

VETERANS READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT
IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2025

AUGUST 15, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BOST, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 980]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 980) to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to the provision of on-campus educational and vocational counseling by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

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The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Readiness and Employment Improvement Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF REQUIREMENT THAT ON-CAMPUS EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELING IS PROVIDED BY CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES.

Section 3697B(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking the second sentence.

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO APPROVE NON-DEGREE FLIGHT TRAINING COURSES AS PART OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS FOR CERTAIN VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3104(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—
 (1) by inserting “(1)” before “A rehabilitation program”;
 (2) by striking “To the maximum extent practicable” and inserting “Except as provided under paragraph (2), to the maximum extent practicable”; and
 (3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2) Notwithstanding section 3680A(b) of this title, the Secretary may approve a rehabilitation program for a veteran under this chapter that includes the pursuit of a course of flight training other than one given by an educational institution of higher learning for credit toward a standard college degree the veteran is seeking.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a rehabilitation program approved on or after August 1, 2025.

SEC. 4. OUTREACH REQUIREMENTS FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TRAINING AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

(a) VRE CONTACT INFORMATION.—Section 3104 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f) The Secretary shall establish a dedicated telephone number within the Education Call Center of the Department for calls about services provided under this chapter. Each regional office of the Department shall include, on the website of the regional office, a name, telephone number, and email address, through which veterans may receive information about services provided under this chapter.”.

(b) OUTREACH REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3123. Outreach requirements

“(a) QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSIONS.—The Secretary shall provide monthly question and answer sessions for appropriate school certifying officials during which such officials shall have the opportunity to ask questions of Department employees who are veteran readiness and employment counselors or trained outreach specialists.

“(b) INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS.—(1) The Secretary shall ensure that veteran readiness and employment counselors or trained outreach specialists employed by a Regional Office of the Department provide in-person briefings for veterans about services provided under this chapter at each educational institution located in the geographic area served by the Regional Office.

“(2) The Secretary may provide a briefing required under paragraph (1) virtually in the case of an educational institution located more than 50 miles away from the headquarters of the Regional Office.

“(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the extension of periods of vocational rehabilitation programs under section 3105(c) of this title. Such report shall include, for the year covered by the report—

“(1) the number of veterans who requested such an extension;
 (2) the number of such requests that were approved; and
 (3) the number of such requests that were rejected.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“3123. Outreach requirements.”.

(d) EXTENSION OF ENTITLEMENTS.—Section 3105(c) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(2) by inserting "(1)" before "The Secretary"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(2) If a veteran applies for an extension under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall approve or reject the extension by not later than 30 days after the date on which the veteran submits a request for the extension."

SEC. 5. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "November 30, 2031" and inserting "May 31, 2032".

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

H.R. 980, the "Veterans Readiness and Employment Improvement Act of 2025," was introduced by Rep. Derrick Van Orden of Wisconsin on February 5, 2025. The bill as amended would require an individual providing counseling services on college and university campuses to student veterans and their beneficiaries to have a bachelor's degree in a relevant field of study as a minimum education. The bill, as amended, includes the text of other legislation including:

H.R. 913, the "Streamlining Aviation for Eligible Veterans Act of 2025" or the "SAFE Veterans Act of 2025", was introduced on February 4, 2025, by Rep. Jay Obernolte of California. This legislation would amend current law to include non-degree flight training programs in the rehabilitation programs under the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

H.R. 1793, the "Veterans Readiness and Employment Transparency Act of 2025", was introduced on March 3, 2025, by Rep. Abe Hamadeh of Arizona. This legislation would create a VR&E specific hotline, provide contact information for a VR&E specialist at each regional office, and require an annual report on the number of entitlement extensions approved by the Secretary in rehabilitation programs.

Finally, the bill would also provide an offset for the cost of this bill by extending the current law restricting the amount of pension paid to VA pension beneficiaries who are admitted to a VA or Medicaid sponsored nursing facility.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Section 1: Short Title

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Readiness and Employment Improvement Act of 2025."

Section 2: Elimination of Requirement that On-Campus Educational and Vocational Counselling is Provided by Certain Department of Veterans Affairs Employees

In 2009, the Vet Success on Campus (VSOC) program began its mission of supporting veterans and servicemembers, who are transitioning from military to college, through vocational training, career counseling, or accessing certain VA benefits while attending college. VSOC counselors also help veterans obtain referrals for campus health services, make referrals to VA health services, and assist veterans with classroom disability accommodations. Unfortunately, many VSOC counselors also spend a great deal of their time doing VR&E casework because they are classified as case managers under Chapter 31 of title 38 USC. Because of this classification in

38 USC § 3697B(a), VSOC employees are required to have a master's degree even though their job requirements are different and can be done by an individual who possesses only a bachelor's degree.

Currently, there is an extremely long waitlist to see a VR&E counselor, with some veterans having to wait over six months to receive their initial appointment. As a result of the PACT Act, (P.L. 117-168), the VR&E program has also seen a 28% increase in applicants since 2022 and has requested a 14.7% increase in funding in VA's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. Actions and data from VA have shown that the most effective way to reduce wait times for appointments is through reducing the burden on counselors. This is done through finding ways to ensure VA is meeting the 1-125 counselor to veteran ratio, finding ways to hire more Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC) and Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists (VRS), and improving the Case Management Service, which tracks cases and reduces the amount of paperwork required. Finally, it is important that VA finds ways to ensure veterans are able to enter VR&E quickly, receive the assistance needed, and then exit the program to free up workload for the next veteran.

