

S 805

SHIELD for Veterans Act of 2020

Congress: 116 (2019–2021, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Armed Forces and National Security

Introduced: Mar 14, 2019

Current Status: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 539.

Latest Action: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 539. (Sep 15, 2020)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/805>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Tester, Jon [D-MT]

Party: Democratic • **State:** MT • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (10 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|---------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT] | D · CT | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Boozman, John [R-AR] | R · AR | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH] | D · OH | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Harris, Kamala D. [D-CA] | D · CA | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Shaheen, Jeanne [D-NH] | D · NH | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Stabenow, Debbie [D-MI] | D · MI | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA] | D · MA | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR] | D · OR | | Mar 14, 2019 |
| Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI] | D · WI | | Nov 18, 2019 |
| Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN] | D · MN | | Jan 28, 2020 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|-----------------------------|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Veterans' Affairs Committee | Senate | Reported By | Sep 15, 2020 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Armed Forces and National Security

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Stopping Harm and Implementing Enhanced Lead-time for Debts for Veterans Act of 2020 or the SHIELD for Veterans Act of 2020

This bill updates debt collection and overpayment processes related to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits or programs.

Specifically, the bill prohibits the incursion of debt arising from programs or benefits administered by the VA if the amount is owed for any overpayment that was caused by the amount of time taken by the VA to process information provided by or on behalf of an individual.

If the VA makes an overpayment to an individual, it must provide such individual with notice of the overpayment and an explanation of the individual's right to (1) dispute the overpayment, and (2) request a waiver of indebtedness. In addition, the VA may not take any collection action regarding an overpayment until 90 days after it issues such notice.

The VA must report on its plan for the improvement of the notification and communication processes for individuals who receive overpayments from the VA.

The bill prohibits interest and administrative cost charges on delinquent payments of debt resulting from a person's participation in a VA disability compensation program, pension program, or an educational assistance program.

The VA must establish a minimum debt threshold for when it will report to a consumer reporting agency in relation to a claim or debt arising from receipt of a VA benefit.

The bill extends the window to request relief from the recovery of debt arising from a person's participation in a VA benefit or program from 180 days to 1 year.

The bill requires the VA to prescribe an administrative process for the dispute of the existence or amount of debt. The VA is prohibited from deducting any amount of an individual's debt if the cost of recovery would exceed the amount to be recovered.

The VA must ensure its website and written notices contain all information veterans need regarding how to dispute an indebtedness.

Finally, the VA must ensure that a veteran may remove any dependent from an award of compensation or pension using the VA's system.

Actions Timeline

- **Sep 15, 2020:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Reported by Senator Moran with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. Without written report.
- **Sep 15, 2020:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 539.
- **Aug 5, 2020:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **May 22, 2019:** Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 116-179.
- **Mar 14, 2019:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 14, 2019:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.