

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 423

AN ACT

To protect regular order for budgeting for 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. PROTECTING REGULAR ORDER FOR VET-**
2 **ERANS.**

3 (a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the
4 “Protecting Regular Order for Veterans Act of 2025” or
5 the “PRO Veterans Act of 2025”.

6 (b) **QUARTERLY BRIEFINGS ON DEPARTMENT OF**
7 **VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGETARY SHORTFALLS.**—

8 (1) **QUARTERLY BRIEFINGS.**—

9 (A) **QUARTERLY BRIEFINGS REQUIRED.**—

10 During the first quarter beginning after the
11 date of the enactment of this Act and in each
12 quarter thereafter until the date that is three
13 years after the date of the enactment of this
14 Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall pro-
15 vide to the appropriate committees of Congress
16 a quarterly briefing, in person, on the budget of
17 the Department of Veterans Affairs and any
18 shortfall the Department may be experiencing.

19 (B) **PLANS.**—In any case in which the Sec-
20 retary informs Congress during a briefing
21 under paragraph (1) that the Department is ex-
22 perienceing a shortfall, the Secretary shall, dur-
23 ing such briefing, present the plans of the Sec-
24 retary to address or mitigate the shortfall.

25 (2) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection:

1 (A) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
 2 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of
 3 Congress” means—

4 (i) the Committee on Veterans’ Af-
 5 fairs and the Committee on Appropriations
 6 of the Senate; and

7 (ii) the Committee on Veterans’ Af-
 8 fairs and the Committee on Appropriations
 9 of the House of Representatives.

10 (B) SHORTFALL.—The term “shortfall”,
 11 with respect to a fiscal year, means that the
 12 amount of appropriations required by the De-
 13 partment of Veterans Affairs for such fiscal
 14 year to meet all of the statutory obligations of
 15 the Department during that fiscal year exceeds
 16 the amount of appropriations requested for the
 17 Department for that fiscal year in the budget of
 18 the President submitted pursuant to section
 19 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, for
 20 that fiscal year.

21 (c) LIMITATIONS ON PROVISION OF INCENTIVES FOR
 22 CRITICAL SKILLS TO SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE EM-
 23 PLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—
 24 Section 706(d) of title 38, United States Code, is amended
 25 by adding at the end the following:

1 “(7)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B)(ii), a critical
 2 skill incentive may not be provided under paragraph (1)
 3 to an employee of the Department employed in a Senior
 4 Executive Service position, or a position in another com-
 5 parable system for senior-level Government employees, as
 6 defined by the Secretary, whose position is at the Central
 7 Office of the Department, including the Veterans Health
 8 Administration, the Veterans Benefits Administration,
 9 and the National Cemetery Administration, regardless of
 10 the actual location where the employee performs the func-
 11 tions of the position.

12 “(B)(i) A critical skill incentive provided under para-
 13 graph (1) to an employee of the Department employed in
 14 a Senior Executive Service position, or a position in an-
 15 other comparable system for senior-level Government em-
 16 ployees, as defined by the Secretary, not described in sub-
 17 paragraph (A) of this paragraph may only be provided—

18 “(I) on an individual basis and may not be pro-
 19 vided to a group of such employees; and

20 “(II) upon approval of the following officers or
 21 those serving in an acting capacity:

22 “(aa) The Under Secretary for Benefits,
 23 the Under Secretary for Health, or the Under
 24 Secretary for Memorial Affairs.

1 “(bb) The Assistant Secretary for Human
2 Resources and Administration.

3 “(cc) The Director of the Office of Man-
4 agement or the Chief Financial Officer.

5 “(dd) The Assistant Secretary for Ac-
6 countability and Whistleblower Protection.

7 “(ee) The General Counsel.

8 “(ff) Such other officers as the Secretary
9 determines appropriate.

