

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5530

To provide for certain limitations to the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs rate of payment or reimbursement provided for transportation of veterans and other eligible individuals on special modes of transportation, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

Mr. BOST introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To provide for certain limitations to the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs rate of payment or reimbursement provided for transportation of veterans and other eligible individuals on special modes of transportation, 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 Emergency Trans-
5 portation Access Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. AUTHORITY FOR CHANGES TO DEPARTMENT OF**
2 **VETERANS AFFAIRS RATE OF PAYMENT OR**
3 **REIMBURSEMENT PROVIDED FOR TRANS-**
4 **PORTATION OF VETERANS AND OTHER ELIGI-**
5 **BLE INDIVIDUALS ON SPECIAL MODES OF**
6 **TRANSPORTATION.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
8 may not change the rate of payment or reimbursement
9 provided for the transportation of a veteran or other eligi-
10 ble individual on a special mode of transportation, as in
11 effect on January 1, 2023, unless—

12 (1) such change would increase the rate of such
13 payment or reimbursement; or

14 (2) before the effective date of such change, the
15 Secretary—

16 (A) conducts a thorough review and anal-
17 ysis of—

18 (i) the economic effect of the change
19 on the Department of Veterans Affairs;

20 (ii) the economic effect of the change
21 on the industry associated with the special
22 mode of transportation that would be af-
23 fected by the change; and

24 (iii) the effect of the change on access
25 to care for veterans;

1 (B) develops a formal process to ensure
2 that any change made to such rate does not re-
3 duce the access to care for veterans; and

4 (C) ensures that the new rate reflects, at
5 a minimum, the actual cost of such transpor-
6 tation.

7 (b) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary
8 shall carry out any review under subsection (a)(2)(A) and
9 develop any process under subsection (a)(2)(B) in con-
10 sultation with a committee made up of each of the fol-
11 lowing, who shall be appointed by the Secretary:

12 (1) Relevant industry experts.

13 (2) Representatives of the Centers for Medicare
14 and Medicaid Services.

15 (3) Department employees with subject matter
16 expertise in transportation, access to care, inte-
17 grated veteran care, rural veterans, Native American
18 veterans, and other matters determine appropriate
19 by the Secretary.

20 (4) Representatives of veteran service organiza-
21 tions.

22 (c) TEMPLATE AND PROCESS FOR AFFECTED CON-
23 TRACTS.—Not later than two years before the effective
24 date of any change made to the rate of payment or reim-
25 bursement for special modes of transportation pursuant

1 to subsection (a) that affects the rate payable under any
2 contract of the Department, the Secretary shall—

3 (1) establish a template and a standardized
4 process for entering into and making changes to
5 rates in effect under such contract;

6 (2) issue guidance about the use of such tem-
7 plate and process within the Department and across
8 the industry associated with special modes of trans-
9 portation; and

10 (3) submit to Congress a report that includes a
11 description of the template and process.

12 (d) SPECIAL MODE OF TRANSPORTATION.—In this
13 section, the term “special mode of transportation”—

14 (1) means an ambulance, ambulette, air ambu-
15 lance, wheelchair van, or other mode of transpor-
16 tation specially designed to transport disabled per-
17 sons; and

18 (2) does not include—

19 (A) a mode of transportation not specifi-
20 cally designed to transport disabled persons,
21 such as a bus, subway, taxi, train, or airplane;

22 or

1 (B) a modified, privately owned vehicle,
2 with special adaptive equipment or that is capa-
3 ble of transporting disabled persons.

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