

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1147

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 20, 2025

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

AN ACT

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, 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 “Veterans Accessibility
3 Advisory Committee Act of 2025”.

4 **SEC. 2. VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUAL AC-**
5 **CESS.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subchapter III of chapter 5
7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at
8 the end the following new section:

9 **“§ 549. Advisory Committee on Equal Access**

10 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—(1) The Secretary shall es-
11 tablish an advisory committee on matters relating to ac-
12 cessibility of the Department for individuals with disabil-
13 ities.

14 “(2) The advisory committee established under para-
15 graph (1) shall be known as the ‘Veterans Advisory Com-
16 mittee on Equal Access’ (in this section referred to as the
17 ‘Advisory Committee’).

18 “(b) MEMBERSHIP.—(1) The Advisory Committee
19 shall be composed of 15 voting members, appointed by the
20 Secretary. In appointing such members, the Secretary
21 shall ensure the following:

22 “(A) Four are veterans with disabilities, includ-
23 ing mobility impairment, hearing, visual, and mental
24 or cognitive disabilities.

1 “(B) Four are experts on issues described in
2 subsection (f)(1)(A) or the provisions of law set
3 forth under subsection (f)(1)(B).

4 “(C) Two are employees of the Department,
5 one from the Section 508 Office and one from the
6 Architectural Accessibility Program, who oversee the
7 compliance of the Department with Federal accessi-
8 bility laws.

9 “(D) Five are representatives nominated by vet-
10 erans service organizations, recognized under section
11 5902 of this title, that advocate for veterans with
12 physical, sensory, mental, or cognitive disabilities.

13 “(2) The Advisory Committee shall also include four
14 ex officio members (or their designees):

15 “(A) The Under Secretary for Health.

16 “(B) The Under Secretary for Benefits.

17 “(C) The Under Secretary for Memorial Af-
18 fairs.

19 “(D) The chairperson of the Architectural and
20 Transportation Barriers Compliance Board estab-
21 lished by section 502 of the Rehabilitation Act of
22 1973 (Public Law 93–112; 29 U.S.C. 792).

23 “(c) TERMS; VACANCIES.—(1) A member of the Ad-
24 visory Committee shall be appointed for a term of two
25 years. The Secretary may reappoint members to the Advi-

1 sory Committee for such additional two-year terms as the
2 Secretary determines appropriate.

3 “(2) The Secretary shall fill a vacancy in the Advisory
4 Committee in the same manner as the original appoint-
5 ment not later than 180 days after such vacancy occurs.

6 “(d) MEETINGS; SUBCOMMITTEES; QUORUM.—(1)
7 The Advisory Committee shall meet not less frequently
8 than twice each year.

9 “(2) The Advisory Committee may form subcommit-
10 tees, which shall meet as often as required.

11 “(3) A majority of the members of the Advisory Com-
12 mittee shall constitute a quorum.

13 “(e) CHAIRPERSON.—(1) Members of the Advisory
14 Committee shall select a Chairperson from among the
15 members of the Advisory Committee.

16 “(2) If the position of Chairperson becomes vacant,
17 the members of the Advisory Committee shall select a new
18 Chairperson not later than 30 days after the date on which
19 the position became vacant.

20 “(f) DUTIES.—(1) On a regular basis, the Secretary
21 shall consult with and seek the advice of the Advisory
22 Committee on the following:

23 “(A) Improving the accessibility of the Depart-
24 ment for individuals with disabilities, including im-
25 proving—

1 “(i) the accessibility of information of the
2 Department, including electronic information;

3 “(ii) the accessibility of the services and
4 benefits furnished by the Department;

5 “(iii) the accessibility of the facilities of the
6 Department;

7 “(iv) the accessibility of facilities of health
8 care providers furnishing care or services under
9 the Veterans Community Care Program under
10 section 1703 of this title; and

11 “(v) the acquisition process of the Depart-
12 ment to ensure that products and services, in-
13 cluding information technology and information
14 and communication technology (as defined in
15 the standards issued by the Architectural and
16 Transportation Barriers Compliance Board pur-
17 suant to section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act
18 of 1973 (Public Law 93–112; 29 U.S.C.
19 794d)), are accessible when purchased.

20 “(B) Ensuring the compliance of the Depart-
21 ment with provisions of law that ensure equal access
22 to Federal facilities, benefits, or services, for individ-
23 uals with disabilities, including the following:

1 “(i) The Americans with Disabilities Act of
2 1990 (Public Law 101–336; 42 U.S.C. 12101
3 et seq.).

4 “(ii) Sections 501, 504, and 508 of the Re-
5 habilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93–112;
6 29 U.S.C. 791, 794, and 794d).

7 “(iii) The Plain Writing Act of 2010 (Pub-
8 lic Law 111–274; 5 U.S.C. 301 note).

9 “(iv) The 21st Century Integrated Digital
10 Experience Act (Public Law 115–336; 44
11 U.S.C. 3501 note).

