

104<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 1482

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve certain veterans programs and benefits.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 7, 1995

Mr. EVANS (for himself, Mr. MONTGOMERY, Mr. MASCARA, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. GUTIERREZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve certain veterans programs and benefits.

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 Programs  
5 Amendments of 1995”.

6 **SEC. 2. EXTENSION TO ALL BENEFITS OF CERTAIN EXCEP-**  
7 **TIONS TO SERVICE REQUIREMENT.**

8 Section 5303A(b)(3)(F) is amended by striking out  
9 “benefits under chapter 30 or chapter 37 of this title”

1 and inserting in lieu thereof “any other benefits under this  
2 title”.

3 **SEC. 3. PILOT PROGRAM FOR USE OF CONTRACT PHYSI-**  
4 **CIANS FOR DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS.**

5 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
6 may conduct a pilot program under this section under  
7 which examinations with respect to medical disability of  
8 applicants for benefits under laws administered by the  
9 Secretary that are carried out through the Under Sec-  
10 retary for Benefits may be made by persons other than  
11 employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant  
12 to contracts entered into with those persons.

13 (b) **LIMITATION.**—The Secretary may carry out the  
14 pilot program under this section through not more than  
15 10 regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

16 (c) **SOURCE OF FUNDS.**—Payments for contracts  
17 under the pilot program under this section shall be made  
18 from amounts available to the Secretary of Veterans Af-  
19 fairs for payment of examinations of applicants for bene-  
20 fits.

21 (d) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than three  
22 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
23 retary shall submit to Congress a report on the effect of  
24 the use of the authority provided by subsection (a) on the

1 timeliness and thoroughness of medical disability examina-  
2 tions.

3 **SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE OF DISCONTINUANCE OF COM-**  
4 **PENSATION UPON DEATH OF CERTAIN VET-**  
5 **ERANS.**

6 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 5112 of title 38, United  
7 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the follow-  
8 ing new subsection:

9 “(d) The effective date of the discontinuance of com-  
10 pensation by reason of the death of a veteran, in the case  
11 of a veteran who, at time of death, was in receipt of com-  
12 pensation for a disability rated as totally disabling with  
13 an additional amount being paid for a spouse, shall be the  
14 last day of the month in which such death occurred if the  
15 surviving spouse of the veteran is not eligible for depend-  
16 ency and indemnity compensation.”.

17 (b) **COORDINATION OF BENEFITS.**—Section 5310 of  
18 such title is amended by adding at the end the following  
19 new sentence: “This section shall not apply in a case to  
20 which section 5112(d) of this title applies.”.

21 (c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by  
22 subsections (a) and (b) shall apply with respect to deaths  
23 occurring after September 30, 1995.

1 **SEC. 5. INCREASE IN AUTOMOBILE ALLOWANCE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3902(a) of title 38,  
3 United States Code, is amended by striking out “\$5,500”  
4 and inserting in lieu thereof “\$6,000”.

5 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
6 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to purchases of  
7 automobiles and other conveyances after October 1, 1995.

8 **SEC. 6. EXTENSION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION FOR**  
9 **PENSION RECIPIENTS.**

10 Section 1524(a)(3) of title 38, United States Code,  
11 is amended by striking out “December 31, 1995” and in-  
12 serting in lieu thereof “December 31, 1997”.

13 **SEC. 7. INCREASE IN PERIOD FOR WHICH ACCRUED BENE-**  
14 **FITS PAYABLE.**

15 Section 5121(a) of title 38, United States Code, is  
16 amended by striking out “one year” in the matter preced-  
17 ing paragraph (1) and inserting in lieu thereof “two  
18 years”.

19 **SEC. 8. RECOVERY OF COSTS OF DEBT COLLECTION.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—(1) Chapter 53 of title 38, United  
21 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the follow-  
22 ing new section:

23 **“§ 5320. Debt collection: recovery of costs**

24 “The Secretary may retain from any amount recov-  
25 ered by the Secretary on an indebtedness owed to the  
26 United States by any person by virtue of such person’s

1 participation in a benefits program administered by the  
2 Secretary a sum equivalent to the costs incurred by the  
3 Secretary in recovering such amount. Sums retained under  
4 this section shall be credited to the account from which  
5 such costs were incurred.”.

6 (2) The table of sections at the beginning of such  
7 chapter is amended by adding at the end the following  
8 new item:

“5320. Debt collection: recovery of costs.”.

9 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 5320 of title 38,  
10 United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall  
11 apply with respect to amounts collected on or after Octo-  
12 ber 1, 1995.

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