

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 7299

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## AN ACT

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to obtain an independent cybersecurity assessment of information systems of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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 “Strengthening VA Cy-  
3 bersecurity Act of 2022” or the “SVAC Act of 2022”.

4 **SEC. 2. INDEPENDENT CYBERSECURITY ASSESSMENT OF**  
5 **INFORMATION SYSTEMS OF DEPARTMENT OF**  
6 **VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

7 (a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.—

8       (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after  
9 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary  
10 of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into an agree-  
11 ment with a federally funded research and develop-  
12 ment center to provide to the Secretary an inde-  
13 pendent cybersecurity assessment of—

14               (A) five high-impact information systems  
15 of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

16               (B) the effectiveness of the information se-  
17 curity program and information security man-  
18 agement system of the Department.

19       (2) DETAILED ANALYSIS.—The independent cy-  
20 bersecurity assessment provided under paragraph  
21 (1) shall include a detailed analysis of the ability of  
22 the Department—

23               (A) to ensure the confidentiality, integrity,  
24 and availability of the information, information  
25 systems, and devices of the Department; and

26               (B) to protect against—

- 1 (i) advanced persistent cybersecurity
- 2 threats;
- 3 (ii) ransomware;
- 4 (iii) denial of service attacks;
- 5 (iv) insider threats;
- 6 (v) threats from foreign actors, in-
- 7 cluding state sponsored criminals and
- 8 other foreign based criminals;
- 9 (vi) phishing;
- 10 (vii) credential theft;
- 11 (viii) cybersecurity attacks that target
- 12 the supply chain of the Department;
- 13 (ix) threats due to remote access and
- 14 telework activity; and
- 15 (x) other cyber threats.

16 (3) TYPES OF SYSTEMS.—The independent cy-  
17 bersecurity assessment provided under paragraph  
18 (1) shall cover on-premises, remote, cloud-based, and  
19 mobile information systems and devices used by, or  
20 in support of, Department activities.

21 (4) SHADOW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—The  
22 independent cybersecurity assessment provided  
23 under paragraph (1) shall include an evaluation of  
24 the use of information technology systems, devices,  
25 and services by employees and contractors of the De-

1       partment who do so without the heads of the ele-  
2       ments of the Department that are responsible for in-  
3       formation technology at the Department knowing or  
4       approving of such use.

5           (5) METHODOLOGY.—In conducting the cyber-  
6       security assessment to be provided under paragraph  
7       (1), the federally funded research and development  
8       center shall take into account industry best practices  
9       and the current state-of-the-art in cybersecurity  
10      evaluation and review.

11      (b) PLAN.—

12           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days  
13      after the date on which an independent assessment  
14      is provided to the Secretary by a federally funded re-  
15      search and development center pursuant to an  
16      agreement entered into under subsection (a), the  
17      Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Vet-  
18      erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and  
19      the Senate a plan to address the findings of the fed-  
20      erally funded research and development center set  
21      forth in such assessment.

22           (2) ELEMENTS.—The plan submitted under  
23      paragraph (1) shall include the following:

1 (A) Improvements to the security controls  
2 of the information systems of the Department  
3 assessed under subsection (a) to—

4 (i) achieve the goals specified in sub-  
5 paragraph (A) of paragraph (2) of such  
6 subsection; and

7 (ii) protect against the threats speci-  
8 fied in subparagraph (B) of such para-  
9 graph.

10 (B) Improvements to the information secu-  
11 rity program and information security manage-  
12 ment system of the Department to achieve such  
13 goals and protect against such threats.

14 (C) A cost estimate for implementing the  
15 plan.

16 (D) A timeline for implementing the plan.

17 (E) Such other elements as the Secretary  
18 considers appropriate.

19 (c) COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED  
20 STATES EVALUATION AND REVIEW.—Not later than 180  
21 days after the date of the submission of the plan under  
22 subsection (b)(1), the Comptroller General of the United  
23 States shall—

24 (1) commence an evaluation and review of—

1 (A) the independent cybersecurity assess-  
2 ment provided under subsection (a); and

3 (B) the response of the Department to  
4 such assessment; and

5 (2) provide to the Committees on Veterans' Af-  
6 fairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate  
7 a briefing on the results of the evaluation and re-  
8 view, including any recommendations made to the  
9 Secretary regarding the matters covered by the  
10 briefing.

Passed the House of Representatives November 17,  
2022.

Attest:

*Clerk.*



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