

Suspend the Rules and Pass the Bill, H.R. 3482, With an Amendment

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

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 3482

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an online program through which an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs may schedule an appointment for a covered veteran with a non-Department health care provider under the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 19, 2025

Mr. BARRETT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an online program through which an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs may schedule an appointment for a covered veteran with a non-Department health care provider under the Veterans Community Care Program, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Community
3 Care Scheduling Improvement Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. SCHEDULING OF APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE VET-**
5 **ERANS COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM.**

6 (a) **ELECTRONIC PROCESS.**—Subsection (d) of sec-
7 tion 3101 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D.
8 Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of
9 2020 (Public Law 116–315; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is
10 amended to read as follows:

11 “(d) **ELECTRONIC PROCESS.**—(1) The Secretary
12 shall implement an electronic process through which a
13 scheduler of the Department, using an information tech-
14 nology system, may schedule an appointment for health
15 care furnished by the Department or through the Veterans
16 Community Care Program, under section 1703 of this
17 title, by a non-Department health care provider.

18 “(2) The electronic process under this subsection
19 shall allow a scheduler, with regards to appointments de-
20 scribed in—

21 “(A) either clause of subparagraph (A) of sub-
22 section (a)(1), to view, search, and sort such ap-
23 pointments by type of care, location, and date; and

24 “(B) clause (ii) of such subparagraph—

25 “(i) to schedule such an appointment;

1 “(ii) to provide referral and authorization
2 documents directly to a non-Department pro-
3 vider; and

4 “(iii) to perform any other function the
5 Secretary determines necessary.

6 “(3) The Secretary shall ensure that the electronic
7 process allows a scheduler to schedule an appointment for
8 health care furnished by the Secretary through a health
9 care provider of the Department.

10 “(4) The Secretary shall implement the electronic
11 process through an existing agreement if practicable.

12 “(5) The Secretary shall submit to the Committees
13 on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Rep-
14 resentatives the following regarding the electronic process:

15 “(A) Not later than 90 days after the Secretary
16 makes a determination under subparagraph (B)(iii)
17 of paragraph (2), a briefing regarding the functions
18 the Secretary has determined necessary.

19 “(B) Not later than six months after the date
20 of the enactment of Veterans Community Care
21 Scheduling Improvement Act, and semiannually
22 thereafter during the following three years, a report
23 regarding operation of the electronic process during
24 both the semiannual period preceding the date of the
25 report and the cumulative period since the date of

1 the enactment of such Act. Such a report shall in-
2 clude the following for each such period:

3 “(i) The number of non-Department health
4 care providers that participated in such elec-
5 tronic process, disaggregated by—

6 “(I) category of hospital care or med-
7 ical services provided; and

8 “(II) medical center of the Depart-
9 ment;

10 “(ii) The number of appointments sched-
11 uled pursuant to the electronic process,
12 disaggregated by—

13 “(I) category of hospital care or med-
14 ical services provided;

15 “(II) medical center of the Depart-
16 ment; and

17 “(III) month.

18 “(iii) A comparison of the average wait
19 time for appointments scheduled through the
20 electronic process and through non-electronic
21 methods, disaggregated by medical center of the
22 Department.

23 “(iv) The rates at which veterans cancelled
24 appointments scheduled through the electronic
25 process.

1 “(v) The rates at which veterans did not
2 appear for appointments scheduled through the
3 electronic process.”.

4 (b) IMPLEMENTATION.—

5 (1) DATE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 shall implement the electronic process under sub-
7 section (d) of section 1703H of such title, as added
8 by this section, not later than two years after the
9 date of the enactment of this Act.

10 (2) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 90 days after
11 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
12 of Veterans Affairs shall establish guidelines. Such
13 guidelines shall include the following:

14 (A) Procedures for schedulers and other
15 employees of the Department involved in the
16 scheduling of appointments described in such
17 section.

18 (B) A directive that employees described in
19 subparagraph (A) use the electronic process to
20 the extent practicable.

21 (C) A directive that employees described in
22 subparagraph (A), when scheduling an appoint-
23 ment for a covered veteran (as such term is
24 used in section 1703 of such title) for health
25 care furnished by the Secretary, inform such

1 covered veteran of available appointments
2 though providers of the Department and
3 through providers under the Veterans Commu-
4 nity Care Program when eligible.

5 (D) Procedures for engaging with non-De-
6 partment health care providers in specialized
7 cases.

8 (E) Standards regarding timeliness and ac-
9 curacy.

10 (F) Escalation protocols for scheduling
11 failures or delays.

12 (3) TRAINING.—Not later than 180 days after
13 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
14 shall implement a mandatory training program for
15 employees described in paragraph (2) regarding the
16 guidelines under paragraph (2).

