

[DISCUSSION DRAFT]117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION**H. R.** _____

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to implement a modern information technology service to process claims for educational assistance under chapters 30, 33, 35, and 36 of title 38, United States Code.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

M____. _____ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to implement a modern information technology service to process claims for educational assistance under chapters 30, 33, 35, and 36 of title 38, United States Code.

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 “_____ Act
5 of 2020”.

1 **SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**
2 **SERVICES USED TO PROCESS CLAIMS FOR**
3 **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.**

4 (a) MODERN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERV-
5 ICE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement
6 an information technology service to process claims for
7 educational assistance under chapters 30, 33, 35, and 36
8 of title 38, United States Code, using one or more com-
9 mercial software systems. The Secretary shall complete
10 such implementation not later than August 1, 2024.

11 (b) REQUIRED CAPABILITIES.—The Secretary shall
12 ensure that the modern information technology service
13 under subsection (a) has the following capabilities:

14 (1) As compared to legacy information tech-
15 nology systems—

16 (A) the ability to process claims faster and
17 in a more efficient manner by improving proc-
18 essing integration and accuracy;

19 (B) improved data exchange and reporting;
20 and

21 (C) improved customer integration and
22 simplification of the online experience.

23 (2) Timely communication by employees of the
24 Department of Veterans Affairs to individuals and
25 educational institutions using an online portal that

1 can provide real-time information on claims for edu-
2 cational assistance.

3 (3) The ability to be customized to address fu-
4 ture capabilities required by law.

5 (4) Fully automated to the extent practicable
6 for all original and supplemental claims, including
7 with respect to calculating accurate awards.

8 (5) The ability for individuals entitled to edu-
9 cational assistance to electronically apply for, with-
10 draw from, and amend such entitlement, and to re-
11 allocate a transferred entitlement.

12 (6) The ability to electronically process changes
13 made by educational institutions.

14 (7) The ability to verify attendance at an edu-
15 cational institution.

16 (8) The ability to process validations made by
17 an educational institution.

18 (c) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after
19 the date on which the Secretary awards a contract for the
20 modern information technology service, the Secretary shall
21 submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the
22 House of Representatives and the Senate a report con-
23 taining information on the cost, schedule, and perform-
24 ance of the project for implementing such system, includ-
25 ing, with respect to such project, the following:

1 (1) An estimate of acquisition, implementation,
2 and life cycle costs (including all direct and indirect
3 costs to acquire, implement, operate, and maintain
4 such system).

5 (2) An intended implementation schedule indi-
6 cating significant milestones, initial operating capa-
7 bility, and full operating capability or completion.

8 (3) Key business, functional, or performance
9 objectives.

10 (4) With respect to both original claims and
11 supplemental claims processed on a monthly basis,
12 statistics regarding—

13 (A) the number of such claims processed
14 using legacy information technology systems;
15 and

16 (B) the number of such claims estimated
17 to be processed using the modern information
18 technology service.

19 (5) The amount of savings that are estimated
20 to be realized from using the modern information
21 technology service rather than legacy information
22 technology systems.

23 (6) The estimated accuracy of processing
24 claims.

25 (7) The estimated timeliness for—

1 (A) processing original claims; and

2 (B) processing supplemental claims.

3 (8) A description of how the modern informa-
4 tion technology service will—

5 (A) automate the processing of original
6 claims; and

7 (B) automate the processing of supple-
8 mental claims.

9 (d) UPDATED INFORMATION.—

10 (1) ANNUAL REPORTS.—On an annual basis
11 during the period in which the Secretary is imple-
12 menting the modern information technology service,
13 the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on
14 Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives
15 and the Senate a report containing updated informa-
16 tion regarding the matters specified in subsection
17 (c). Each such updated report shall identify any
18 changes to the cost, schedule, or performance of the
19 project to implement such system.

20 (2) NOTIFICATION.—

21 (A) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 60
22 days after the date on which an action de-
23 scribed in subparagraph (B) occurs, the Sec-
24 retary shall submit to the Committees on Vet-
25 erans' Affairs of the House of Representatives

1 and the Senate a notification of such action, in-
2 cluding a description of and explanation for
3 such action.

4 (B) ACTION DESCRIBED.—An action de-
5 scribed in this subparagraph is, with respect to
6 the project to implement the modern informa-
7 tion technology service, any of the following:

8 (i) With respect to the acquisition, im-
9 plementation, or life cycle cost of the
10 project, or an increment therein, a change
11 or variance that is 10 percent or greater
12 compared to the amount identified the
13 most recent report submitted under para-
14 graph (1).

15 (ii) With respect to the schedule for
16 achieving a significant milestone, initial op-
17 erating capability, or final completion of
18 the project, a change or variance that is
19 180 days or greater compared to the
20 schedule identified the most recent report
21 submitted under paragraph (1).

22 (iii) With respect to the performance,
23 an instance where a key business, func-
24 tional, or performance objective is not at-

1 tained, or is not anticipated to be attained,
2 in whole or in part.

3 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
4 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans
5 Affairs for fiscal years 2020 through 2022 a total of
6 \$250,000,000 to carry out this section.

7 (i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) The term “legacy information technology
9 system” means an information technology system
10 used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to proc-
11 ess claims for educational assistance under chapters
12 30, 33, 35, and 36 of title 38, United States Code,
13 before the date on which the Secretary of Veterans
14 Affairs awards a contract under subsection (a) for
15 the modern information technology service.

16 (2) The term “modern information technology
17 service” means the information technology service
18 implemented under subsection (a) to process claims
19 for educational assistance under chapters 30, 33, 35,
20 and 36 of title 38, United States Code.