

HR 4782

Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2016

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Mar 17, 2016

Current Status: Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 574.

Latest Action: Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 574. (Sep 12, 2016)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/4782>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Abraham, Ralph Lee [R-LA-5]

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

Cosponsors (4 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Titus, Dina [D-NV-1]	D · NV		Mar 17, 2016
Rep. Cartwright, Matt [D-PA-17]	D · PA		Apr 29, 2016
Rep. Heck, Joseph J. [R-NV-3]	R · NV		Apr 29, 2016
Rep. O'Rourke, Beto [D-TX-16]	D · TX		May 11, 2016

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Reported by	May 11, 2016

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 4757	Related bill	Nov 30, 2016: Received in the Senate.
114 HR 5588	Related bill	Jul 22, 2016: Became Public Law No: 114-197.
114 S 3032	Related bill	Jun 29, 2016: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 114-707.
114 HR 3936	Related bill	Jun 22, 2016: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
114 HR 5084	Related bill	May 13, 2016: Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.
114 HR 4758	Related bill	May 11, 2016: Forwarded by Subcommittee to Full Committee in the Nature of a Substitute (Amended) by Voice Vote .
114 S 1493	Related bill	Oct 26, 2015: Held at the desk.
114 HR 675	Related bill	Jul 29, 2015: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2016

(Sec. 2) This bill directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to increase, as of December 1, 2016, the amounts for the payment of veterans' disability compensation, additional compensation for dependents, the clothing allowance for certain disabled veterans, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children.

Each such increase shall be the same percentage as the increase in benefits provided under title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) of the Social Security Act, on the same effective date (rounded to the next lower dollar amount if the amount is not a whole dollar amount).

The VA may adjust administratively the rates of disability compensation payable to persons receiving benefits pursuant to public laws administered by the VA on December 31, 1958 (that are still in effect) who have not received service-connected disability or death compensation.

The VA shall publish such increased amounts in the Federal Register.

(Sec. 3) The VA may pay the cost of transporting a deceased veteran:

- who died as the result of a service-connected disability, or who died while in receipt of disability compensation, to a national cemetery or a state- or tribal-owned veterans' cemetery in which the deceased veteran is eligible to be buried, or
- who has no next of kin or other person claiming the body to a national cemetery in which the deceased veteran is eligible to be buried.

Such payment shall not exceed the cost of transportation to the national cemetery nearest to the veteran's last place of residence in which burial space is available.

(Sec. 4) The VA shall furnish at a private cemetery, upon request, a headstone, marker, or medallion that signifies the status of an eligible veteran who served in the Armed Forces on or after April 6, 1917, as a Medal of Honor recipient.

If the VA furnished a headstone, marker, or medallion for a deceased veteran that does not signify his or her status as a Medal of Honor recipient, the VA shall, upon request, replace that headstone, marker, or medallion with one that signifies such status.

(Sec. 5) The bill authorizes award of the Presidential Memorial Certificate to certain deceased members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and certain deceased members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

(Sec. 6) The Department of the Army shall reserve 100 in-ground burial plots at Arlington National Cemetery for interment of deceased Medal of Honor recipients. Such requirement shall terminate when the Army submits a report on the cemetery's interment and inurnment capacity that includes: (1) the estimated date of achieving maximum capacity; and (2) recommendations to ensure that such capacity is not reached until well into the future, including actions to redefine interment eligibility and considerations for cemetery expansion.

(Sec. 7) The VA, beginning not later than October 1, 2016, shall carry out a three-year pilot program under which the VA shall carry out Veteran Engagement Team events to assist veterans in completing VA disability and pension claims.

Such events shall be carried out:

- during the first year, at least once a month within the jurisdiction of each of 10 VA regional offices, including at least 2 regional offices in each of the 5 districts of the Veterans Benefits Administration;
- during each of the second and third years, at least once a month within the jurisdiction of each of 15 VA regional offices, including at least 3 regional offices in each district;
- at different locations within each regional office's jurisdiction and at least 50 miles from any regional office;
- during the sponsoring regional office's normal business hours; and
- with a sufficient number of physicians (to be available for opinions only), veteran service and rating representatives, and other appropriate claims personnel to initiate, update, and finalize the completion and adjudication of claims.

The VA shall: (1) collect and analyze event-satisfaction information from attending veterans, and (2) report annually on event implementation.

The VA may not permanently transfer any Veterans Health Administration physician to staff an event.

Actions Timeline

- **Sep 12, 2016:** Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H. Rept. 114-738.
- **Sep 12, 2016:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 574.
- **May 18, 2016:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **May 18, 2016:** Ordered to be Reported in the Nature of a Substitute (Amended) by Voice Vote.
- **May 11, 2016:** Subcommittee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **May 11, 2016:** Forwarded by Subcommittee to Full Committee (Amended) by Voice Vote .
- **Apr 13, 2016:** Subcommittee Hearings Held.
- **Apr 11, 2016:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.
- **Mar 17, 2016:** Introduced in House
- **Mar 17, 2016:** Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.