17 (4) EVALUATION.—Not later than 60 days after
18 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
19 shall prescribe performance benchmarks and out-
20 come-based metrics for the electronic process under
21 such section, including—

22 (A) time between a referral and a sched-
23 uled appointment;

24 (B) patient satisfaction; and

1 (C) the percentage of appointments sched-
2 uled exclusively through the electronic process.

3 (5) OUTREACH.—Not later than 90 days after
4 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
5 shall plan and carry out an outreach strategy to en-
6 courage non-Department of Veterans Affairs health
7 care providers that participate in the Veterans Com-
8 munity Care Program to participate in the electronic
9 process under such subsection. Such outreach
10 shall—

11 (A) include contacting each such provider
12 during such 90 days;

13 (B) include seeking to enter into an agree-
14 ment with each such provider under which the
15 provider shall participate in the electronic proc-
16 ess;

17 (C) include collaborating with State hos-
18 pital associations and rural health associations
19 to promote such participation;

20 (D) focus on providers in specialties or un-
21 derserved areas, as determined by the Sec-
22 retary; and

23 (E) include the publication, on a publicly
24 accessible website of the Department, of infor-
25 mation regarding—

- 1 (i) details of the electronic process;
- 2 (ii) how a provider may elect to par-
- 3 ticipate in the electronic process; and
- 4 (iii) a point of contact in the Depart-
- 5 ment regarding the electronic process.

6 (6) OVERSIGHT.—The Secretary shall submit to
7 the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate
8 and House of Representatives, with regards to the
9 electronic process under such subsection, the fol-
10 lowing:

11 (A) Not later than 30 days after the Sec-
12 retary establishes guidelines under paragraph
13 (2) of this subsection, a copy of such guidelines.

14 (B) Not later than 30 days after the Sec-
15 retary formulates the plan under paragraph (5)
16 of this subsection, a briefing on the outreach
17 strategy under such paragraph.

18 (C) Not later than 180 days after the date
19 of the enactment of this Act, the benchmarks
20 and metrics prescribed under paragraph (4).

21 (c) EXPANSION.—Not later than 90 days after the
22 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall sub-
23 mit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate
24 and House of Representatives a plan to integrate the
25 scheduling of appointments for health care furnished

1 through health care providers of the Department of Vet-
2 erans Affairs into the electronic process under subsection
3 (d) of section 1703H of such title. Such plan shall include
4 the following elements:

5 (1) A timeline to implement such plan.

6 (2) Estimated costs to carry out such plan.

7 (3) Changes to policies and procedures of the
8 Department the Secretary determines necessary to
9 implement such plan.

10 (d) CODIFICATION.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3101 of such Act, as
12 amended by subsection (a), is transferred to sub-
13 chapter I of chapter 17 of title 38, United States
14 Code, inserted after section 1703G, and redesign-
15 nated as section 1703H.

16 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section
17 1703H of such title, as transferred and redesignated
18 by this subsection, is amended—

19 (A) by striking any heading that is not a
20 section heading or subsection heading and con-
21 forming the margins accordingly;

22 (B) by striking “of title 38, United States
23 Code” both places it appears and inserting “of
24 this title”;

1 (C) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “Not
2 later than one year after the date of the enact-
3 ment of this Act, the Secretary” and inserting
4 “The Secretary”;

5 (D) in subsection (c)—

6 (i) in paragraph (1), in the matter
7 preceding subparagraph (A), by striking
8 “Not later than 180 days after the date of
9 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary”
10 and inserting “The Secretary”; and

11 (ii) in paragraph (2), by striking sub-
12 paragraphs (A) and (B) and inserting
13 “The Secretary shall require each medical
14 facility of the Department to use the meth-
15 od or tool described in paragraph (1).”;

16 (E) in the section enumerator, by striking
17 “**SEC.**” and inserting “**§**”; and

18 (F) in the section heading—

19 (i) by striking “**PROCESS AND RE-**
20 **QUIREMENTS FOR SCHEDULING AP-**
21 **POINTMENTS FOR HEALTH CARE**
22 **FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
23 **FAIRS AND NON-DEPARTMENT**
24 **HEALTH CARE.**” and inserting “**SCHED-**
25 **ULING OF APPOINTMENTS**”; and

1 (ii) by conforming the typeface and
2 typestyle, including capitalization, to the
3 typeface and typestyle used in the section
4 heading of section 1703G of such title.

5 (3) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections
6 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by in-
7 sserting, after the item relating to section 1703G, the
8 following new item:

“1703H. Scheduling of appointments.”.

9 **SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENT OF**
10 **PENSION.**

11 Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code,
12 is amended by striking “January 31, 2033” and inserting
13 “May 31, 2033”.