10 “(ii) In the case of an employee of the Department
11 employed in a Senior Executive Service position, or a posi-
12 tion in another comparable system for senior-level Govern-
13 ment employees, as defined by the Secretary, whose posi-
14 tion is primarily at the Central Office of the Department,
15 but who performs some portion of the employee’s job func-
16 tion at other facilities of the Department, as defined by
17 the Secretary, not at Central Office—

18 “(I) the employee shall not be considered de-
19 scribed in subparagraph (A) with respect to the por-
20 tion of the employee’s job function that is based out
21 of non-Central Office facilities of the Department;
22 and

23 “(II) any critical skill incentive provided under
24 paragraph (1) to the employee for the portion of the
25 employee’s job function that is based out of facilities

1 of the Department other than the Central Office
 2 shall be proportionate to the time spent at those De-
 3 partment facilities.

4 “(C)(i) Not later than one year after the date of the
 5 enactment of the Protecting Regular Order for Veterans
 6 Act of 2025, and not less frequently than once each year
 7 thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee
 8 on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on
 9 Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives an an-
 10 nual report on the employees of the Department employed
 11 in a Senior Executive Service position, or a position in
 12 another comparable system for senior-level Government
 13 employees, as defined by the Secretary, who were provided
 14 a critical skill incentive under paragraph (1).

15 “(ii) Reports submitted pursuant to clause (i) may
 16 be submitted by incorporating their contents into other
 17 congressionally mandated reports to the committees de-
 18 scribed in such clause.

19 “(D) In this paragraph, the term ‘Senior Executive
 20 Service position’ has the meaning given such term in sec-
 21 tion 3132(a) of title 5.”.

22 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF VETERANS EXPERIENCE OF-**
 23 **FICE.**

24 (a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the
 25 “Improving Veterans’ Experience Act of 2025”.

1 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 38, United
3 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the
4 following new section:

5 **“§ 325. Veterans experience office**

6 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
7 Department within the Office of the Secretary an office
8 to be known as the ‘Veterans Experience Office’ (in this
9 section referred to as the ‘Office’).

10 “(b) HEAD OF OFFICE.—(1) The head of the Office
11 shall be the Chief Veterans Experience Officer.

12 “(2) The Chief Veterans Experience Officer shall—

13 “(A) be appointed by the Secretary from among
14 individuals the Secretary considers qualified to per-
15 form the duties of the position;

16 “(B) report directly to the Secretary; and

17 “(C) be responsible for carrying out the func-
18 tions of the Office set forth under subsection (c).

19 “(c) FUNCTION.—The functions of the Office are as
20 follows:

21 “(1) Carrying out the key customer experience
22 initiatives of the Department relating to veterans’
23 and other beneficiaries’ satisfaction with and usage
24 of benefits and services furnished under laws admin-
25 istered by the Secretary for which they are eligible,

1 including setting the strategy, framework, policy,
2 and other guidance for the Department relating to
3 customer experience, including ensuring the activi-
4 ties of the Office and those of other organizations
5 and offices within the Department are coordinated
6 and not duplicative.

7 “(2) Requiring the heads of other organizations
8 and offices within the Department to report regu-
9 larly on customer experience metrics, action plans,
10 and other customer experience improvement efforts
11 to the Chief Veterans Experience Officer.

12 “(3) Collecting veteran-derived data—

13 “(A) to determine veteran and beneficiary
14 satisfaction with and usage of the benefits and
15 services furnished under laws administered by
16 the Secretary for which they are eligible; and

17 “(B) to be considered during policymaking.

18 “(4) Providing strategic guidance and strategies
19 to Department entities for engaging with veterans
20 and beneficiaries regarding benefits and services fur-
21 nished under laws administered by the Secretary, in-
22 cluding those not using such benefits and services.

23 “(5) Assessing and advising the Secretary on
24 the accuracy and helpfulness of the websites and
25 other customer-facing information of the Depart-

1 ment, be it available electronically or in any other
2 format.

