

S 1856

Department of Veterans Affairs Equitable Employee Accountability Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Feb 23, 2015

Current Status: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 114-212.

Latest Action: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 114-212. (Sep 16, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1856>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]

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

Cosponsors (28 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH]	D · OH		Jul 23, 2015
Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI]	D · HI		Jul 23, 2015
Sen. Murray, Patty [D-WA]	D · WA		Jul 23, 2015
Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT]	I · VT		Jul 23, 2015
Sen. Tester, Jon [D-MT]	D · MT		Jul 23, 2015
Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA]	D · MA		Jul 30, 2015
Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI]	D · WI		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Bennet, Michael F. [D-CO]	D · CO		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA]	D · PA		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Kaine, Tim [D-VA]	D · VA		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Menendez, Robert [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Udall, Tom [D-NM]	D · NM		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]	D · MA		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Cantwell, Maria [D-WA]	D · WA		Aug 6, 2015
Sen. Cardin, Benjamin L. [D-MD]	D · MD		Aug 6, 2015
Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]	D · VT		Aug 6, 2015
Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Aug 6, 2015
Sen. Mikulski, Barbara A. [D-MD]	D · MD		Sep 8, 2015
Sen. Peters, Gary C. [D-MI]	D · MI		Sep 24, 2015
Sen. Stabenow, Debbie [D-MI]	D · MI		Oct 21, 2015
Sen. Shaheen, Jeanne [D-NH]	D · NH		Oct 26, 2015
Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI]	D · RI		Nov 4, 2015
Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Nov 9, 2015
Sen. Heinrich, Martin [D-NM]	D · NM		Nov 10, 2015
Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Nov 16, 2015
Sen. Franken, Al [D-MN]	D · MN		Dec 1, 2015
Sen. Boxer, Barbara [D-CA]	D · CA		Apr 19, 2016

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Hearings By (full committee)	Sep 16, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Department of Veterans Affairs Equitable Employee Accountability Act of 2015

This bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to: (1) suspend a VA employee without pay if the employee's performance or misconduct is a clear and direct threat to public health or safety; and (2) remove a suspended employee when, after investigation and review, removal is determined necessary for public health or safety interests.

A suspended employee is entitled, after suspension and before removal, to:

- a written statement of the specific charges and an opportunity to answer the charges and submit affidavits,
- a case review by the VA before a decision adverse to the employee is made final, and
- a written statement of the VA's decision.

A VA employee who is suspended or removed is entitled to: (1) appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board; and (2) back pay, less amounts otherwise earned during such period, if the suspension or removal is determined to be unwarranted.

The VA shall:

- conduct an annual performance plan for each political appointee that is similar to that conducted for VA Senior Executive Service employees;
- provide managers with training on the rights of whistle blowers and how to address reports of hostile work environment, reprisal, or harassment; and
- develop a promotional track for technical expert employees that allows for career advancement without being required to transition to management positions.

Evaluation of VA managers shall include actions taken to address employee performance.

Before terminating VA employment an official who has participated personally and substantially in a VA acquisition that exceeds \$1 million or held a key acquisitions position at the VA shall obtain a written opinion from a VA ethics counselor regarding any restrictions on activities that the official may undertake on behalf of a contractor during the two-year period after the official terminates VA employment.

A contractor may not knowingly provide compensation to such an individual during the two-year period unless the contractor determines that the individual has obtained or requested such written opinion.

The VA may not place an individual subject to disciplinary action on administrative leave for more than 14 business days during any 365-day period.

Actions Timeline

- **Sep 16, 2015:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 114-212.
- **Jul 23, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. (Sponsor introductory remarks on measure: CR S5528-5530)
- **Feb 23, 2015:** Introduced in Senate