

## S 1286

### Veterans Appeals Assistance and Improvement Act of 2015

**Congress:** 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

**Chamber:** Senate

**Policy Area:** Armed Forces and National Security

**Introduced:** May 11, 2015

**Current Status:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

**Latest Action:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. (May 11, 2015)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1286>

## Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Shaheen, Jeanne [D-NH]

**Party:** Democratic • **State:** NH • **Chamber:** Senate

## Cosponsors (10 total)

| Cosponsor                       | Party / State | Role | Date Joined  |
|---------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI]      | D · WI        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Bennet, Michael F. [D-CO]  | D · CO        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH]      | D · OH        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Cardin, Benjamin L. [D-MD] | D · MD        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]      | D · MN        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]   | D · VT        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Udall, Tom [D-NM]          | D · NM        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI] | D · RI        |      | May 11, 2015 |
| Sen. Reed, Jack [D-RI]          | D · RI        |      | Oct 29, 2015 |
| Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT] | D · CT        |      | Jan 27, 2016 |

## Committee Activity

| Committee                   | Chamber | Activity    | Date         |
|-----------------------------|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Veterans' Affairs Committee | Senate  | Referred To | May 11, 2015 |

## Subjects & Policy Tags

### Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

## Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

## **Veterans Appeals Assistance and Improvement Act of 2015**

This bill directs the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to establish a financial assistance program to provide legal and other assistance without charge for veterans and other persons seeking Court review who are unable to afford legal representation costs. (Programs include case screening and referral, training for attorney and related personnel, and facilitation of pro bono representation by members of the bar and law school clinical and other programs.)

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shall establish a financial assistance program to provide legal and other assistance without charge to veterans and other persons seeking review by the Board of Veterans' Appeals who are unable to afford legal representation costs.

The Court and the VA shall each carry out such programs through an interagency agreement with the Legal Services Corporation. The Corporation may receive a reimbursable payment from the Court or VA for providing such financial assistance. Funds may not be used for the payment of attorney's fees.

VA shall provide for the expeditious treatment by the Board of any claim that: (1) is remanded to VA by the Court, or (2) has been pending before the Board for eight years or more.

The Government Accountability Office shall review the processing of appeals of VA decisions regarding service-connected disability and dependency and indemnity compensation claims.

## **Actions Timeline**

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- **May 11, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **May 11, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.