



Legislative Bulletin.....June 10, 2014

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H.R. 4810 – The Veteran Access to Care Act of 2014— (Miller-R, FL)

Order of Business: [H.R. 4810](#) is scheduled to be considered on June 10, 2014, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, which requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

Summary: This bill directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with non-Department facilities as necessary to provide care for eligible covered veterans. Those who are “covered veterans” include: those enrolled under section [1705 of title 38](#) who had waited longer than the wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration, had been notified that an appointment was not available within those wait-times, resides more than 40 miles from a VA medical facility or who makes an election to receive care at a non-Department facility. The Secretary must also ensure that those who elect to have their care at a non-Department facility receive appropriate follow-up care, including all specialty and ancillary services deemed necessary. The Secretary is given the authority to carry this section out for a period of two years.

The Secretary is required to submit to Congress a quarterly report on hospital care and medical services and should include:

- The number of veterans who received care at non-Department facilities;
- The number of veterans who elected to continue waiting for an appointment at a Department facility;
- The purchase methods and rate of payment for individual authorizations for care at non-Department facilities, and;
- Any other measure the Secretary sees fit.

To the extent appropriations are available, the Secretary is to reimburse any non-Department facility with which the Secretary has not established a contract at the rate which is the greatest of the VA payment rate, the Medicare payment rate, or the TRICARE payment rate.

No later than 120 days after enactment, the Secretary is will enter into a contract with a private sector entity to conduct an assessment of hospital care and medical services furnished by the VA. This assessment must include improvement areas outlined both qualitatively and quantitatively, recommendations on how to address improvement areas and findings on the credibility of the analysis. The Secretary will share the assessment with Congress no later than 10 months after entering into a contract with the private entity.

This bill prohibits the awarding of bonuses for fiscal years 2014-2016 to employees of the VA.

Finally, the bill directs the Office of Management and budget to transmit an estimate of the budgetary effects of the bill, any transfer authority needed to utilize the savings from eliminating bonuses and awards to satisfy such budgetary effects, and if necessary, a request for additional budgetary resources, or transfers or reprogramming of existing budgetary resources, needed to provide funding for the bill's authority.

Additional Background: This bill comes after numerous reports, including those from the [VA Office of the Inspector General](#) (OIG) and an internal [VA audit](#), uncovered veterans across the country are waiting months to access medical treatment. Findings in the OIG report concluded that inappropriate scheduling practices are systemic throughout VA, while the internal audit concluded the “highest scored barrier or challenge was the lack of provider slots.”

The Veterans Health Administration within the VA provides care to approximately [5.75 million](#) veteran patients. It has been [reported](#) 57,436 veterans have waited 90 days to see a doctor, and still didn't have an appointment as of May 15. In sum, [100,000](#) veterans were identified as experiencing long wait times. The VA has a 14-day wait-time performance target for new appointments.

Committee Action: This bill was introduced on June 9, 2014, by Representative Miller and referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs where it awaits further action.

Administration Position: No statement of administration policy is available at this time.

Cost to Taxpayers: No CBO score is available at this time.

Constitutional Authority: The Constitutional Authority statement was unable to be viewed online at this time.

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H. Res. 608 - Condemning the senseless rampage and mass shooting that took place in Isla Vista, California, on Friday May 23, 2014, as amended — (Capps-D, CA)

Order of Business: [H. Res. 608](#) is scheduled to be considered on June 10, 2014, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, which requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

Summary: This resolution condemns the mass shooting which took place in Isla Vista, California on May 23, 2014. In addition it offers condolences to the community and encourages a productive discussion on all aspects of this tragedy. Finally, it expresses the resolve to remain committed to working to help prevent these tragedies from happening again.

Additional Background: On May 23, 2014, seven people were killed and thirteen injured in a rampage and mass shooting in Isla Vista, California. The gunman, Elliot Rodger, also died during the massacre.

Committee Action: This bill was introduced by Representative Capps on May 30, 2014, and was referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform where it awaits further action.

Administration Position: No statement of administration policy is available at this time.

Cost to Taxpayers: No CBO score was available at this time.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?: No.

Constitutional Authority: House Rules do not require constitutional authority statements for resolutions.

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