

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6874

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to implement a system or process to actively monitor the veteran self-service and data transmission functions of the main internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs for certain adverse events, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 2023

Mr. ROSENDALE (for himself and Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to implement a system or process to actively monitor the veteran self-service and data transmission functions of the main internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs for certain adverse events, 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 “Department of Vet-
5 erans Affairs Watching over Electronic Benefits Act” or
6 the “VA WEB Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. SYSTEM OR PROCESS TO ACTIVELY MONITOR CER-**
2 **TAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE COVERED WEBSITE**
3 **FOR ADVERSE EVENTS.**

4 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the
5 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
6 erans Affairs shall develop and implement a system or
7 process to actively monitor certain functions of the covered
8 website, including covered features and any underlying
9 interface or system, for adverse events. The Secretary may
10 use the authority under section 701(a) of the Sergeant
11 First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Ad-
12 dress Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (Public Law
13 117–168; 38 U.S.C. 324 note) to carry out this sub-
14 section.

15 (b) **SYSTEM OR PROCESS REQUIREMENTS.**—The Sec-
16 retary shall ensure that the system or process developed
17 under subsection (a) is designed to monitor, and log and
18 store data, with respect to—

- 19 (1) the volume of traffic to the covered website;
- 20 (2) the number of submissions made using a
21 covered feature;
- 22 (3) software updates or other modifications to
23 a covered feature or underlying interface or system;
- 24 (4) needs, deficiencies, or obsolescence of a cov-
25 ered feature or underlying interface or system;
- 26 (5) adverse events, including—

1 (A) the date and time of any such adverse
2 event;

3 (B) the number of users of the covered
4 website who were affected by the adverse event;

5 (C) the number of submissions affected by
6 the adverse event; and

7 (D) any factor related to an underlying
8 interface or system that caused or contributed
9 to the adverse event; and

10 (6) any other factors, as determined by the Sec-
11 retary.

12 (c) NOTICE AND REPORT REGARDING CERTAIN AD-
13 VERSE EVENTS.—

14 (1) NOTICE.—In the case of any significant ad-
15 verse event affecting the covered website, not later
16 than 30 days after the date of such event, the Sec-
17 retary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans'
18 Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives
19 notice of the event, including a description of the
20 event.

21 (2) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after re-
22 ceiving a request from the Chair of the Committee
23 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate or the Chair of
24 the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of
25 Representatives for a report about an adverse event,

1 including a significant adverse event, the Secretary
2 shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs
3 of the Senate and the House of Representatives a
4 report on the adverse event covered by the request.

5 Each such report shall include—

6 (A) a description of the adverse event;

7 (B) the date and time when the adverse
8 event began and ended;

9 (C) the number of users of the covered
10 website who were affected;

11 (D) the number of submissions made using
12 a covered feature that were affected; and

13 (E) a description of any underlying inter-
14 face or system that was affected.

15 (3) SUNSET.—The requirements under this
16 subsection shall expire on the date that is seven
17 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

18 (d) REPORT REGARDING EXERCISE OF CERTAIN AU-
19 THORITY.—If the Secretary exercises authority under sec-
20 tion 701(a) of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson
21 Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics
22 Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–168; 38 U.S.C. 324 note)
23 to carry out subsection (a), not later than 30 days after
24 the date on which the Secretary first exercises such au-
25 thority for such purpose, the Secretary shall submit to the

1 Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the
2 House of Representatives and the Committees on Appro-
3 priations of the Senate and the House of Representatives
4 a report about the exercise of such authority. Such report
5 shall include—

6 (1) the cost of implementing the system or
7 process developed under subsection (a);

8 (2) a description of any modernization or re-
9 placement of an underlying interface or system nec-
10 essary to implement the system or process;

11 (3) an identification of any ways in which the
12 covered website and any underlying interface or sys-
13 tem is susceptible to any adverse event; and

14 (4) a description of how the Secretary plans to
15 eliminate or mitigate, to the extent possible, any
16 such susceptibility.

17 (e) TESTING STRATEGY.—Not later than one year
18 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant
19 Secretary for Information and Technology of the Depart-
20 ment of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees
21 on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Rep-
22 resentatives a strategy to reduce the occurrence of adverse
23 events by improving testing for each modification or soft-
24 ware update to a covered feature or underlying system or
25 interface.

1 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 (1) The term “adverse event” means, with re-
3 spect to the covered website, including covered fea-
4 tures—

5 (A) a failure to properly receive or process
6 a submission;

7 (B) a system outage;

8 (C) an error in an underlying interface or
9 system that prevents the transmission of data;

10 (D) a deficiency in information storage ca-
11 pacity;

12 (E) a loss of data;

13 (F) a presentation of incorrect informa-
14 tion;

15 (G) an error regarding a status notifica-
16 tion; or

17 (H) any similar event that affects a func-
18 tion of the covered website, as determined by
19 the Secretary.

20 (2) The term “covered feature” means any fea-
21 ture or function of the covered website for use in the
22 facilitation of the application, maintenance, or re-
23 ceipt of benefits under the laws administered by the
24 Secretary.

1 (3) The term “covered website” means the
2 main internet website of the Department of Veterans
3 Affairs.

4 (4) The term “significant adverse event”, with
5 respect to the covered website, including covered fea-
6 tures, means an adverse event that affects 1,000 or
7 more users of, or submissions to, the covered
8 website.

9 (5) The term “underlying interface or system”
10 means—

11 (A) any information technology system
12 that transmits data through, or accepts data
13 from, a covered feature; or

14 (B) any mechanism through which any
15 such information technology system connects
16 and interacts with the covered website.

○