actions taken to address areas of concern regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs in the High Risk List of the Government Accountability Office, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 22, 2019

Mr. BANKS 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 report biennially on actions taken to address areas of concern regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs in the High Risk List of the Government Accountability Office, 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 Oversight Enhancement Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. BIENNIAL REPORT BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS**  
2 **AFFAIRS ON ACTIONS TAKEN TO ADDRESS**  
3 **AREAS OF CONCERN IN THE HIGH RISK LIST**  
4 **OF THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OF-**  
5 **FICE.**

6 (a) BIENNIAL REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than  
7 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and  
8 in each session of Congress thereafter in which the High  
9 Risk List of the Government Accountability Office pub-  
10 lished in that session includes areas of concern relating  
11 to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of  
12 Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate commit-  
13 tees of Congress and the Comptroller General of the  
14 United States a report on the actions taken by the Sec-  
15 retary and the progress made by the Secretary in imple-  
16 menting the High Risk Action Plan of the Department  
17 of Veterans Affairs to address such areas of concern iden-  
18 tified by the Comptroller General in the most recently pub-  
19 lished High Risk List.

20 (b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under sub-  
21 section (a) shall include, for the period covered by the re-  
22 port, the following:

23 (1) The corrective measures and specific steps  
24 necessary for addressing root causes identified in the  
25 High Risk Action Plan for removal from the high-  
26 risk designation, including the progress of the Sec-

1       retary in implementing those measures and steps.

2       The specific measures and steps shall—

3               (A) address each root cause;

4               (B) identify resources to implement correc-  
5               tive actions, including funding, stakeholders,  
6               technology, and the senior officials responsible  
7               for implementing the corrective actions and re-  
8               porting results;

9               (C) identify metrics that can be used to as-  
10              sess progress and assign responsibility for  
11              tracking progress, including the mechanism  
12              that will be used to keep senior leadership in-  
13              formed about progress made or challenges en-  
14              countered;

15              (D) list key outcomes and goals that dem-  
16              onstrate progress in addressing the concerns;  
17              and

18              (E) establish timeframes with overall and  
19              interim milestones.

20              (2) The progress of the Secretary in addressing  
21              the five criteria for removal from the High Risk List  
22              for each of the areas of concern identified by the  
23              Comptroller General.

1           (3) An explanation and course of action for  
2           each failure to fully adopt the criteria of the Comp-  
3           troller General for removal from the High Risk list.

4 **SEC. 3. ANNUAL REPORT BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AF-**  
5 **FAIRS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF CERTAIN**  
6 **RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMPTROLLER GEN-**  
7 **ERAL OF THE UNITED STATES PERTAINING**  
8 **TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

9           (a) ANNUAL REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than  
10 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and  
11 not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Sec-  
12 retary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate  
13 committees of Congress and to the Comptroller General  
14 of the United States a report on the implementation of  
15 recommendations of the Comptroller General that pertain  
16 to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

17           (b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under sub-  
18 section (a) shall include, for the period covered by the re-  
19 port, the following:

20           (1) The progress of the Secretary in imple-  
21 menting all open priority recommendations of the  
22 Comptroller General for the Department of Veterans  
23 Affairs.

24           (2) An explanation for each instance where the  
25 Secretary has decided not to implement, or has not

1 fully implemented, an open priority recommendation  
2 of the Comptroller General for the Department.

3 (3) Courses of action for the Secretary to im-  
4 plement open priority recommendations of the  
5 Comptroller General, including—

6 (A) resources to implement corrective ac-  
7 tions, including funding, stakeholders, tech-  
8 nology, and the senior officials responsible for  
9 implementing the corrective actions and report-  
10 ing results;

11 (B) metrics that can be used to assess  
12 progress and assign responsibility for tracking  
13 progress, including the mechanism that will be  
14 used to keep senior leadership informed about  
15 progress made or challenges encountered;

16 (C) key outcomes and goals that dem-  
17 onstrate progress in addressing the concerns;  
18 and

19 (D) timeframes with overall and interim  
20 milestones.

21 (c) SUPPLEMENT AND NOT SUPPLANT CURRENT RE-  
22 PORT REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of this section  
23 shall supplement and not supplant the requirements of  
24 section 720 of title 31, United States Code.

1 **SEC. 4. APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DE-**  
2 **FINED.**

3 In this Act, the term “appropriate committees of  
4 Congress” means the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of  
5 the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the  
6 House of Representatives.

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