VSOC counselors typically had a small caseload of veterans and their additional duties of helping transitioning servicemembers from military to college life. However, with the increase of applications for veterans in VR&E, VA has increased the number of VR&E cases for VSOC counselors to the point that VSOC employees no longer have time to carry out their primary duties. VA has also labeled VSOC employees as rehabilitation counselors to satisfy the requirements needed to serve veterans in VR&E and maintain the recommended caseload of one rehabilitation counselor for every 150 veterans in the program. Under current law, both VR&E counselors and VSOC counselors are required to have a master's degree.

The Committee believes that if the master's degree provision was waived for VSOC counselors, more veterans could be served on campus. There are currently 104 VSOC counselor positions and a waitlist of almost 300 schools who have applied for a VSOC counselor across the United States. Since there is a growing population of veterans enrolling in the VR&E program, many VSOC counselors have been given a caseload higher than they can manage leading to longer delays and a lack of services for student veterans. Finally, it is important that VA finds ways to ensure veterans are able to enter VR&E quickly, receive the assistance needed, and then exit the program to free up workload for the next veteran.

This section would amend 38 USC § 3697B(a) by striking the requirement for VSOC counselors to have a master's degree. The Committee believes waiving this provision would allow more veterans to have access to VA assistance on campus while navigating college life. It would also allow future VSOC counselors to be hired by VA at a lower GS grade. This would both save the government money and expand the pool of qualified applicants for the VSOC position. Without this change, the Committee is concerned that the VSOC position is not being utilized by VA as Congress intended in 2009 when the position was created, and veterans on college campuses are not receiving the educational experience they have earned.

Section 3: Authority of Secretary of Veterans Affairs to Approve Non-Degree Flight Training Courses as Part of Vocational Rehabilitation Programs for Certain Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities

Vocational Flight training refers to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved flight instruction that is offered by a FAA-certified pilot school. This type of training is generally accepted as necessary for the attainment of a recognized vocational objective in the field of aviation.¹ To participate in this program using the GI Bill, individuals must have a valid private pilot certificate and the appropriate medical certificate.² Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) flight training is provided by an accredited IHL for credit toward a standard college degree.³ Once an eligible veteran is enrolled in the VR&E program, they are overseen by a counselor to ensure that this employment or educational track is suitable and attainable given their employment handicap.

This section would allow VR&E participants to use the program to pursue non-degree flight training courses. Currently, veterans are able to pursue non-degree flight training programs if they are enrolled in any other GI Bill benefits. The Committee believes allowing veterans using VR&E to also pursue non-degree flight training programs is a good idea because it would expand the education possibilities for disabled veterans. It would also standardize what flight school programs are available in VR&E as currently a veteran could get their pilot license through a public-school flight training program. The Committee believes that this change would give disabled veterans access to an often less expensive option, that also takes significantly less time to complete. This section would level the playing field and allow veterans within the VR&E program to pursue any GI bill programs including vocational flight training.

Section 4: Outreach Requirements for Department of Veterans Affairs Training and Rehabilitation Programs for Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities

The purpose of VR&E Program is to provide veterans and servicemembers with service-connected disabilities with the job training and skills needed to obtain suitable employment and/or achieve independent living. These programs cover such things as short and long-term education or training, resume development, and employment services. Family members of severely disabled veterans may also be eligible for education and career counseling. VR&E is split into six phases. These phases include application, entitlement decision, evaluation/planning, “five tracks”, employment services, and rehabilitation.

Eligible veterans include those who received at least a 10% disability rating from VA and have a serious employment handicap. A *serious employment handicap* is defined as a significant impairment of a veteran’s ability to prepare for, obtain, or retain employ-

¹ Flight Training Under the GI Bills: Frequently Asked Questions. (2025, May 1). <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R47817>.

² 38 U.S.C. § 3034(d).

³ 38 U.S.C. § 3680A(b) and § 3452(g).

ment consistent with his or her abilities, aptitudes, and interests.⁴ Veterans with a disability rating of 30% or more may use this program with only an employment handicap that is preventing them from finding suitable employment. If eligible, and a veteran has not used any of their GI Bill entitlement, a veteran is eligible for 48 months of VR&E education, training, and employment services. The basic period of eligibility ends 12 years from either the date of separation of military service or the date a veteran is first notified by VA that they have a service-connected disability. If the veteran was discharged after January 1, 2013, the benefit does not expire. This period can also be waived if the veteran has been found to have a serious employment handicap.

Over 167,000 veterans participated in the VR&E program in 2023⁵ and participation numbers continue to increase following implementation of the PACT Act. Currently, veterans pursuing any other GI Bill benefit are able to contact the Education Call Center (ECC) to seek help or reach out with any questions they may have regarding payments, entitlement or any other matter. However, the VR&E program does not have a call center or provide contact information for anyone knowledgeable about the VR&E program at any of the VA regional offices. This is very concerning as veterans who are in this program have some type of handicap that hinders that ability to find employment and they have no point of contact when they cannot reach their assigned counselor. Additionally, some VA employees may give out incorrect information to VR&E participants because VR&E is not in their primary job function.

This section would provide monthly question and answer sessions for School Certifying Officials (SCOs) during which SCOs would be able to ask VA employees any questions they have. This section would also provide informational briefings by VR&E employees or trained outreach specialists at the educational institutions within the regional office's area and provide a virtual option if the educational institution is more than 50 miles away. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, VA VR&E employees would go out and visit educational institutions. This led to VA employees and VA employees at the school developing relationships and information getting to the school and veteran students faster. The Committee believes that increasing the interactions between VA employees and the school employees would benefit the program and veterans enrolled in VR&E.