12 “(v) The Architectural Barriers Act of
13 1968 (Public Law 90–480; 42 U.S.C. 4151 et
14 seq.).

15 “(2) In advising to the Secretary, the Advisory Com-
16 mittee shall, focusing on the areas of greatest need for
17 the Department—

18 “(A) assess the disability access needs of vet-
19 erans, the public, and Department employees, for
20 full access to the Department’s information, services,
21 and benefits, by reviewing relevant information, such
22 as filed complaints by people with disabilities or
23 physical assessments of the Department’s facilities;

24 “(B) provide assessments of accessibility at the
25 Department and the compliance of the Department

1 with applicable provisions of law relating to dis-
2 ability and accessibility; and

3 “(C) provide advice on improving accessibility
4 at the Department, including the accessibility of
5 all—

6 “(i) communications, including internal
7 and public-facing;

8 “(ii) services and benefits; and

9 “(iii) facilities.

10 “(3) REPORTS.—(A) Not later than two years after
11 the date of the first meeting of the Advisory Committee,
12 and not less frequently than once every two years there-
13 after, the Advisory Committee shall submit to the Sec-
14 retary a report that, focusing on areas of greatest need
15 for the Department—

16 “(i) identifies and assesses access barriers af-
17 fecting veterans, the public, and employees of the
18 Department;

19 “(ii) determines the extent to which the pro-
20 grams and activities of the Department address the
21 barriers identified in clause (i), including compliance
22 of the Department with provisions of law relating to
23 accessibility law and reporting;

24 “(iii) provides recommendations and access pri-
25 orities to improve the accessibility of the Depart-

1 ment’s services, benefits, information, technology,
2 and facilities;

3 “(iv) provides a description of access improve-
4 ments and assesses the Department’s implementa-
5 tion of recommendations from previous reports of
6 the Advisory Committee, including any unmet rec-
7 ommendations that remain necessary for improving
8 accessibility for the Department; and

9 “(v) provides any recommendations for legisla-
10 tion, administrative action, or other actions that the
11 Advisory Committee determines appropriate.

12 “(B)(i) Not later than 90 days after the receipt of
13 a report required under subparagraph (A), the Secretary
14 shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees
15 a copy of such report and any comments and recommenda-
16 tions of the Secretary concerning such report that the Sec-
17 retary determines appropriate.

18 “(ii) The Secretary shall publish on a publicly acces-
19 sible website of the Department such report and such com-
20 ments and recommendations as may have been submitted
21 along with such report.

22 “(iii) In this subparagraph, the term ‘appropriate
23 congressional committee’ means—

24 “(I) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the
25 House of Representatives;

1 “(II) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the
2 Senate;

3 “(III) the Committee on Education and Work-
4 force of the House of Representatives; or

5 “(IV) the Special Committee on Aging of the
6 Senate.

7 “(g) ADVISORY COMMITTEE PERSONNEL AND RE-
8 SOURCE MATTERS.—(1) A member of the Commission
9 who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Govern-
10 ment shall not be compensated for the performance of the
11 duties of the Advisory Committee.

12 “(2) A member of the Advisory Committee shall be
13 allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of sub-
14 sistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies
15 under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, while away
16 from their homes or regular places of business in the per-
17 formance of services for the Advisory Committee.

18 “(3) The Secretary shall ensure that such personnel,
19 funding, and other resources are made available to the Ad-
20 visory Committee as the Secretary determines appropriate
21 to carry out the duties of the Advisory Committee.

22 “(4) The Secretary shall furnish to the Advisory
23 Committee such information as the Advisory Committee
24 may request from the Secretary, subject to applicable pro-
25 visions of law.

1 “(h) TERMINATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The
2 Advisory Committee shall terminate on the date that is
3 seven years after the date of the enactment of the Vet-
4 erans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2025.”.

5 (b) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at
6 the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding, after
7 the item relating to section 548, the following new item:
 “549. Advisory Committee on Equal Access.”.

8 (c) IMPLEMENTATION; ABOLITION OF INACTIVE AD-
9 VISORY COMMITTEE.—Not later than 180 days after the
10 date of the enactment of this Act, and before establishing
11 the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access under
12 section 549 of title 38, United States Code, as added by
13 subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

14 (1) abolish an advisory committee of the De-
15 partment of Veterans Affairs that—

16 (A) was not established by an Act of Con-
17 gress; and

18 (B) is inactive;

19 (2) consolidate two advisory committees de-
20 scribed in paragraph (1); or

21 (3) submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Af-
22 fairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a
23 recommendation to abolish an advisory committee of
24 the Department that—

1 (A) was established by an Act of Congress;
 2 and
 3 (B) is inactive.

4 **SEC. 3. EXTENSION ON LIMITATION OF CERTAIN PENSION**
 5 **PAYMENTS TO VETERANS ADMITTED TO**
 6 **NURSING FACILITIES.**

7 Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code,
 8 is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and insert-
 9 ing “January 31, 2032”.

Passed the House of Representatives May 19, 2025.

Attest: KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Clerk.