

## HR 1461

VET Protection Act of 2017

**Congress:** 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

**Chamber:** House

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

**Introduced:** Mar 9, 2017

**Current Status:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 94.

**Latest Action:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 94. (May 23, 2017)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1461>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Rep. Arrington, Jodey C. [R-TX-19]

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

### Cosponsors

*No cosponsors are listed for this bill.*

### Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Oversight and Government Reform Committee	House	Discharged From	May 23, 2017
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Hearings By (subcommittee)	Mar 21, 2017

### Subjects & Policy Tags

#### Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

### Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
115 S 2288	Related bill	<b>Jan 10, 2018:</b> Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

## **Veterans, Employees, and Taxpayers Protection Act of 2017 or the VET Protection Act of 2017**

(Sec. 2) This bill directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to: (1) track the use of official time by VA employees accurately and without the use of estimates or ranges of times, and (2) report on such use to the Office of Personnel Management and Congress by December 1 of each fiscal year.

Each report shall include: (1) the total amount of official time granted to employees; (2) the total amount of official time expended and the amount of official time expended per employee for term negotiations, mid-term negotiations, general labor-management relations, and dispute resolution; (3) the types of activities for which official time was granted and the impact on VA operations; (4) the total annual salary and job title of, and amount of official time afforded to, employees; (5) a description of any room or space designated for official time activities; and (6) a list of any employees granted a waiver and a justification for each such waiver.

"Official time" means any period of time granted to an employee under federal labor-management provisions to perform representational or consultative functions during which the employee would otherwise be in a duty status.

The bill prohibits a VA employee from using official time to carry out political or lobbying activities;

The following VA employees may not use official time for any purpose: (1) a physician, dentist, podiatrist, chiropractor, or optometrist; (2) an employee with an annual basic pay rate of \$100,000 or more; and (3) an employee serving a probationary period. Any other VA employee may not spend more than 25% of his or her duty status time on official time.

The VA may waive such official time restrictions if reasonable, necessary, and in the best interest of veterans. Such waiver authority shall not be subject to collective bargaining, and the exercise or failure to exercise such authority shall not be an unfair labor practice.

An exclusive bargaining agreement entered into by the VA shall allow a VA employee to terminate a voluntary allotment for the payment of dues at any time.

The appointment of a covered VA employee shall become final only after such employee has served a two-year probationary period. "Covered employee:" (1) means any individual appointed to a permanent position within the competitive service or as a career appointee within the Senior Executive Service, and (2) does not include any individual appointed to a VA health care position for which a two-year probationary period applies. Such an employee's supervisor shall determine whether the employee's appointment becomes final not later than 90 days before the expiration of such probationary period.

## Actions Timeline

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- **May 23, 2017:** Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H. Rept. 115-146, Part I.
- **May 23, 2017:** Committee on Oversight and Government discharged.
- **May 23, 2017:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 94.
- **May 17, 2017:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **May 17, 2017:** Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by the Yeas and Nays: 13 - 11.
- **Mar 21, 2017:** Subcommittee Hearings Held.
- **Mar 20, 2017:** Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Discharged.
- **Mar 20, 2017:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.
- **Mar 9, 2017:** Introduced in House
- **Mar 9, 2017:** Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.