To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the staffing, transparency, and accountability of the law enforcement operations of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the staffing, transparency, and accountability of the law enforcement operations of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “VA Police Improve-
ment and Accountability Act”.

SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS TO TRANSPARENCY OF LAW EN-
FORCEMENT OPERATIONS OF DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) Provision of Information.—Section 902 of
title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the
end the following new subsection:

“(e)(1) The Secretary shall publish on the internet
website of each facility of the Department the following
information with respect to the facility:

“(A) Summaries and statistics covering the pre-
vious five-year period regarding—

“(i) arrests made by and tickets issued by
Department police officers;

“(ii) prosecutions, ticketing, and other ac-
tions relating to such arrests;

“(iii) the use of force and weapons dis-
charge by Department police officers; and

“(iv) complaints, investigations, and dis-
ciplinary actions regarding Department police
officers.
“(B) Contact information for employees of the Department and the public to directly contact the police force of the facility, including for an individual (or the representative, attorney, or authorized agent of the individual) to request information regarding the arrest, ticketing, detainment, use of force, or other police matters pertaining to that individual.

“(2) The Secretary shall ensure that each police force of a facility of the Department is able to provide to an individual who contacts the police force pursuant to paragraph (1)(B) the information described in such paragraph.”.

(b) USE OF BODY WORN CAMERAS BY DEPARTMENT POLICE OFFICERS.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Subsection (a) of such section 902 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) Beginning not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary shall require Department police officers to use cameras worn on the individual police officer’s person that record and store audio and video (commonly known as ‘body worn cameras’).”.

(2) GUIDANCE.—Not later than one year after
the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
shall issue, and make publicly available, guidance on
the use of body worn cameras by Department police
officers pursuant to section 902(a)(3) of title 38,
United States Code, as amended by paragraph (1).

(3) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall issue
the guidance under paragraph (2) in consultation
with veterans service organizations, civil rights orga-
nizations, law enforcement organizations, law en-
forcement accreditation organizations, privacy rights
organizations, and other relevant organizations or
experts.

(c) DATA AND REPORTING ON POLICE INCIDENTS.—
Section 902 of title 38, United States Code, as amended
by subsection (a), is further amended by adding at the
end the following new subsection:

“(f) POLICE INCIDENTS.—(1)(A) The Secretary shall
track and analyze the following information regarding the
police force of the Department:

“(i) Arrests made by and tickets
issued by Department police officers.

“(ii) Prosecutions, ticketing, and
other actions relating to such arrests.
“(iii) The use of force and weapons discharge.

“(iv) Complaints, investigations, and disciplinary actions.

“(B) The Secretary shall carry out subparagraph (A) by implementing one or more Department-wide data systems.

“(2)(A) Beginning not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall ensure that each incident described in subparagraph (C) is promptly reported to the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for operations, preparedness, security, and law enforcement functions.

“(B) The Assistant Secretary shall, in a timely manner—

“(i) review each incident described in subparagraph (C)(i) that is reported under subparagraph (A); and

“(ii) investigate each incident described in subparagraph (C)(ii) that is reported under subparagraph (A).

“(C) An incident described in this subparagraph is either of the following:

“(i) An incident, including an allegation, of the use of force by a Department police officer.
“(ii) An incident, including an allegation, of the use of force by a Department police officer that results in any person receiving medical attention.”.

(d) PLAN ON POLICE STAFFING.—The Secretary shall develop a plan that establishes minimum standards for police staffing at each facility of the Department, including with respect to—

(1) the number of Department police officers assigned to each facility; and

(2) the pay grades for such officers.

(e) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on the implementation of this section and the amendments made by this section. The report shall include the following:

(1) With respect to the staffing needs of the Department police force—

(A) identification of the amount of turnover among Department police officers;

(B) how the compensation for Department police officers affects such turnover;

(C) a comparison of such compensation with the compensation provided to specialty po-
lice units, such as police units at medical facilities and other police units in the same locality pay area; and

(D) the plan developed under subsection (d), including—

(i) estimates on the costs to carry out the plan; and

(ii) any recommendations for legislative actions required to carry out the plan.

(2) With respect to body worn cameras, a review of the implementation and use of body worn cameras by Department police officers, including under pilot programs carried out by the Secretary during the five-year period preceding the date of the report.

(f) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) The term “body worn camera” means a camera worn on an individual police officer’s person that records and stores audio and video.

(2) The term “Department police officer” means an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs described in section 902(a) of title 38, United States Code.