

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 114

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide the public with access to research of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 7, 2015

Mr. HELLER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide the public with access to research of 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 “Veterans Affairs Re-
5 search Transparency Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**
2 **AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND DATA SHARING BE-**
3 **TWEEN DEPARTMENTS.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNET WEBSITE.—The
5 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available on an
6 Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs
7 available to the public the following:

8 (1) Data files that contain information on re-
9 search of the Department.

10 (2) A data dictionary on each data file.

11 (3) Instructions for how to obtain access to
12 each data file for use in research.

13 (b) PUBLIC ACCESS TO MANUSCRIPTS ON DEPART-
14 MENT FUNDED RESEARCH.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than
16 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,
17 the Secretary shall require, as a condition on the use
18 of any data gathered or formulated from research
19 funded by the Department, that any final, peer-re-
20 viewed manuscript prepared for publication that
21 uses such data be submitted to the Secretary for—

22 (A) deposit in the digital archive estab-
23 lished under paragraph (2); and

24 (B) publication under paragraph (3).

25 (2) ESTABLISHMENT OF DIGITAL ARCHIVE.—
26 Not later than 540 days after the date of the enact-

1 ment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a dig-
2 ital archive consisting of manuscripts described in
3 paragraph (1).

4 (3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

5 (A) AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVE.—The Sec-
6 retary shall make the digital archive established
7 under paragraph (2) and the contents of such
8 archive available to the public via a publicly ac-
9 cessible Internet website at no cost to the pub-
10 lic.

11 (B) AVAILABILITY OF MANUSCRIPTS.—The
12 Secretary shall ensure that each manuscript
13 submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1)
14 is available to the public under subparagraph
15 (A) of this paragraph not later than one year
16 after the official date on which the manuscript
17 is otherwise published.

18 (4) CONSISTENT WITH COPYRIGHT LAW.—The
19 Secretary shall carry out this subsection in a man-
20 ner consistent with applicable copyright law.

21 (5) ANNUAL REPORT.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
23 after the date the Secretary begins making
24 manuscripts available to the public under this
25 subsection and not less frequently than once

1 each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit
2 to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the
3 Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs
4 of the House of Representatives a report on the
5 implementation of this subsection during the
6 most recent one-year period.

7 (B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted
8 under subparagraph (A) shall include for the
9 period of the report:

10 (i) The number of manuscripts sub-
11 mitted under paragraph (1).

12 (ii) The titles of such manuscripts.

13 (iii) The names of the authors of such
14 manuscripts.

15 (iv) For each such manuscript, the
16 name and issue number or volume number,
17 as the case may be, of the journal or other
18 publication in which such manuscript was
19 published.

20 (c) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA SHARING BE-
21 TWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DE-
22 PARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Not later than one year after
23 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Department of
24 Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive
25 Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38,

1 United States Code, shall submit to the Secretary of Vet-
2 erans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense options and
3 recommendations for establishment of a program for long-
4 term cooperation and data sharing between and within the
5 Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of
6 Defense to facilitate research on outcomes of military serv-
7 ice, readjustment after combat deployment, and other top-
8 ics of importance to the following:

9 (1) Veterans.

10 (2) Members of the Armed Forces.

11 (3) Family members of veterans.

12 (4) Family members of members of the Armed
13 Forces.

14 (5) Members of communities that have a sig-
15 nificant population of veterans or members of the
16 Armed Forces.

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