

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8919

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to consolidate and upgrade the mail management systems of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 9, 2020

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

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to consolidate and upgrade the mail management systems 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 “Ensuring Vastly Im-
5 proved Performance (eVIP) for Mail Service for our Vet-
6 erans Act” or the “eVIP Mail Service for Veterans Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. MAIL STRATEGY AND MODERNIZATION.**

8 (a) DEVELOP STRATEGY.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
3 retary of Veterans Affairs shall develop a strategy to
4 improve the printing and mailing operations of the
5 Department of Veterans Affairs.

6 (2) EXCLUSION.—The strategy described in
7 paragraph (1) does not apply to the mailing of pre-
8 scription and over-the-counter drugs.

9 (b) STRATEGY GOALS.—The Secretary shall include
10 in the strategy under subsection (a) plans for improving
11 the printing and mailing operations of the Department,
12 including plans for the following:

13 (1) Consolidate the printing and mailing oper-
14 ations of the Department—

15 (A) such that the operations are performed
16 at not more than four locations, except that the
17 Veterans Health Administration and the Vet-
18 erans Benefits Administration are each pri-
19 marily serviced by not more than two of the lo-
20 cations;

21 (B) to enable production cost efficiencies;
22 and

23 (C) to improve the timeliness of sending
24 mail.

1 (2) Ensure each of the locations described in
2 paragraph (1)(A) has the capacity to offset service
3 disruptions at another such location, and enable the
4 exchange of mail volume between such locations for
5 purposes of such offsetting and for balancing the
6 mail volume for which each such location is respon-
7 sible.

8 (3) Update the printing and mailing practices
9 of the Department to decrease mailing costs, includ-
10 ing increasing the use of automation discounts of-
11 fered by the United States Postal Service.

12 (4) Improve the accuracy of mail data main-
13 tained by the Department.

14 (5) Improve the tracking of mail within the De-
15 partment.

16 (6) Perform house holding on a more consistent
17 basis.

18 (7) Set Departmentwide standards, including
19 minimum requirements and target goals, for appro-
20 priate mail data metrics.

21 (8) Improve the accuracy of address informa-
22 tion held by the Department for persons to whom
23 the Department sends mail.

1 (c) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Secretary may carry out
2 a pilot program to test the feasibility and efficacy of the
3 strategy developed under subsection (a).

4 (d) IMPLEMENTATION.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
6 after the Secretary has developed the strategy under
7 subsection (a), the Secretary shall implement the
8 strategy except as provided in paragraphs (2) and
9 (3).

10 (2) CONSOLIDATION.—Subject to paragraph
11 (3), not later than 24 months after the Secretary
12 has developed the strategy under subsection (a) the
13 Secretary shall implement the strategy with respect
14 to the goals described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of
15 subsection (b).

16 (3) EXTENSION IN CASE OF PILOT PROGRAM.—
17 If the Secretary carries out a pilot program under
18 subsection (c), not later than 36 months after the
19 Secretary has developed the strategy under sub-
20 section (a) the Secretary shall implement the strat-
21 egy.

22 (e) REPORT.—

23 (1) CONTENTS.—Not later than the date de-
24 scribed in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall submit

1 to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Sen-
2 ate and the House of Representatives a report on—

3 (A) the effect of the strategy developed
4 under subsection (a), as implemented, on the
5 reliability and timeliness of correspondence be-
6 tween the Department and veterans and their
7 dependants;

8 (B) the cost savings resulting from the im-
9 plementation of the strategy;

10 (C) the improvements implemented under
11 the strategy to the hardware and software used
12 for printing and mailing operations of the De-
13 partment, including any such improvements
14 that will be implemented; and

15 (D) whether the Department is processing
16 a significant volume of mail correspondence vol-
17 umes outside of the locations described in sub-
18 section (b)(1)(A).

19 (2) TIMING.—The date described in this para-
20 graph is—

21 (A) two years after the date of the enact-
22 ment of this Act; or

23 (B) if the Secretary carries out a pilot pro-
24 gram under subsection (c), three years after the
25 date of the enactment of this Act.

1 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 (1) The term “house holding” means consoli-
3 dating into a single piece of mail all mail that is sent
4 on the same day from the same location to the same
5 intended recipient at one address.

6 (2) The term “mail data” means metrics relat-
7 ing to printing and mailing operations, including the
8 quantity of mail, costs, and address errors.

9 (3) The term “printing and mailing operations”
10 means the processes, personnel, facilities, and mate-
11 rials and other resources involved in the production,
12 handling, and transmission of electronic and physical
13 mail, and the management thereof.

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