

S 114

VA Choice and Quality Employment Act of 2017

Congress: 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Jan 12, 2017

Current Status: Became Public Law No: 115-46.

Latest Action: Became Public Law No: 115-46. (Aug 12, 2017)

Law: 115-46 (Enacted Aug 12, 2017)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/114>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Heller, Dean [R-NV]

Party: Republican • **State:** NV • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA]	D · PA		Jan 12, 2017
Sen. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME]	R · ME		Aug 1, 2017
Sen. King, Angus S., Jr. [I-ME]	I · ME		Aug 1, 2017

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	Senate	Discharged From	May 25, 2017
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Referred To	May 26, 2017

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
115 S 2906	Related bill	May 22, 2018: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
115 S 2807	Identical bill	May 9, 2018: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
115 S 2193	Related bill	Mar 7, 2018: By Senator Isakson from Committee on Veterans' Affairs filed written report. Report No. 115-212.
115 HRES 480	Procedurally related	Jul 28, 2017: Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
115 HR 1690	Related bill	Jul 25, 2017: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
115 S 1550	Related bill	Jul 13, 2017: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
115 S 233	Related bill	Jan 24, 2017: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
115 HR 90	Related bill	Jan 19, 2017: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.

VA Choice and Quality Employment Act of 2017

TITLE I--APPROPRIATION OF AMOUNTS FOR VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

(Sec. 101) This bill provides funding for the Veterans Choice Program.

TITLE II--PERSONNEL MATTERS

(Sec. 201) The annual determination of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) staff shortages shall include shortages for a minimum of five clinical and five nonclinical occupations for each network. (Such determination currently includes the five occupations for which there are the largest Department of Veterans Affairs [VA]-wide shortages.)

(Sec. 202) The bill establishes in the VA an executive management fellowship program to provide Veterans Benefits Administration and VHA employees with training and experience in the private sector and private sector employees training and experience in the VA. Employees shall be selected in a manner that reflects veteran demographics and provides a preference for rural employees.

(Sec. 203) The VA shall conduct an annual performance plan for each political appointee that is similar to the plan conducted for VA career senior executive employees.

(Sec. 204) The VA may noncompetitively appoint a qualified former employee to any VA position within the competitive service that is one grade or equivalent higher than the person's most recent position.

(Sec. 205) The VA shall establish a promotional track system for employees who are technical experts to advance without being required to transition to management positions.

(Sec. 206) The VA shall prescribe regulations to allow for excepted service appointments of qualifying students and recent graduates leading to career employment.

(Sec. 207) The VA shall establish a program to encourage service members with a military health care specialty to seek postmilitary employment with the VHA.

(Sec. 208) The VA shall establish a single database that lists each vacant VA position that is: (1) critical, difficult to fill, or both; or (2) for a mental health professional. A qualified applicant for a position in the database who is not selected may elect to be considered by the VA for similar positions in the database.

(Sec. 209) The VA shall provide VHA human resources professionals with recruitment and retention training.

(Sec. 210) The VA shall develop and implement a plan to hire qualified directors for VA medical centers without a permanent director.

(Sec. 211) The VA shall develop a standardized exit survey for employees and executives who voluntarily separate from the VA.

(Sec. 212) Physician assistants are included in the list of VA health care personnel who must receive pay that is competitive with non-VA health care facilities.

(Sec. 213) The VA may appoint highly qualified candidates without regard to competitive service provisions if there is a severe shortage of highly qualified candidates.

(Sec. 214) The Government Accountability Office shall assess the VA's succession planning policies.

TITLE III--MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES

(Sec. 301) The VA may carry out major medical facility leases in specified amounts at certain locations.

TITLE IV--OTHER MATTERS

(Sec. 401) The bill extends through FY2027: (1) the \$90 monthly limit on a VA pension paid to veterans residing in nursing homes when their nursing costs are paid through title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act; (2) VA authority to collect certain fees at current levels for housing loans made, insured, or guaranteed by the VA; and (3) VA authority to obtain veterans' income verification information from the Social Security Administration or the Department of the Treasury.

Actions Timeline

- **Aug 12, 2017:** Signed by President.
- **Aug 12, 2017:** Became Public Law No: 115-46.
- **Aug 7, 2017:** Presented to President.
- **Aug 2, 2017:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Aug 1, 2017:** Resolving differences -- Senate actions: Senate agreed to the House amendments to the Senate bill by Voice Vote.(text as Senate agree to the House amendment: CR S4686)
- **Aug 1, 2017:** Senate agreed to the House amendments to the Senate bill by Voice Vote. (text as Senate agree to the House amendment: CR S4686)
- **Jul 31, 2017:** Message on House action received in Senate and at desk: House amendments to Senate bill.
- **Jul 28, 2017:** Rule H. Res. 480 passed House.
- **Jul 28, 2017:** Considered under the provisions of rule H. Res. 480. (consideration: CR H6531-6538)
- **Jul 28, 2017:** Rule provides for consideration of S. 114 with 1 hour of general debate. Motion to recommit with or without instructions allowed. The resolution provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the Rules Committee report shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read.
- **Jul 28, 2017:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with one hour of debate on S. 114.
- **Jul 28, 2017:** The previous question was ordered pursuant to the rule.
- **Jul 28, 2017:** POSTPONED PROCEEDINGS - At the conclusion of debate on S. 114, the Chair put the question on passage of the bill and by voice vote, announced that the aye had prevailed. Mr. Roe(TN) demanded the yeas and nays and the Chair postponed further proceedings on the question of passage until later in the legislative day.
- **Jul 28, 2017:** Considered as unfinished business. (consideration: CR H6557-6558)
- **Jul 28, 2017:** Passed/agreed to in House: On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays: 414 - 0 (Roll no. 438).(text: CR H6531-6535)
- **Jul 28, 2017:** On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays: 414 - 0 (Roll no. 438). (text: CR H6531-6535)
- **Jul 28, 2017:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Jul 28, 2017:** The title of the measure was amended. Agreed to without objection.
- **Jul 27, 2017:** Rules Committee Resolution H. Res. 480 Reported to House. Rule provides for consideration of S. 114 with 1 hour of general debate. Motion to recommit with or without instructions allowed. The resolution provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the Rules Committee report shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read.
- **Jul 24, 2017:** Mr. Roe (TN) moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.
- **Jul 24, 2017:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H6151-6158; text of measure as received: CR H6151)
- **Jul 24, 2017:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on S. 114.
- **Jul 24, 2017:** 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 24, 2017:** Considered as unfinished business. (consideration: CR H6196-6197)
- **Jul 24, 2017:** Failed of passage/not agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Failed by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 219 - 186 (Roll no. 408).
- **Jul 24, 2017:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Failed by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 219 - 186 (Roll no. 408).
- **May 26, 2017:** Received in the House.
- **May 26, 2017:** Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
- **May 25, 2017:** Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs discharged by Unanimous Consent.(consideration: CR S3190)
- **May 25, 2017:** Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs discharged by Unanimous Consent. (consideration: CR S3190)
- **May 25, 2017:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate without amendment by Unanimous Consent.(text: CR S3190)
- **May 25, 2017:** Passed Senate without amendment by Unanimous Consent. (text: CR S3190)
- **May 25, 2017:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Jan 12, 2017:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jan 12, 2017:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.