Additionally, this section would also require an annual report to the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs on the number of entitlement extensions granted under VR&E. In statute, an eligible veteran can be in the VR&E program for 48 months and may ask for an entitlement extension. There are plenty of reasons why an entitlement extension would be necessary, for instance if a veteran's disability worsens and they can no longer pursue the employment track they intended to, however, the Committee has received data from VA that indicates 99% of entitlement extensions are approved. The Committee believes that this is a drastically high approval rating with little to no checks and balances in place. The Committee believes this section would increase oversight of the

⁴ Veterans' Benefits: The Veteran Readiness and Employment Program Updated May 10, 2021 (RL34627).

⁵ *Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) 2023 Report.*

program by reporting the number annually to Congress. This section would also require the VA Secretary to approve or reject the extensions no later than 30 days after a veteran submits an extension request. The Committee believes these changes would provide more transparency for the veterans within the VR&E program and oversight of the program to ensure it is being mindful of taxpayer dollars.

Section 5: Extension of Certain Limits on Payments of Pension

Under current law (38 U.S.C. § 5503(d)), the amount of VA pension paid to veterans having no spouse nor child, veterans' surviving spouses having no child, and veterans' children who are admitted to a VA or Medicaid sponsored nursing facility is capped at \$90 a month. This section would cover the costs of the other sections of this bill by extending this pension limitation from November 30, 2031, to May 31, 2032. Because they receive government sponsored care in a nursing home, these pension beneficiaries do not require the full amount of pension to cover their cost of living. The Committee believes this short-term extension of the current limit on pension payments is a reasonable way to cover the costs associated with the other sections of this bill.

HEARINGS

On March 11, 2025, the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a legislative hearing on H.R. 980 and other bills that were pending before the subcommittee.

The following witnesses testified:

Mr. John Bell, Executive Director of Loan Guaranty Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nick Pamperin, Executive Director, Veterans Readiness and Employment, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Thomas J. Alphonso, Assistant Director, Policy and Implementation, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jill Albanese, Director of Clinical Operations, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Kristina Keenan, Deputy Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Ms. Julie Howell, Associate Legislative Director for Governmental Relations, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Ms. Elizabeth Balce, Executive Vice President of Servicing at Carrington Mortgage, Mortgage Bankers Association; Mr. Tobias Peter, Co-Director of the Housing Center, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute; and Mr. Will Hubbard, Vice President for Veterans and military Policy, Veterans Education Success.

The following individuals and organizations submitted statements for the record:

Freedom Mortgage, Student Veterans of America, the Veterans Education Project, National Association of Veterans Program Administrators, National Consumer Law Center, BraunAbility, National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association, and the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

SUBCOMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

On April 9, 2025, the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a markup on H.R. 980. A motion by Representative Pappas to

favorably forward H.R. 980 to the full committee was agreed to by voice vote.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

On May 6, 2025, the full Committee met in an open markup session, a quorum being present, and ordered H.R. 980, as amended, to be reported favorably to the House of Representatives by voice vote.

During consideration of the bill, the following amendments were offered:

Representative Van Orden offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 980. The amendment in the nature of a substitute included the text of H.R. 1793, H.R. 913, and added an offset using the pension payments to pay for the cost of the legislation. The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to by a voice vote.

An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute was offered by Ranking Member Takano. This amendment would prohibit VA Education Service employees from holding a position in the excepted service under Schedule Policy or Career designations. This amendment was not agreed to by a voice vote.

An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute was offered by Ranking Member Takano. This amendment would prohibit any layoffs from Education Services positions at VA due to a potential Reduction in Force (RIF). The amendment failed by recorded vote, 11–13.

An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute was offered by Representative Conaway. This amendment included a Sense of Congress that the Department of Veterans Affairs should not foreclose on veterans and should use the authorities granted them in statute to continue providing loans to veterans to prevent foreclosure. The amendment failed by recorded vote, 11–13.

An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute was offered by Representative Conaway. This amendment would have the Department of Veterans Affairs pay a cash subsidy for nutrition assistance to veterans who are no longer eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The amendment failed by recorded vote, 11–13.

A motion by Ranking Member Takano to report H.R. 980, as amended, favorably to the House of Representatives, was agreed to by voice vote.

COMMITTEE VOTES

In compliance with clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, three recorded votes were taken on amendments, or in connection with ordering H.R. 980, as amended, favorably reported to the House.

An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 980 offered by Mr. Takano was not agreed to by a recorded vote of 11 ayes, 13 noes. The names of Members voting for and against follow:

ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH CONGRESS
 U.S. STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
 MIKE BOST, CHAIRMAN

MARKUP

FULL COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES

Date: **Tuesday, May 6, 2025**
 Subject: **Approval of Takano Amendment #2 to the Amendment in the
 Nature of a Substitute**

NAME	YEA/AYE	NAY/NO	Present
Mike Bost		X	
Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen			
Jack Bergman		X	
Nancy Mace		X	
Mariannette Miller-Meeks		X	
Gregory F. Murphy		X	
Derrick Van Orden		X	
Morgan Luttrell		X	
Juan Ciscomani		X	
Keith Self		X	
Jennifer A. Kiggans		X	
Abraham J. Hamadeh		X	
Kimberlyn King-Hinds		X	
Tom Barrett		X	
Mark Takano	X		
Julia Brownley	X		
Chris Pappas	X		
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick	X		
Morgan McGarvey	X		
Delia C. Ramirez	X		
Nikki Budzinski	X		
Timothy M. Kennedy	X		
Maxine Dexter	X		
Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.	X		
Kelly Morrison	X		
Total	11	13	

An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 980 offered by Mr. Conaway was not agreed to by a recorded vote of 11 ayes, 13 noes. The names of Members voting for and against follow:

ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH CONGRESS
 U.S. STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
 MIKE BOST, CHAIRMAN

MARKUP

FULL COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES

Date: **Tuesday, May 6, 2025**
 Subject: **Approval of Conaway Amendment #1 to the Amendment in the
 Nature of a Substitute**

NAME	YEA/AYE	NAY/NO	Present
Mike Bost		X	
Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen			
Jack Bergman		X	
Nancy Mace		X	
Mariannette Miller-Meeks		X	
Gregory F. Murphy		X	
Derrick Van Orden		X	
Morgan Luttrell		X	
Juan Ciscomani		X	
Keith Self		X	
Jennifer A. Kiggans		X	
Abraham J. Hamadeh		X	
Kimberlyn King-Hinds		X	
Tom Barrett		X	
Mark Takano	X		
Julia Brownley	X		
Chris Pappas	X		
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick	X		
Morgan McGarvey	X		
Delia C. Ramirez	X		
Nikki Budzinski	X		
Timothy M. Kennedy	X		
Maxine Dexter	X		
Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.	X		
Kelly Morrison	X		
Total	11	13	

An amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 980 offered by Mr. Conaway was not agreed to by a recorded vote of 11 ayes, 13 noes. The names of Members voting for and against follow:

ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH CONGRESS
 U.S. STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
 MIKE BOST, CHAIRMAN

MARKUP

FULL COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES

Date: **Tuesday, May 6, 2025**
 Subject: **Approval of Conway Amendment #2 to the Amendment in the
 Nature of a Substitute**

NAME	YEA/AYE	NAY/NO	Present
Mike Bost		X	
Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen			
Jack Bergman		X	
Nancy Mace		X	
Mariannette Miller-Meeks		X	
Gregory F. Murphy		X	
Derrick Van Orden		X	
Morgan Luttrell		X	
Juan Ciscomani		X	
Keith Self		X	
Jennifer A. Kiggans		X	
Abraham J. Hamadeh		X	
Kimberlyn King-Hinds		X	
Tom Barrett		X	
Mark Takano	X		
Julia Brownley	X		
Chris Pappas	X		
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick	X		
Morgan McGarvey	X		
Delia C. Ramirez	X		
Nikki Budzinski	X		
Timothy M. Kennedy	X		
Maxine Dexter	X		
Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.	X		
Kelly Morrison	X		
Total	11	13	

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII and clause (2)(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee's oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the descriptive portions of this report.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee's performance goals and objectives of H.R. 980, as amended, are to improve communication channels within the VR&E program and provide increased oversight and modernizations for veterans enrolled in the program.

EARMARKS AND TAX AND TARIFF BENEFITS

H.R. 980, as amended, does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

The Committee adopts as its own the Congressional Budget Office cost estimate on this measure.

BUDGET AUTHORITY AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause (3)(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following is the cost estimate for H.R. 980, as amended, provided by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974:

At a Glance			
H.R. 980, Veterans Readiness and Employment Improvement Act of 2025			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on May 6, 2025			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2025	2025-2030	2025-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	*	10	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	*	10	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	2	64	137
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	< \$2.5 billion	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	< \$5 billion	Mandate Effects	
		Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.			

The bill would:

- Expand the types of flight training available to veterans under the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program

- Extend the reduction of pensions that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pays to veterans and survivors residing in Medicaid nursing homes
 - Require VA to undertake additional outreach activities related to the VR&E program

Estimated budgetary effects would mainly stem from:

- Compensating VA staff to provide additional outreach activities related to the VR&E program
- Paying benefits for veterans pursuing flight training
- Reducing pension payments

Bill summary: H.R. 980 would expand the types of flight training available to veterans under the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program and extend the reduction of pension payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for veterans and survivors who reside in Medicaid nursing homes. The bill also would establish new outreach requirements for VA related to the VR&E program.

Estimated Federal cost: The estimated budgetary effects of H.R. 980 are shown in Table 1. Over the 2025–2035 period, the bill would change net direct spending by less than \$500,000 and increase spending subject to appropriation by \$137 million. The costs of the legislation fall within budget functions 550 (health) and 700 (veterans benefits and services).

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF H.R. 980

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—												
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2025–2030	2025–2035
	INCREASES OR DECREASES (–) IN DIRECT SPENDING												
Estimated Budget													
Authority	*	2	2	2	2	2	2	–21	3	3	3	10	*
Estimated Outlays	*	2	2	2	2	2	2	–21	3	3	3	10	*
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION													
Estimated Authoriza-													
tion	2	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	15	15	15	65	138
Estimated Outlays	2	11	12	13	13	13	14	14	15	15	15	64	137

* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 980 will be enacted in fiscal year 2025 and that provisions will take effect upon enactment. CBO also estimates that outlays will follow historical spending patterns for affected programs.

Direct spending: H.R. 980 would expand the types of flight training available to veterans under the VR&E program. The bill also would extend the reduction of pension payments for veterans and survivors who reside in a Medicaid nursing home. The costs of both of those programs are paid from mandatory appropriations. In total, the bill would change net direct spending by less than \$500,000 over the 2025–2035 period (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.—ESTIMATED CHANGES IN DIRECT SPENDING UNDER H.R. 980

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—												
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2025–2030	2025–2035
Flight Training:													
Estimated Budget Authority	*	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	10	24
Estimated Outlays	*	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	10	24
Pensions:													
Estimated Budget Authority	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–24	0	0	0	0	–24
Estimated Outlays	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–24	0	0	0	0	–24
Total Changes:													
Estimated Budget Authority	*	2	2	2	2	2	2	–21	3	3	3	10	*
Estimated Outlays	*	2	2	2	2	2	2	–21	3	3	3	10	*

* = between –\$500,000 and \$500,000.

