



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

August 9, 2013

H.R. 1804 **Veterans Accountability Act of 2013**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on August 1, 2013

H.R. 1804 would impose several administrative and reporting requirements on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The bill would require VA to obtain informed consent of patients for potential video recordings of care furnished by the agency, unless such a recording is determined to be medically necessary. While the agency is not currently required by statute to obtain such consent, VA reports that, in compliance with the Video Voyeurism Protection Act of 2004 and the Joint Commission for Leadership in Healthcare Organizations, it already requires written consent of patients when they are videotaped for purposes other than medical necessity.

In addition, H.R. 1804 would require the VA to report diseases that occur at its medical facilities to appropriate state and local entities, in accordance with state laws. If VA failed to report the diseases, it would be required to take remedial action and potentially pay a penalty to the state. However, on June 25, 2013, VA released the directive, "Infectious Disease Reporting" (2013-008), which requires mandatory reporting on infectious diseases to state and local entities.

Since both of the requirements described above would codify VA's policy, CBO estimates no additional cost to implement those provisions.

Finally, H.R. 1804 would require VA to submit semiannual reports to the Congress that provide detailed descriptions of certain travel by its employees. The first report would have to be completed by June 30, 2014. In total, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1804 would cost \$1 million to prepare reports over the 2014-2018 period, assuming the availability of appropriated funds. Enacting this bill would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as you go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 1804 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Ann E. Futrell and Dwayne M. Wright. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.