

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8269

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct annual surveys of veterans on experiences obtaining hospital care and medical services from medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

Ms. ESCOBAR introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct annual surveys of veterans on experiences obtaining hospital care and medical services from medical facilities 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 “Ask Veterans Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SURVEY OF VETERANS' EXPERIENCES WITH DE-**
2 **PARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL**
3 **CARE.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
5 shall seek to enter into a contract with a non-government
6 entity with significant experience conducting scientifically
7 verifiable surveys and research to conduct an annual sur-
8 vey of a statistically significant sample of veterans who
9 reside in the geographic area served by each of the medical
10 facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to deter-
11 mine the nature of the experiences of such veterans in ob-
12 taining hospital care and medical services furnished by the
13 Secretary at each such medical facility. Each such survey
14 shall be conducted using scientific and verifiable methods.
15 Such contract shall provide that the non-government enti-
16 ty shall conduct such annual surveys during the five-year
17 period beginning on the date on which the Secretary en-
18 ters into the contract with the non-government entity.

19 (b) CONTENTS.—The contract entered into under
20 subsection (a) shall provide that each survey conducted
21 pursuant to the contract shall be specific to a medical fa-
22 cility of the Department and shall include questions relat-
23 ing to the experiences of veterans in requesting and receiv-
24 ing appointments for hospital care and medical services
25 furnished by the Secretary at that medical facility, includ-
26 ing questions relating to each of the following:

1 (1) The veteran's ability to obtain hospital care
2 and medical services at the facility in a timely man-
3 ner.

4 (2) The period of time between the date on
5 which the veteran requests an appointment at the
6 facility and the date on which the appointment is
7 scheduled.

8 (3) The frequency with which scheduled ap-
9 pointments are canceled by the facility.

10 (4) The quality of hospital care or medical serv-
11 ices the veteran has received at the facility.

12 (c) CONSULTATION.—The contract entered into
13 under subsection (a) shall provide that in designing and
14 conducting the surveys for each medical facility of the De-
15 partment pursuant to such contract, the non-government
16 entity shall consult with veterans service organizations.

17 (d) CERTIFICATION.—The contract entered into
18 under subsection (a) shall provide that—

19 (1) before conducting a survey pursuant to the
20 contract, the non-government entity shall submit the
21 proposed survey to the Comptroller General who
22 shall assess whether the survey is scientifically valid
23 and whether the proposed sample size of veterans to
24 be surveyed is statistically significant; and

1 (2) the non-government entity may not conduct
2 such a survey until the Comptroller General provides
3 such a certification for the survey.

4 (e) SUBMITTAL OF RESULTS AND PUBLIC AVAIL-
5 ABILITY OF INFORMATION.—Not later than 30 days after
6 the completion of the surveys conducted pursuant to a
7 contract entered into under subsection (a) for a year, the
8 Secretary shall make the results of the surveys publicly
9 available on the internet website of the Department.

10 (f) PAPERWORK REDUCTION.—Subchapter I of chap-
11 ter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to
12 this section.

13 (g) DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The Sec-
14 retary shall enter into a contract under subsection (a) for
15 each medical facility of the Department by not later than
16 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

○