

## [Subcommittee Print]

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**(Reflecting the actions of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs on April 15, 2026)**

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119<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 7950

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs in the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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 “VA Congressional Ac-  
5 countability Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE AF-**  
2 **FAIRS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**  
3 **AFFAIRS.**

4 (a) OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE  
5 AFFAIRS.—Chapter 3 of title 38, United States Code, is  
6 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

7 **“§ 326. Office of Congressional and Legislative Af-**  
8 **fairs.**

9 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within  
10 the Department an Office of Congressional and Legislative  
11 Affairs (referred to in this section as the ‘Office’), which  
12 shall serve as the principal liaison between the Depart-  
13 ment and Congress.

14 “(b) FUNCTIONS.—The Office shall—

15 “(1) coordinate communications and legislative  
16 engagement with Congress;

17 “(2) facilitate hearings, briefings, and technical  
18 assistance;

19 “(3) coordinate the preparation and submission  
20 of testimony and witness materials for congressional  
21 hearings, including written statements, oral testi-  
22 mony, and responses for the record;

23 “(4) manage and track congressional requests  
24 for information;

25 “(5) support the development and analysis of  
26 legislative proposals; and

1           “(6) ensure timely and accurate responses to  
2           the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of  
3           Representatives and the Senate (in this section, re-  
4           ferred to as ‘the Committees’).

5           “(c) LEADERSHIP.—(1) There is at the head of the  
6           Office an Assistant Secretary appointed by the President,  
7           by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, who  
8           shall ensure that the functions of legislative strategy and  
9           congressional operations are exercised independently, con-  
10          currently, and in mutual restraint, and who shall be re-  
11          sponsible for resolving impasses between the Deputy As-  
12          sistant Secretaries.

13          “(2) The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislative  
14          Strategy, a noncareer appointee (as defined in section  
15          3132(a) of title 5), shall be responsible for the formulation  
16          and articulation of each legislative position and policy  
17          communication conveyed to Congress, but may not direct  
18          or control the timing, production, or transmission of con-  
19          gressional materials.

20          “(3) The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congres-  
21          sional Operations, a career appointee (as defined in sec-  
22          tion 3132(a) of title 5) in the Senior Executive Service,  
23          shall be responsible for coordination, production, and  
24          transmission of congressional materials, but may not alter,

1 delay, or substitute any legislative position established by  
2 the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislative Strategy.

3 “(d) POSITION DESIGNATIONS.—(1) The Assistant  
4 Secretary, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislative  
5 Strategy, and any supervisory policy official, who shall be  
6 accountable for the substance, consistency, and attribution  
7 of each legislative position communicated to Congress,  
8 shall be a noncareer appointee (as defined in section  
9 3132(a) of title 5).

10 “(2) Any analyst, liaison, records manager, member  
11 of production staff, technical specialist, and administrative  
12 support personnel shall be a career employee in the com-  
13 petitive service.

14 “(e) STAFFING COMPOSITION.—(1) Not fewer than  
15 65 percent of the employees occupying full-time equivalent  
16 positions of the Office shall be career employees in the  
17 competitive service.

18 “(2) A political appointee may perform policy and  
19 strategy functions but shall not replace a core operational  
20 career role.

21 “(3) In this subsection, ‘political appointee’ means an  
22 individual who is—

23 “(A) a noncareer appointee in the Senior Exec-  
24 utive Service, as defined under section 3132(a) of  
25 title 5; or

1           “(B) employed in a position of a confidential or  
2           policy-determining character under schedule C of  
3           subpart C of part 213 of title 5, Code of Federal  
4           Regulations, or successor regulation.

5           “(f) PROCEDURES.—The Assistant Secretary shall  
6           maintain procedures for the following:

7           “(1) Ensuring prompt acknowledgment of con-  
8           gressional requests, coordinated and complete re-  
9           sponses, availability of subject-matter experts for  
10          briefings, and internal tracking of outstanding in-  
11          quiries.

