

**Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, HR. 1147**

**(The amendment strikes all after the enacting clause and inserts a new text)**

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1147

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 7, 2025

Mr. VALADAO (for himself and Mr. MCGARVEY) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Accessibility  
5 Advisory Committee Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUAL AC-**  
2 **CESS.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subchapter III of chapter 5  
4 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at  
5 the end the following new section:

6 **“§ 549. Advisory Committee on Equal Access**

7 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—(1) The Secretary shall es-  
8 tablish an advisory committee on matters relating to ac-  
9 cessibility of the Department for individuals with disabil-  
10 ities.

11 “(2) The advisory committee established under para-  
12 graph (1) shall be known as the ‘Veterans Advisory Com-  
13 mittee on Equal Access’ (in this section referred to as the  
14 ‘Advisory Committee’).

15 “(b) MEMBERSHIP.—(1) The Advisory Committee  
16 shall be composed of 15 voting members, appointed by the  
17 Secretary. In appointing such members, the Secretary  
18 shall ensure the following:

19 “(A) Four are veterans with disabilities, includ-  
20 ing mobility impairment, hearing, visual, and mental  
21 or cognitive disabilities.

22 “(B) Four are experts on issues described in  
23 subsection (f)(1)(A) or the provisions of law set  
24 forth under subsection (f)(1)(B).

25 “(C) Two are employees of the Department,  
26 one from the Section 508 Office and one from the

1 Architectural Accessibility Program, who oversee the  
2 compliance of the Department with Federal accessi-  
3 bility laws.

4 “(D) Five are representatives nominated by vet-  
5 erans service organizations, recognized under section  
6 5902 of this title, that advocate for veterans with  
7 physical, sensory, mental, or cognitive disabilities.

8 “(2) The Advisory Committee shall also include four  
9 ex officio members (or their designees):

10 “(A) The Under Secretary for Health.

11 “(B) The Under Secretary for Benefits.

12 “(C) The Under Secretary for Memorial Af-  
13 fairs.

14 “(D) The chairperson of the Architectural and  
15 Transportation Barriers Compliance Board estab-  
16 lished by section 502 of the Rehabilitation Act of  
17 1973 (Public Law 93–112; 29 U.S.C. 792).

18 “(c) TERMS; VACANCIES.—(1) A member of the Ad-  
19 visory Committee shall be appointed for a term of two  
20 years. The Secretary may reappoint members to the Advi-  
21 sory Committee for such additional two-year terms as the  
22 Secretary determines appropriate.

23 “(2) The Secretary shall fill a vacancy in the Advisory  
24 Committee in the same manner as the original appoint-  
25 ment not later than 180 days after such vacancy occurs.

1       “(d) MEETINGS; SUBCOMMITTEES; QUORUM.—(1)

2       The Advisory Committee shall meet not less frequently  
3       than twice each year.

4       “(2) The Advisory Committee may form subcommit-  
5       tees, which shall meet as often as required.

6       “(3) A majority of the members of the Advisory Com-  
7       mittee shall constitute a quorum.

8       “(e) CHAIRPERSON.—(1) Members of the Advisory  
9       Committee shall select a Chairperson from among the  
10       members of the Advisory Committee.

11       “(2) If the position of Chairperson becomes vacant,  
12       the members of the Advisory Committee shall select a new  
13       Chairperson not later than 30 days after the date on which  
14       the position became vacant.

15       “(f) DUTIES.—(1) On a regular basis, the Secretary  
16       shall consult with and seek the advice of the Advisory  
17       Committee on the following:

18               “(A) Improving the accessibility of the Depart-  
19       ment for individuals with disabilities, including im-  
20       proving—

21               “(i) the accessibility of information of the  
22       Department, including electronic information;

23               “(ii) the accessibility of the services and  
24       benefits furnished by the Department;

1           “(iii) the accessibility of the facilities of the  
2           Department;

3           “(iv) the accessibility of facilities of health  
4           care providers furnishing care or services under  
5           the Veterans Community Care Program under  
6           section 1703 of this title; and

7           “(v) the acquisition process of the Depart-  
8           ment to ensure that products and services, in-  
9           cluding information technology and information  
10          and communication technology (as defined in  
11          the standards issued by the Architectural and  
12          Transportation Barriers Compliance Board pur-  
13          suant to section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act  
14          of 1973 (Public Law 93–112; 29 U.S.C.  
15          794d)), are accessible when purchased.

16          “(B) Ensuring the compliance of the Depart-  
17          ment with provisions of law that ensure equal access  
18          to Federal facilities, benefits, or services, for individ-  
19          uals with disabilities, including the following:

20               “(i) The Americans with Disabilities Act of  
21               1990 (Public Law 101–336; 42 U.S.C. 12101  
22               et seq.).

23               “(ii) Sections 501, 504, and 508 of the Re-  
24               habilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93–112;  
25               29 U.S.C. 791, 794, and 794d).

1 “(iii) The Plain Writing Act of 2010 (Pub-  
2 lic Law 111–274; 5 U.S.C. 301 note).

3 “(iv) The 21st Century Integrated Digital  
4 Experience Act (Public Law 115–336; 44  
5 U.S.C. 3501 note).

