

HR 2256

Veterans Information Modernization Act

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: May 12, 2015

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. (Jul 22, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2256>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Benishek, Dan [R-MI-1]

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

Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Reported by	May 15, 2015
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Referred To	Jul 22, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 S 2921	Related bill	May 16, 2016: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 467.
114 S 2334	Related bill	Nov 30, 2015: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Veterans Information Modernization Act

(Sec. 2) This bill directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to report annually to Congress during 2016 through 2020 on its furnishing of hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care.

Each report shall:

- evaluate the effectiveness of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) program in improving the quality of, and increasing access to, veterans hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care; and
- assess physician and other VHA employee workloads, patient demographics and utilization rates, physician compensation, physician and VHA employee productivity, the percentage of hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care provided to veterans in VA facilities and in non-VA facilities, pharmaceutical prices, and outstanding third party health billings.

(Sec. 3) The definition of homeless veteran is expanded for purposes of VA benefits.

(Sec. 4) The VA shall: (1) adopt the device identification system developed for medical devices by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or implement a comparable standard identification system to identify biological implants for use in VA medical facilities, (2) implement a system for tracking biological implants from human or animal source to implantation which shall be compatible with the identification system, and (3) implement inventory recall controls compatible with the tracking system.

180-day implementation deadlines are set for the identification and tracking systems.

(Sec. 5) The VA may procure biological implants of human origin only from a vendor that:

- uses the standard identification system and has safeguards to ensure that a distinct identity code has been in place at each distribution step of each biological implant from its donor;
- is registered as required by the FDA, and for a vendor that uses a tissue distribution intermediary or a tissue processor, provides assurances that the intermediary or processor is registered as required by the FDA;
- ensures that donor eligibility determinations and other records accompany each biological implant at all times, regardless of the donor's country of origin;
- agrees to cooperate with all biological implant recalls;
- agrees to notify the VA of any adverse event or reaction report it provides to the FDA, or of any FDA warning letter issued to the vendor or a tissue processor or tissue distribution intermediary it uses;
- agrees to retain all records associated with the procurement of a biological implant by the VA for at least 10 years; and
- provides assurances that the biological implants provided by the vendor are acquired only from tissue processors that maintain active accreditation with the American Association of Tissue Banks or a similar national accreditation specific to biological implants.

The VA may procure biological implants of non-human origin only from a vendor that:

- uses the standard identification system;
- is a registered establishment as required by the FDA, and in the case of a vendor that is not the original product

manufacturer of such implants the vendor provides assurances that the original product manufacturer is registered as required by the FDA;

- agrees to cooperate with all biological implant recalls;
- agrees to notify the VA of any adverse event report it provides to the FDA, or any FDA warning letter issued to the vendor or the original product manufacturer it uses; and
- agrees to retain all records associated with the procurement of a biological implant by the VA for at least 10 years.

The VA shall procure biological implants under the General Services Administration's federal supply schedules unless the implants are not available under them.

A VA procurement employee who procures biological implants with the intent to avoid, or with reckless disregard of, the procurement requirements of this Act shall be ineligible to hold a certificate of appointment as a contracting officer or serve as a representative of an ordering officer, contracting officer, or purchase card holder.

(Sec. 6) Extended through FY2019 is the mandatory rounding down of percentage increases of certain educational assistance rates and survivors' and dependents' educational assistance rates. Post-FY2019 increases shall be rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

(Sec. 7) The Veterans Expedited Recovery Commission is established to:

- examine the efficacy of the evidence-based therapy model for treating mental health illnesses of veterans;
- conduct a patient-centered survey within each of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks to examine the experience of veterans seeking mental health assistance through the VA and non-VA systems, the preferences of veterans regarding mental health treatment, and VA outreach efforts;
- examine complementary alternative treatment therapies for mental health issues; and
- study the potential increase of VA claims relating to mental health issues by veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn, including an assessment of VA resources to meet such claims.

Actions Timeline

- **Jul 22, 2015:** Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
- **Jul 21, 2015:** Mr. Benishek moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.
- **Jul 21, 2015:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H5304-5308)
- **Jul 21, 2015:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on H.R. 2256.
- **Jul 21, 2015:** At the conclusion of debate, the Yeas and Nays were demanded and ordered. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8, rule XX, the Chair announced that further proceedings on the motion would be postponed.
- **Jul 21, 2015:** Considered as unfinished business. (consideration: CR H5316)
- **Jul 21, 2015:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 408 - 0 (Roll no. 449). (text: CR H5304-5306)
- **Jul 21, 2015:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 408 - 0 (Roll no. 449). (text: CR H5304-5306)
- **Jul 21, 2015:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Jul 21, 2015:** The title of the measure was amended. Agreed to without objection.
- **Jul 7, 2015:** Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H. Rept. 114-191.
- **Jul 7, 2015:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 143.
- **May 21, 2015:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **May 21, 2015:** Ordered to be Reported in the Nature of a Substitute (Amended) by Voice Vote.
- **May 15, 2015:** Subcommittee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **May 15, 2015:** Forwarded by Subcommittee to Full Committee by Voice Vote .
- **May 13, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.
- **May 12, 2015:** Introduced in House
- **May 12, 2015:** Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.