

HR 2349

Veterans' Benefits Act of 2011

Congress: 112 (2011–2013, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Jun 24, 2011

Current Status: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Latest Action: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. (Oct 12, 2011)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/house-bill/2349>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Runyan, Jon [R-NJ-3]

Party: Republican • **State:** NJ • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (1 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Bilirakis, Gus M. [R-FL-9]	R · FL		Sep 20, 2011

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Discharged from	Sep 7, 2011
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Referred To	Oct 12, 2011

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
112 S 1707	Related bill	Sep 12, 2012: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.
112 S 1847	Related bill	Nov 10, 2011: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
112 HR 1898	Related bill	Jul 22, 2011: Forwarded by Subcommittee to Full Committee by Voice Vote .

(This measure has not been amended since it was reported to the House on October 6, 2011. The summary of that version is repeated here.)

Veterans' Benefits Act of 2011 - (Sec. 2) Directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to conduct a four-year pilot program to: (1) biennially assess the skills of appropriate Veterans Benefits Administration employees and managers responsible for processing VA compensation and pension benefit claims; (2) develop and implement individualized training plans related to such skills; (3) provide remediation for deficiently skilled employees or managers receiving a less than satisfactory result on any portion of the assessment; and (4) take appropriate disciplinary actions with respect to individuals failing to receive a satisfactory result after being given two opportunities for such remediation. Authorizes appropriations. Requires the Secretary to report annually during the program period to the congressional veterans committees on such assessment and the training conducted.

(Sec. 3) Excludes from annual income, for purposes of eligibility for pensions for veterans and their surviving spouses and children, reimbursements resulting from: (1) any accident; (2) any theft or loss; (3) any casualty loss; (4) medical expenses resulting from any such accident, theft, or loss; and (5) pain and suffering (including insurance settlement payments and general damages awarded by a court) related to such accident, theft, or loss.

Extends through November 18, 2011, VA authority to obtain veterans' income verification information from the Secretary of the Treasury or the Commissioner of Social Security.

(Sec. 4) Directs the Secretary to notify VA benefits claimants by the most effective means available, including electronic communication or notification in writing, of any information or medical or lay evidence not previously provided to the Secretary that is necessary to substantiate a claim. (Current law does not specify the means of notice.)

(Sec. 5) Requires the Secretary, in assisting claimants in obtaining relevant records in support of a claim, to make at least two requests to a custodian of a private medical record, unless it is made evident by the first request that a second request would be futile. Directs the Secretary to encourage claimants to submit relevant private medical records if such submission does not burden the claimant. Allows the claimant to instead authorize the Secretary to obtain such records. Provides procedures for the obtaining of public records by the Secretary.

(Sec. 6) Prohibits, in any case arising out of the administration of laws and benefits by VA, considering any person who is mentally incapacitated, deemed mentally incompetent, or experiencing an extended loss of consciousness from being considered adjudicated as a mental defective for purposes of the right to receive or transport firearms without the order or finding of a judge, magistrate, or other judicial authority of competent jurisdiction that such person is a danger to himself or herself or others.

(Sec. 7) Provides criminal penalties against any person who solicits, contracts for, charges, or receives any fee or compensation from a veteran, other than that currently permitted under law, for: (1) advice on how to file a benefits claim; or (2) the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of a claim before the date on which a notice of disagreement is filed in a proceeding on the claim.

(Sec. 8) Prohibits the Secretary from paying more than \$2 million in Senior Executive Service performance awards for each of FY2012-FY2016.

Actions Timeline

- **Oct 12, 2011:** Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
- **Oct 11, 2011:** Mr. Miller (FL) moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.
- **Oct 11, 2011:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H6695-6698)
- **Oct 11, 2011:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on H.R. 2349.
- **Oct 11, 2011:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote.(text: CR H6695-6696)
- **Oct 11, 2011:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by voice vote. (text: CR H6695-6696)
- **Oct 11, 2011:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Oct 11, 2011:** The title of the measure was amended. Agreed to without objection.
- **Oct 6, 2011:** Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H. Rept. 112-241.
- **Oct 6, 2011:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 159.
- **Sep 8, 2011:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Sep 8, 2011:** Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.
- **Sep 7, 2011:** Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Discharged.
- **Jul 8, 2011:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.
- **Jul 7, 2011:** Hearings Held by the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Prior to Referral.
- **Jun 24, 2011:** Introduced in House
- **Jun 24, 2011:** Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.