6 “(v) The Architectural Barriers Act of  
7 1968 (Public Law 90–480; 42 U.S.C. 4151 et  
8 seq.).

9 “(2) In advising to the Secretary, the Advisory Com-  
10 mittee shall, focusing on the areas of greatest need for  
11 the Department—

12 “(A) assess the disability access needs of vet-  
13 erans, the public, and Department employees, for  
14 full access to the Department’s information, services,  
15 and benefits, by reviewing relevant information, such  
16 as filed complaints by people with disabilities or  
17 physical assessments of the Department’s facilities;

18 “(B) provide assessments of accessibility at the  
19 Department and the compliance of the Department  
20 with applicable provisions of law relating to dis-  
21 ability and accessibility; and

22 “(C) provide advice on improving accessibility  
23 at the Department, including the accessibility of  
24 all—

1                   “(i) communications, including internal  
2                   and public-facing;

3                   “(ii) services and benefits; and

4                   “(iii) facilities.

5           “(3) REPORTS.—(A) Not later than two years after  
6 the date of the first meeting of the Advisory Committee,  
7 and not less frequently than once every two years there-  
8 after, the Advisory Committee shall submit to the Sec-  
9 retary a report that, focusing on areas of greatest need  
10 for the Department—

11                   “(i) identifies and assesses access barriers af-  
12 fecting veterans, the public, and employees of the  
13 Department;

14                   “(ii) determines the extent to which the pro-  
15 grams and activities of the Department address the  
16 barriers identified in clause (i), including compliance  
17 of the Department with provisions of law relating to  
18 accessibility law and reporting;

19                   “(iii) provides recommendations and access pri-  
20 orities to improve the accessibility of the Depart-  
21 ment’s services, benefits, information, technology,  
22 and facilities;

23                   “(iv) provides a description of access improve-  
24 ments and assesses the Department’s implementa-  
25 tion of recommendations from previous reports of

1 the Advisory Committee, including any unmet rec-  
2 ommendations that remain necessary for improving  
3 accessibility for the Department; and

4 “(v) provides any recommendations for legisla-  
5 tion, administrative action, or other actions that the  
6 Advisory Committee determines appropriate.

7 “(B)(i) Not later than 90 days after the receipt of  
8 a report required under subparagraph (A), the Secretary  
9 shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees  
10 a copy of such report and any comments and recommenda-  
11 tions of the Secretary concerning such report that the Sec-  
12 retary determines appropriate.

13 “(ii) The Secretary shall publish on a publicly acces-  
14 sible website of the Department such report and such com-  
15 ments and recommendations as may have been submitted  
16 along with such report.

17 “(iii) In this subparagraph, the term ‘appropriate  
18 congressional committee’ means—

19 “(I) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the  
20 House of Representatives;

21 “(II) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the  
22 Senate;

23 “(III) the Committee on Education and Work-  
24 force of the House of Representatives; or

1           “(IV) the Special Committee on Aging of the  
2       Senate.

3       “(g) ADVISORY COMMITTEE PERSONNEL AND RE-  
4       SOURCE MATTERS.—(1) A member of the Commission  
5       who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Govern-  
6       ment shall not be compensated for the performance of the  
7       duties of the Advisory Committee.

8       “(2) A member of the Advisory Committee shall be  
9       allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of sub-  
10      sistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies  
11      under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, while away  
12      from their homes or regular places of business in the per-  
13      formance of services for the Advisory Committee.

14      “(3) The Secretary shall ensure that such personnel,  
15      funding, and other resources are made available to the Ad-  
16      visory Committee as the Secretary determines appropriate  
17      to carry out the duties of the Advisory Committee.

18      “(4) The Secretary shall furnish to the Advisory  
19      Committee such information as the Advisory Committee  
20      may request from the Secretary, subject to applicable pro-  
21      visions of law.

22      “(h) TERMINATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The  
23      Advisory Committee shall terminate on the date that is  
24      seven years after the date of the enactment of the Vet-  
25      erans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2025.”.

1 (b) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at  
2 the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding, after  
3 the item relating to section 548, the following new item:

“549. Advisory Committee on Equal Access.”.

4 (c) IMPLEMENTATION; ABOLITION OF INACTIVE AD-  
5 VISORY COMMITTEE.—Not later than 180 days after the  
6 date of the enactment of this Act, and before establishing  
7 the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access under  
8 section 549 of title 38, United States Code, as added by  
9 subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

10 (1) abolish an advisory committee of the De-  
11 partment of Veterans Affairs that—

12 (A) was not established by an Act of Con-  
13 gress; and

14 (B) is inactive;

15 (2) consolidate two advisory committees de-  
16 scribed in paragraph (1); or

17 (3) submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Af-  
18 fairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a  
19 recommendation to abolish an advisory committee of  
20 the Department that—

21 (A) was established by an Act of Congress;  
22 and

23 (B) is inactive.

1   **SEC. 3. EXTENSION ON LIMITATION OF CERTAIN PENSION**  
2                   **PAYMENTS TO VETERANS ADMITTED TO**  
3                   **NURSING FACILITIES.**

4       Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code,  
5 is amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and insert-  
6 ing “January 31, 2032”.