Flight training: Veterans with service-connected disabilities that negatively affect their ability to work can receive vocational rehabilitation services such as educational assistance, job training, skills counseling, and independent-living services. For veterans pursuing education or training programs, VA pays their tuition, fees, and related costs as well as housing allowances. Under current law, the benefit can be used for flight training that leads to a college degree; section 3 would allow veterans to use the benefit for flight training programs that do not lead to a degree. (Non-degree flight training programs are often provided by vocational pilot schools rather than colleges or universities; they issue licenses or certifications upon successful completion.)

Using information from VA on the number of students using the Post-9/11 GI Bill for non-degree flight training, CBO expects that roughly 120 veterans who would not otherwise receive vocational rehabilitation would pursue such training under the bill each year, at an average annual cost of \$18,300 per person. As a result, CBO estimates that enacting section 3 would increase direct spending by \$24 million over the 2025–2035 period.

Pensions: Under current law, VA reduces pension payments to veterans and survivors who reside in Medicaid nursing homes to \$90 per month. That required reduction expires November 30, 2031. Section 5 would extend that reduction for six months through May 31, 2032. CBO estimates that extending that requirement would reduce VA benefits by \$10 million per month. (Those benefits are paid from mandatory appropriations and are therefore considered direct spending.) As a result of that reduction in beneficiaries' income, Medicaid would pay more of the cost of their care, increasing spending for that program by \$6 million per month. Thus, enacting section 5 would reduce net direct spending by \$24 million over the 2025–2035 period.

Spending subject to appropriation: Section 4 would require VA to hold monthly informational sessions with school officials to answer questions concerning the VR&E program and to offer in-person or virtual briefings for veterans regarding VR&E services. CBO estimates that VA would need two trained outreach specialists at each of its 56 regional offices to provide those activities. Using information on VA personnel expenses, CBO estimates that implementing section 4 would increase spending subject to appropriation by \$137 million over the 2025–2035 period (see Table 3).

TABLE 3.—ESTIMATED INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION UNDER H.R. 980

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—												
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2025–2030	2025–2035
Outreach:													
Authorization	2	12	12	13	13	13	14	14	15	15	15	65	138
Estimated Outlays	2	11	12	13	13	13	14	14	15	15	15	64	137

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. The net changes in outlays that are subject to those pay-as-you-go procedures are shown in Table 2.

Increase in long-term net direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 980 would not increase net direct spending by more than \$2.5 billion in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 980 would not increase on-budget deficits by more than \$5 billion in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036.

Mandates: The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Paul B.A. Holland (for Veteran Readiness and Employment program); Logan Smith (for pensions); Mandates: Grace Watson.

Estimate reviewed by: David Newman, Chief, Defense, International Affairs, and Veterans' Affairs Cost Estimates Unit; Kathleen Fitzgerald, Chief, Public and Private Mandates Unit; Christina Hawley Anthony, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

Estimate approved by: Phillip L. Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

Section 423 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act (as amended by Section 101(a)(2) of the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act, P.L. 104–4 is inapplicable to H.R. 980, as amended.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act would be created by H.R. 980, as amended.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that H.R. 980, as amended, does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

STATEMENT ON DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(5) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds that no provision of H.R. 980, as amended, would establish or reauthorize a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal

program, a program that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111-139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This section would establish the short title of the bill as the “Veterans Readiness and Employment Improvement Act of 2025”

Section 2. Elimination of requirement that on-campus educational and vocational counselling is provided by certain department of veterans affairs employees

This section would amend 38 U.S.C. §3697B(a) by striking the second sentence, which would decouple the VSOC counselor from the requirement that an individual providing counseling services on campus have a master’s degree in a relevant field of study as a minimum education.

Section 3: Authority of Secretary of Veterans Affairs to approve non-degree flight training courses as part of vocational rehabilitation programs for certain veterans with service-connected disabilities

This section would amend 38 U.S.C. §3104(b) by allowing the Secretary to approve a rehabilitation program for a veteran under this chapter that includes the pursuit of a course of flight training other than one given by degree granting flight training institution.

Section 4: Outreach requirements for Department of Veterans Affairs training and rehabilitation programs for veterans with service-connected disabilities

This section would amend 38 U.S.C. §3104 by adding a new subsection that would establish a dedicated telephone number within the Education Call Center Department for calls regarding the VR&E program. Additionally, each regional office would include on the website of the regional office, a name, telephone number, and email address, through which veterans may receive information about services provided under this chapter.

This section would add a monthly question and answer session for SCOs to ask questions about the VR&E program to VA employees. This section would also add an additional subsection requiring the Secretary to ensure that VR&E counselors or trained outreach specialists employed at each regional office must provide an in-person briefing for veterans interested in the program at each educational institution under their purview. If the educational institution is over 50 miles away, then a virtual briefing is permitted.

This section would also establish an annual mandated report one year after enactment and annually thereafter on the entitlement extension waivers. This report would be sent to the House and Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committees. This report would include the number of veterans who requested such extension, the number of approved requests, and the number of rejected requests. Finally, in this section if a veteran applies for an extension the VA Secretary

would have to approve or reject the extension no later than 30 days after the date on which the extension was submitted.

Section 5: Extension of certain limits on payments of pension

This section would extend the limitation of pension payable to certain veterans, their surviving spouses, and their children as established in section 5503(d)(7) of Title 38, United States Code, from November 30, 2031, to May 31, 2032.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

* * * * *

PART III—READJUSTMENT AND RELATED BENEFITS

* * * * *

CHAPTER 31—TRAINING AND REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

Sec.

