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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an online program through which an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs may schedule an appointment for a covered veteran with a non-Department health care provider under the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BARRETT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an online program through which an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs may schedule an appointment for a covered veteran with a non-Department health care provider under the Veterans Community Care Program, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Community
3 Care Scheduling Improvement Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. SCHEDULING OF APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE VET-**
5 **ERANS COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3101 of the Johnny Isak-
7 son and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and
8 Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116–315;
9 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by striking subsection
10 (d) and inserting the following new subsection (d):

11 “(d) PROGRAM ON SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS
12 WITH COMMUNITY CARE PROVIDERS BY EMPLOYEES OF
13 THE DEPARTMENT THROUGH INFORMATION TECH-
14 NOLOGY SYSTEM.—(1) Not later than one year after the
15 date of the enactment of the Veterans Community Care
16 Scheduling Improvement Act, the Secretary shall, instead
17 of the process under subsection (a), carry out a program
18 through which a scheduler of the Department—

19 “(A) may schedule, for a veteran, an appoint-
20 ment—

21 “(i) for health care furnished through the
22 Veterans Community Care Program; and

23 “(ii) offered by a non-Department health
24 care provider that participates in the Veterans
25 Community Care Program and elects to partici-
26 pate in the program under this subsection; and

1 “(B) using an information technology system.

2 “(2) The Secretary shall carry out the program under
3 this subsection through an existing agreement if prac-
4 ticable.

5 “(3) The program under this subsection shall, with
6 regards to an appointment available with a Department
7 provider or a non-Department provider that participates
8 in the Veterans Community Care Program, allow a sched-
9 uler—

10 “(A) to view, search, and sort such appoint-
11 ments by type of care, location, and date;

12 “(B) to schedule such an appointment;

13 “(C) to provide referral or authorization docu-
14 ments directly to a non-Department provider; and

15 “(D) to perform any other function the Sec-
16 retary determines necessary.

17 “(4) Not later than 90 days after the date of the en-
18 actment of the Veterans Community Care Scheduling Im-
19 provement Act, the Secretary shall prescribe regulations
20 under this subsection. Such regulations shall include a di-
21 rective to employees at medical centers of the Department
22 to use the information technology system under this sub-
23 section to schedule appointments described in paragraph
24 (1) instead of the process under subsection (a) whenever
25 practicable.

1 “(5) Not later than 90 days after the date of the en-
2 actment of the Veterans Community Care Scheduling Im-
3 provement Act, the Secretary shall plan and carry out an
4 outreach campaign to encourage non-Department pro-
5 viders that participate in the Veterans Community Care
6 Program to participate in the program under this sub-
7 section. Such outreach shall include the publication of a
8 publicly accessible website of the Department regarding—

9 “(A) details of the program;

10 “(B) how a provider may elect to participate in
11 the program; and

12 “(C) a point of contact in the Department re-
13 garding the program.

14 “(6) The Secretary shall submit to the Committees
15 on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Rep-
16 resentatives the following documents regarding the pro-
17 gram under this subsection:

18 “(A) Not later than 30 days after each deter-
19 mination described in paragraph (3)(D), a report re-
20 garding each function described in such subpara-
21 graph.

22 “(B) Not later than 30 days after prescription,
23 a copy of the regulations prescribed under para-
24 graph (4).

1 “(C) Not later than 30 days after the Secretary
2 formulates the plan under paragraph (5), a copy of
3 such plan.

4 “(D) Not later than 18 months after the date
5 of the enactment of the Veterans Community Care
6 Scheduling Improvement Act and every six months
7 thereafter during the following five years, a report
8 regarding operation of such program during the six
9 months preceding the date of the report. Such a re-
10 port shall include the following:

11 “(i) The number of non-Department health
12 care providers who participated in such pro-
13 gram.

14 “(ii) The number of appointments under
15 the Veterans Community Care Program, sched-
16 uled by a scheduler of the Department,
17 disaggregated by—

18 “(I) whether the appointment was
19 scheduled under such program or by the
20 process under subsection (a);

21 “(II) category of medical services pro-
22 vided; and

23 “(III) month.

24 “(7) The program under this subsection shall termi-
25 nate seven years after the date of the enactment of the

1 Veterans Community Care Scheduling Improvement
2 Act.”.

3 (b) CODIFICATION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3101 of such Act, as
5 amended by subsection (a), is transferred to sub-
6 chapter I of chapter 17 of title 38, United States
7 Code, inserted after section 1703G, and redesign-
8 nated as section 1703H.

9 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section
10 1703H of such title, as added by this section, is
11 amended—

12 (A) by striking any heading that is not a
13 section heading or subsection heading and con-
14 forming the margins accordingly;

15 (B) by striking “of title 38, United States
16 Code” both places it appears and inserting “of
17 this title”;

18 (C) in subsection (a)(1)—

19 (i) in the matter preceding subpara-
20 graph (A), by striking “Not later than 60
21 days after the date of the enactment of
22 this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Af-
23 fairs” and inserting “The Secretary”; and

1 (ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking
2 “Department of Veterans Affairs” and in-
3 serting “Department”;

4 (D) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “Not
5 later than one year after the date of the enact-
6 ment of this Act, the Secretary” and inserting
7 “The Secretary”;

8 (E) in subsection (c)—

9 (i) in paragraph (1), in the matter
10 preceding subparagraph (A), by striking
11 “Not later than 180 days after the date of
12 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary”
13 and inserting “The Secretary”; and

14 (ii) in paragraph (2), by striking sub-
15 paragraphs (A) and (B) and inserting
16 “The Secretary shall require each medical
17 facility of the Department to use the meth-
18 od or tool described in paragraph (1).”;

19 (F) in the section enumerator, by striking
20 “**SEC.**” and inserting “§”; and

21 (G) in the section heading—

22 (i) by striking “**PROCESS AND RE-**
23 **QUIREMENTS FOR SCHEDULING AP-**
24 **POINTMENTS FOR HEALTH CARE**
25 **FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**

1 **FAIRS AND NON-DEPARTMENT**
2 **HEALTH CARE.”** and inserting “**SCHED-**
3 **ULING OF APPOINTMENTS”**; and

4 (ii) by conforming the typeface and
5 typestyle, including capitalization, to the
6 typeface and typestyle used in the section
7 heading of section 1703G of such title.

8 (3) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections
9 at the beginning of such chapter is amended by in-
10 serting, after the item relating to section 1703G, the
11 following new item:

“1703H. Scheduling of appointments.”.