12          “(2) Documenting the source of each legislative  
13          position and the timing of each congressional pro-  
14          duction, such that responsibility for substance and  
15          responsibility for timeliness are separately identifi-  
16          able.

17          “(g) SUPERVISION.—The Office shall operate under  
18          the supervision of the Assistant Secretary. In supervising  
19          the Office, the Assistant Secretary shall receive parallel  
20          reports from each Deputy Assistant Secretary concerning  
21          the performance of the Office, including instances in which  
22          action or inaction of the other Deputy Assistant Secretary  
23          affected accuracy, consistency, or timeliness of engage-  
24          ment with Congress.

1           “(h) CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION ACCESS AND  
2 TIMELINES.—(1) Upon receipt of a written or electronic  
3 request for information from the Committees, the Assist-  
4 ant Secretary shall—

5           “(A) send to the requesting committee an ac-  
6 knowledgment of the request not later than two  
7 business days after receipt of such request;

8           “(B) provide to the requesting committee a pro-  
9 duction plan and estimated date of the delivery of  
10 the requested material not later than five business  
11 days after receipt of such request; and

12           “(C) produce all requested records and mate-  
13 rials not later than 45 days after receipt.

14           “(2) If the Secretary certifies that the scope or com-  
15 plexity of the request prevents full production not later  
16 than 30 days after the receipt of such request, the Assist-  
17 ant Secretary shall—

18           “(A) provide a partial response to the request  
19 not later than 45 days after receipt; and

20           “(B) produce a complete response to the re-  
21 quest not later than 60 days after receipt.

22           “(3) Information shall be provided in the form re-  
23 quested by the Committees, including underlying records,  
24 datasets, methodologies, contracts, and communications,  
25 and may not be limited to summaries or briefing materials

1 in lieu of original source documents unless authorized by  
2 the requesting committee.

3 “(4) No official or employee of the Department  
4 may—

5 “(A) withhold, screen, or alter responsive infor-  
6 mation;

7 “(B) delay or condition production on initial  
8 clearance or political review;

9 “(C) require a nondisclosure agreement unless  
10 required by law;

11 “(D) substitute summaries for requested  
12 records; or

13 “(E) otherwise impede or interfere with direct  
14 transmission of information to the Committees.

15 “(5) If the Secretary determines that any information  
16 requested by Congress is classified, the Secretary shall  
17 make arrangements to present such information to the  
18 Chair of the requesting committee using appropriate secu-  
19 rity measures.

20 “(i) NONCOMPLIANCE.—If the Secretary fails to com-  
21 ply with the required timeline for response to a congres-  
22 sional request under subsection (h)—

23 “(1) the Secretary shall provide written notice  
24 to the requesting committee explaining the delay and  
25 identifying corrective actions;

1           “(2) the Secretary shall submit to the request-  
2           ing committee a corrective action plan, including  
3           specific deadlines for compliance and designated;

4           “(3) amounts available for the salaries and ex-  
5           penses of the Office may not be obligated or ex-  
6           pended during the period beginning on the day on  
7           which the Secretary is not in substantial compliance  
8           with subsection (h) and ending on the day on which  
9           the Secretary enters into compliance, except for ac-  
10          tivities necessary to achieve compliance; and

11          “(4) the Inspector General of the Department  
12          shall conduct a review to determine the cause of  
13          such noncompliance, including whether any action or  
14          inaction by a senior Department official contributed  
15          to the noncompliance, and submit a report to the  
16          Committees not later than 60 days after notification  
17          by the Secretary under paragraph (1).”.

18          (b) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date  
19          of the enactment of this section, the Comptroller General  
20          shall submit to the Committees a report evaluating the  
21          implementation of this section.

22          (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

23                  (1) NUMBER OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRE-  
24          TARIES.—Section 308(d)(1) of such title is amended  
25          by striking “19” and inserting “21”.

1           (2) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of con-  
2           tents for such chapter is amended by adding at the  
3           end the following new item:

“326. Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs”.