3100. Purposes.

* * * * *

3123. *Outreach requirements.*

* * * * *

§ 3104. Scope of services and assistance

(a) Services and assistance which the Secretary may provide under this chapter, pursuant to regulations which the Secretary shall prescribe, include the following:

(1) Evaluation, including periodic reevaluations as appropriate with respect to a veteran participating in a rehabilitation program, of the potential for rehabilitation of a veteran, including diagnostic and related services (A) to determine whether the veteran has an employment handicap or a serious employment handicap and whether a vocational goal is reasonably feasible for such veteran, and (B) to provide a basis for planning a suitable vocational rehabilitation program or a pro-

gram of services and assistance to improve the vocational rehabilitation potential or independent living status of such veteran, as appropriate.

(2) Educational, vocational, psychological, employment, and personal adjustment counseling.

(3) An allowance and other appropriate assistance, as authorized by section 3108 of this title.

(4) A work-study allowance as authorized by section 3485 of this title.

(5) Placement services to effect suitable placement in employment, and postplacement services to attempt to insure satisfactory adjustment in employment.

(6) Personal adjustment and work adjustment training.

(7)(A) Vocational and other training services and assistance, including individualized tutorial assistance, tuition, fees, books, supplies, handling charges, licensing fees, and equipment and other training materials determined by the Secretary to be necessary to accomplish the purposes of the rehabilitation program in the individual case.

(B) Payment for the services and assistance provided under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall be made from funds available for the payment of readjustment benefits.

(8) Loans as authorized by section 3112 of this title.

(9) Treatment, care, and services described in chapter 17 of this title.

(10) Prosthetic appliances, eyeglasses, and other corrective and assistive devices.

(11) Services to a veteran's family as necessary for the effective rehabilitation of such veteran.

(12) Such license fees and essential equipment, supplies, and minimum stocks of materials as the Secretary determines to be necessary for a veteran to begin self-employment and are within the criteria and cost limitations that the Secretary shall prescribe in regulations for the furnishing of such fees, equipment, supplies, and stocks.

(13) Travel and incidental expenses under the terms and conditions set forth in section 111 of this title, plus, in the case of a veteran who because of such veteran's disability has transportation expenses in addition to those incurred by persons not so disabled, a special transportation allowance to defray such additional expenses during rehabilitation, job seeking, and the initial employment stage.

(14) Special services (including services related to blindness and deafness) including—

(A) language training, speech and voice correction, training in ambulation, and one-hand typewriting;

(B) orientation, adjustment, mobility, reader, interpreter, and related services; and

(C) telecommunications, sensory, and other technical aids and devices.

(15) Services necessary to enable a veteran to achieve maximum independence in daily living.

(16) Other incidental goods and services determined by the Secretary to be necessary to accomplish the purposes of a rehabilitation program in an individual case.

(b)(1) A rehabilitation program (including individual courses) to be pursued by a veteran shall be subject to the approval of the Secretary. **【To the maximum extent practicable】** *Except as provided under paragraph (2), to the maximum extent practicable*, a course of education or training may be pursued by a veteran as part of a rehabilitation program under this chapter only if the course is approved for purposes of chapter 30 or 33 of this title. The Secretary may waive the requirement under the preceding sentence to the extent the Secretary determines appropriate.

(2) *Notwithstanding section 3680A(b) of this title, the Secretary may approve a rehabilitation program for a veteran under this chapter that includes the pursuit of a course of flight training other than one given by an educational institution of higher learning for credit toward a standard college degree the veteran is seeking.*

(c)(1) The Secretary shall have the authority to administer this chapter by prioritizing the provision of services under this chapter based on need, as determined by the Secretary, including with respect to providing priority for services under subsection (a)(12) to veterans with the most severe service-connected disabilities who require homebound training or self-employment, or both homebound training and self-employment. In evaluating need for purposes of this subsection, the Secretary shall consider disability ratings, the severity of employment handicaps, qualification for a program of independent living, income, and any other factor the Secretary determines appropriate.

(2) Not later than 90 days before making any changes to the prioritization of the provision of services under this chapter as authorized under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a plan describing such changes.

(d) The Secretary may not assist a veteran in acquiring adaptations to the residence of the veteran under this chapter. Any such assistance may be furnished only under section 2102B of this title.

(e) In the case of any veteran whom the Secretary determines is satisfactorily following a program of employment services provided under subsection (a)(5) during the period of an emergency situation, the Secretary may pay the veteran a subsistence allowance, as prescribed in section 3108 of this title for full-time training for the type of program that the veteran was pursuing, for two additional months, if the Secretary determines that the veteran is negatively affected by the emergency situation.

(f) *The Secretary shall establish a dedicated telephone number within the Education Call Center of the Department for calls about services provided under this chapter. Each regional office of the Department shall include, on the website of the regional office, a name, telephone number, and email address, through which veterans may receive information about services provided under this chapter.*

§ 3105. Duration of rehabilitation programs

(a) In any case in which the Secretary is unable to determine whether it currently is reasonably feasible for a veteran to achieve a vocational goal, the period of extended evaluation under section 3106(c) of this title may not exceed twelve months, except that such period may be extended for additional periods of up to six months each if the Secretary determines before granting any such exten-

sion that it is reasonably likely that, during the period of any such extension, a determination can be made whether the achievement of a vocational goal is reasonably feasible in the case of such veteran.