3 “(6) Assessing and advising the Secretary on
4 the status and opportunities for improvement of the
5 customer service efforts of the Department.

6 “(d) REPORTS.—(1) Each year, the Chief Veterans
7 Experience Officer shall submit to the Secretary a sum-
8 mary of the data received by the Chief Veterans Experi-
9 ence Officer under subsection (c)(2).

10 “(2) Each year, not later than 180 days after the
11 date on which the Secretary receives the summary under
12 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress an
13 annual summary and analysis of the matters summarized
14 pursuant to such paragraph.

15 “(3) Each annual summary submitted pursuant to
16 paragraph (2) shall include the following:

17 “(A) Data regarding customer service and expe-
18 rience feedback, disaggregated by benefit or service
19 furnished under laws administered by the Secretary,
20 and relevant demographic data of the veterans and
21 beneficiaries providing the feedback.

22 “(B) Data regarding veteran and beneficiary
23 satisfaction with and usage of benefits or services,
24 disaggregated by benefit or service furnished under
25 laws administered by the Secretary, and relevant de-

1 mographic data of the veterans and beneficiaries
2 providing the feedback, including—

3 “(i) potential reasons for not using the
4 benefits or services, such as—

5 “(I) eligibility;

6 “(II) lack of knowledge or awareness
7 of existence of benefit or service;

8 “(III) barriers of technology, informa-
9 tion, or time; and

10 “(IV) other related reasons; and

11 “(ii) an analysis of how such reasons may
12 be addressed.

13 “(e) STAFF AND RESOURCES.—(1) The Secretary
14 shall ensure that—

15 “(A) the Office has such staff, resources, and
16 access to customer service and experience informa-
17 tion as may be necessary to carry out the functions
18 of the Office; and

19 “(B) any information provided to the Office
20 does not include personally identifiable information
21 of an individual veteran, survivor, dependent, or
22 other beneficiary unless such individual provides ap-
23 propriate consent to allow such information to be
24 shared with the Office.

1 “(2) Funds available for basic pay and other adminis-
 2 trative expenses of other Department organizations and
 3 offices may be available to reimburse the Office for all
 4 services provided at rates which will recover actual costs
 5 for services provided to such organizations if the Secretary
 6 determines that contributing to such costs will not under-
 7 mine the ability of any such organization or office to pro-
 8 vide services required by such office.

9 “(3) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to
 10 authorize an increase in the number of full-time employees
 11 otherwise authorized for the Department.

12 “(f) PRIVACY.—Nothing in this section shall be con-
 13 strued to authorize the Chief Veterans Experience Officer
 14 to disclose any record in contravention of section 552a of
 15 title 5 (commonly referred to as the ‘Privacy Act of
 16 1974’).

17 “(g) SUNSET.—The requirements and authorities of
 18 this section shall terminate on September 30, 2028.”.

19 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
 20 tions at the beginning of chapter 3 of such title is
 21 amended by adding at the end the following new
 22 item:

“325. Veterans Experience Office.”.

23 (c) COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED
 24 STATES REVIEW OF VETERANS EXPERIENCE OFFICE AND
 25 CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS.—Not later

1 than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,
2 the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

3 (1) complete an analysis of the methodology, ef-
4 fectiveness, and implementation of findings and
5 feedback of veterans and beneficiaries used by the
6 Department of Veterans Affairs, including the Vet-
7 erans Experience Office, to improve veteran and
8 beneficiary customer experience and satisfaction, in-
9 cluding through the use of what are known as
10 “trust-scores”, Veteran Signals also known as
11 “VSignals”, and related survey and data collection
12 activities, processes, and initiatives; and

13 (2) submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Af-
14 fairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’
15 Affairs of the House of Representatives a report set-
16 ting forth the findings of the Comptroller General
17 with respect to the analysis completed pursuant to
18 paragraph (1).

Passed the Senate April 8, 2025.

Attest:

Secretary.

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