

[COMMITTEE PRINT]

[Reflecting the actions of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on April 16, 2024]

118TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 7816

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center for an assessment of notice letters that the Secretary sends to claimants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center for an assessment of notice letters that the Secretary sends to claimants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary, 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 “Clear Communication
3 for Veterans Claims Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF NOTICES THAT THE**
5 **SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SENDS**
6 **TO CLAIMANTS.**

7 (a) AGREEMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the
8 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
9 erans Affairs shall seek to enter into an agreement with
10 an FFRDC for an assessment of notices that the Sec-
11 retary sends to claimants.

12 (b) ASSESSMENT.—An FFRDC that enters to an
13 agreement under subsection (a) shall submit to the Sec-
14 retary a written assessment of such notices. The assess-
15 ment shall include the following:

16 (1) The determination of the FFRDC, made in
17 consultation with covered entities, whether each such
18 notice may be feasibly altered to reduce paper con-
19 sumption by, and costs to, the Federal Government.

20 (2) The recommendations of the FFRDC re-
21 garding how the Secretary may, in compliance with
22 laws administered by the Secretary, make such no-
23 tices clearer to claimants, better organized, and
24 more concise.

1 (c) REPORT; IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 90
2 days after the Secretary receives the assessment under
3 subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

4 (1) submit to the Committees on Veterans' Af-
5 fairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a
6 copy of such assessment; and

7 (2) implement the recommendations in the as-
8 sessment.

9 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 (1) The term “FFRDC” means a federally
11 funded research and development center.

12 (2) The term “covered entities” includes—

13 (A) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

14 (B) an expert in laws administered by the
15 Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

16 (C) a veterans service organization recog-
17 nized under section 5902 of title 38, United
18 States Code; and

19 (D) an entity that advocates for veterans.

20 (3) The terms “claimant” and “notice” have
21 the meanings given such terms in section 5100 of
22 title 38, United States Code.