(b)(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) and in subsection (c), the period of a vocational rehabilitation program for a veteran under this chapter following a determination of the current reasonable feasibility of achieving a vocational goal may not exceed forty-eight months, except that the counseling and placement and postplacement services described in section 3104(a)(2) and (5) of this title may be provided for an additional period not to exceed eighteen months in any case in which the Secretary determines the provision of such counseling and services to be necessary to accomplish the purposes of a rehabilitation program in the individual case.

(2) The period of a vocational rehabilitation program pursued by a veteran under section 3102(b) of this title following a determination of the current reasonable feasibility of achieving a vocational goal may not exceed 12 months.

(3)(A) In any case in which the Secretary determines that a veteran has been prevented from participating in counseling and placement and postplacement services described in paragraphs (2) and (5) of section 3104(a) of this title due to an emergency situation, the Secretary shall extend the period during which the Secretary may provide such counseling and placement and postplacement services for the veteran for a period equal to the number of months that the veteran was so prevented from participating in such counseling and services, as determined by the Secretary.

(B) In any case in which the Secretary determines that a veteran has been prevented from participating in a vocational rehabilitation program under this chapter due to an emergency situation, the Secretary shall extend the period of the veteran's vocational rehabilitation program for a period equal to the number of months that the veteran was so prevented from participating in the vocational rehabilitation program, as determined by the Secretary.

(c)(1) The Secretary may extend the period of a vocational rehabilitation program for a veteran to the extent that the Secretary determines that an extension of such period is necessary to enable such veteran to achieve a vocational goal if the Secretary also determines—

[(1)] (A) that such veteran had previously been rehabilitated to the point of employability but (A) such veteran's need for further vocational rehabilitation has arisen out of a worsening of such veteran's service-connected disability that precludes such veteran from performing the duties of the occupation for which such veteran had been so rehabilitated, or (B) the occupation for which such veteran had been so rehabilitated is not suitable in view of such veteran's current employment handicap and capabilities; or

[(2)] (B) under regulations which the Secretary shall prescribe, that such veteran has a serious employment handicap and that an extension of such period is necessary to accomplish the purposes of a rehabilitation program for such veteran.

(2) If a veteran applies for an extension under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall approve or reject the extension by not later than 30 days after the date on which the veteran submits a request for the extension.

(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the period of a program of independent living services and assistance for a veteran under this chapter (following a determination by the Secretary that such veteran's disability or disabilities are so severe that the achievement of a vocational goal currently is not reasonably feasible) may not exceed twenty-four months.

(2)(A) The period of a program of independent living services and assistance for a veteran under this chapter may exceed twenty-four months as follows:

(i) If the Secretary determines that a longer period is necessary and likely to result in a substantial increase in the veteran's level of independence in daily living.

(ii) If the veteran served on active duty during the Post-9/11 Global Operations period and has a severe disability (as determined by the Secretary for purposes of this clause) incurred or aggravated in such service.

(B) In this paragraph, the term "Post-9/11 Global Operations period" means the period of the Persian Gulf War beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on the date thereafter prescribed by Presidential proclamation or by law.

(e)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter or chapter 36 of this title, any payment of a subsistence allowance and other assistance described in paragraph (2) shall not—

(A) be charged against any entitlement of any veteran under this chapter; or

(B) be counted toward the aggregate period for which section 3695 of this title limits an individual's receipt of allowance or assistance.

(2) The payment of the subsistence allowance and other assistance referred to in paragraph (1) is the payment of such an allowance or assistance for the period described in paragraph (3) to a veteran for participation in a vocational rehabilitation program under this chapter if the Secretary finds that the veteran had to suspend or discontinue participation in such vocational rehabilitation program as a result of being ordered to serve on active duty under section 688, 12301(a), 12301(d), 12301(g), 12302, 12304, 12304a, or 12304b of title 10.

(3) The period for which, by reason of this subsection, a subsistence allowance and other assistance is not charged against entitlement or counted toward the applicable aggregate period under section 3695 of this title shall be the period of participation in the vocational rehabilitation program for which the veteran failed to receive credit or with respect to which the veteran lost training time, as determined by the Secretary.

* * * * *

§3123. Outreach requirements

(a) *QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSIONS.—The Secretary shall provide monthly question and answer sessions for appropriate school certifying officials during which such officials shall have the opportunity to ask questions of Department employees who are veteran*

readiness and employment counselors or trained outreach specialists.

(b) *INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS.*—(1) *The Secretary shall ensure that veteran readiness and employment counselors or trained outreach specialists employed by a Regional Office of the Department provide in-person briefings for veterans about services provided under this chapter at each educational institution located in the geographic area served by the Regional Office.*

(2) *The Secretary may provide a briefing required under paragraph (1) virtually in the case of an educational institution located more than 50 miles away from the headquarters of the Regional Office.*

(c) *ANNUAL REPORT.*—*Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the extension of periods of vocational rehabilitation programs under section 3105(c) of this title. Such report shall include, for the year covered by the report—*

- (1) *the number of veterans who requested such an extension;*
- (2) *the number of such requests that were approved; and*
- (3) *the number of such requests that were rejected.*

* * * * *

CHAPTER 36—ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

* * * * *

SUBCHAPTER III—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

* * * * *

§ 3697B. On-campus educational and vocational counseling

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—The Secretary shall provide educational and vocational counseling services for individuals described in section 3697A(b) of this title at locations on the campuses of institutions of higher learning selected by the Secretary. [Such counseling services shall be provided by employees of the Department who provide such services under section 3697A of this title.]

(b) *SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.*—(1) To be selected by the Secretary under this section, an institution of higher learning shall provide an appropriate space on the campus of the institution where counseling services can be provided under this section.

(2) In selecting locations for the provision of counseling services under this section, the Secretary shall seek to select locations where the maximum number of veterans would have access to such services.

