

HR 2311

Express Appeals Act

Congress: 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: May 3, 2017

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. (May 3, 2017)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/2311>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. O'Rourke, Beto [D-TX-16]

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

Cosponsors (11 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Brownley, Julia [D-CA-26]	D · CA		May 3, 2017
Rep. Cicilline, David N. [D-RI-1]	D · RI		May 3, 2017
Rep. Costello, Ryan A. [R-PA-6]	R · PA		May 3, 2017
Rep. Hurd, Will [R-TX-23]	R · TX		May 3, 2017
Rep. Kilmer, Derek [D-WA-6]	D · WA		May 3, 2017
Rep. Langevin, James R. [D-RI-2]	D · RI		May 3, 2017
Rep. Loebssack, David [D-IA-2]	D · IA		May 3, 2017
Rep. Massie, Thomas [R-KY-4]	R · KY		May 3, 2017
Rep. Pingree, Chellie [D-ME-1]	D · ME		May 3, 2017
Rep. Titus, Dina [D-NV-1]	D · NV		May 3, 2017
Rep. Young, David [R-IA-3]	R · IA		May 3, 2017

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Referred to	May 3, 2017

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
115 S 933	Related bill	Apr 25, 2017: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Express Appeals Act

This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to: (1) carry out a five-year pilot program to provide the option of an alternative appeals process to determine appeals of claims for disability compensation more quickly, and (2) inform claimants about such program.

The bill describes appeals filed under the pilot program as "fully developed appeals."

A claimant may elect to file a fully developed appeal by filing with the VA: (1) a notice of disagreement along with the claimant's written election to have the appeal determined under the pilot program, (2) all evidence that the claimant believes is needed for the appeal, and (3) a statement of the argument in support of the claim. The VA must transfer jurisdiction over a fully developed appeal directly to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

A claimant must make such election: (1) at any time during the traditional appeal process if the claimant has filed a traditional appeal before the pilot program commences, or (2) when the claimant files the notice of disagreement if the claimant has not filed a traditional appeal.

The VA shall inform a claimant who seeks to change a traditional appeal to a fully developed appeal as to whether any time will be saved. A claimant who elects to file a fully developed appeal may elect to revert to a traditional appeal at any time.

The Board of Veterans' Appeals shall: (1) maintain fully developed appeals on a separate docket; (2) hear fully developed appeals in the order received; (3) decide not more than one fully developed appeal for each four traditional appeals decided, though this ratio may be adjusted for fairness purposes beginning one year after the pilot program begins; and (4) decide each fully developed appeal within one year of a claimant's filing the notice of disagreement.

The bill sets forth provisions regarding: (1) the effects of new evidence submitted or additional information needed after a fully developed appeal is filed, and (2) a prohibition against the Board providing hearings for fully developed appeals.

The Board shall establish an office to develop federal records, independent medical opinions, and new medical exams that are necessary to decide a fully developed appeal.

Actions Timeline

- **May 3, 2017:** Introduced in House
- **May 3, 2017:** Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
- **May 3, 2017:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.