(c) *ANNUAL REPORT.*—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the counseling services provided under this section. Such report shall include, for the year covered by the report—

- (1) *the average ratio of counselors providing such services to individuals who received such services at each location where such services were provided;*
- (2) *a description of such services provided;*

- (3) the recommendations of the Secretary for improving the provision of such services; and
- (4) any other matters the Secretary determines appropriate.

* * * * *

PART IV—GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

* * * * *

CHAPTER 55—MINORS, INCOMPETENTS, AND OTHER WARDS

* * * * *

§ 5503. Hospitalized veterans and estates of incompetent institutionalized veterans

(a)(1)(A) Where any veteran having neither spouse nor child is being furnished domiciliary care by the Department, no pension in excess of \$90 per month shall be paid to or for the veteran for any period after the end of the third full calendar month following the month of admission for such care.

(B) Except as provided in subparagraph (D) of this paragraph, where any veteran having neither spouse nor child is being furnished nursing home care by the Department, no pension in excess of \$90 per month shall be paid to or for the veteran for any period after the end of the third full calendar month following the month of admission for such care. Any amount in excess of \$90 per month to which the veteran would be entitled but for the application of the preceding sentence shall be deposited in a revolving fund at the Department medical facility which furnished the veteran nursing care, and such amount shall be available for obligation without fiscal year limitation to help defray operating expenses of that facility.

(C) No pension in excess of \$90 per month shall be paid to or for a veteran having neither spouse nor child for any period after the month in which such veteran is readmitted for care described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of this paragraph and furnished by the Department if such veteran is readmitted within six months of a period of care in connection with which pension was reduced pursuant to subparagraph (A) or (B) of this paragraph.

(D) In the case of a veteran being furnished nursing home care by the Department and with respect to whom subparagraph (B) of this paragraph requires a reduction in pension, such reduction shall not be made for a period of up to three additional calendar months after the last day of the third month referred to in such subparagraph if the Secretary determines that the primary purpose for the furnishing of such care during such additional period is for the Department to provide such veteran with a prescribed program of rehabilitation services, under chapter 17 of this title, designed to restore such veteran's ability to function within such veteran's family and community. If the Secretary determines that it is necessary, after such period, for the veteran to continue such program of rehabilitation services in order to achieve the purposes of such program and that the primary purpose of furnishing nursing home

care to the veteran continues to be the provision of such program to the veteran, the reduction in pension required by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph shall not be made for the number of calendar months that the Secretary determines is necessary for the veteran to achieve the purposes of such program.

(2) The provisions of paragraph (1) shall also apply to a veteran being furnished such care who has a spouse but whose pension is payable under section 1521(b) of this title. In such a case, the Secretary may apportion and pay to the spouse, upon an affirmative showing of hardship, all or any part of the amounts in excess of the amount payable to the veteran while being furnished such care which would be payable to the veteran if pension were payable under section 1521(c) of this title.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section or any other provision of law, no reduction shall be made in the pension of any veteran for any part of the period during which the veteran is furnished hospital treatment, or institutional or domiciliary care, for Hansen's disease, by the United States or any political subdivision thereof.

(c) Where any veteran in receipt of an aid and attendance allowance described in subsection (r) or (t) of section 1114 of this title is hospitalized at Government expense, such allowance shall be discontinued from the first day of the second calendar month which begins after the date of the veteran's admission for such hospitalization for so long as such hospitalization continues. Any discontinuance required by administrative regulation, during hospitalization of a veteran by the Department, of increased pension based on need of regular aid and attendance or additional compensation based on need of regular aid and attendance as described in subsection (l) or (m) of section 1114 of this title, shall not be effective earlier than the first day of the second calendar month which begins after the date of the veteran's admission for hospitalization. In case a veteran affected by this subsection leaves a hospital against medical advice and is thereafter admitted to hospitalization within six months from the date of such departure, such allowance, increased pension, or additional compensation, as the case may be, shall be discontinued from the date of such readmission for so long as such hospitalization continues.

(d)(1) For the purposes of this subsection—

(A) the term "Medicaid plan" means a State plan for medical assistance referred to in section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)); and

(B) the term "nursing facility" means a nursing facility described in section 1919 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r), other than a facility that is a State home with respect to which the Secretary makes per diem payments for nursing home care pursuant to section 1741(a) of this title.

(2) If a veteran having neither spouse nor child is covered by a Medicaid plan for services furnished such veteran by a nursing facility, no pension in excess of \$90 per month shall be paid to or for the veteran for any period after the month of admission to such nursing facility.

(3) Notwithstanding any provision of title XIX of the Social Security Act, the amount of the payment paid a nursing facility pursuant to a Medicaid plan for services furnished a veteran may not be

reduced by any amount of pension permitted to be paid such veteran under paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(4) A veteran is not liable to the United States for any payment of pension in excess of the amount permitted under this subsection that is paid to or for the veteran by reason of the inability or failure of the Secretary to reduce the veteran's pension under this subsection unless such inability or failure is the result of a willful concealment by the veteran of information necessary to make a reduction in pension under this subsection.

(5)(A) The provisions of this subsection shall apply with respect to a surviving spouse having no child in the same manner as they apply to a veteran having neither spouse nor child.

(B) The provisions of this subsection shall apply with respect to a child entitled to pension under section 1542 of this title in the same manner as they apply to a veteran having neither spouse nor child.

(6) The costs of administering this subsection shall be paid for from amounts available to the Department of Veterans Affairs for the payment of compensation and pension.

(7) This subsection expires on **【November 30, 2031】 May 31, 2032.**

* * * * *

