

H.R. 5284, Vet OUTREACH Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on March 12, 2020

| By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars | 2020 | 2020-2025 | 2020-2030 |
|--|------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Direct Spending (Outlays) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Revenues | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? | No | Mandate Effects | |
| Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2031? | No | Contains intergovernmental mandate? | No |
| | | Contains private-sector mandate? | No |

Under current law, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides education benefits through several programs to eligible service members, veterans, and their dependents. Those benefits are paid for programs of education offered by educational institutions and training establishments that have been approved by the State Approving Agency (SAA) for each jurisdiction. Typically, SAAs are state agencies that enter cooperative agreements with VA to conduct that oversight. The department reimburses SAAs from mandatory appropriations for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in overseeing, evaluating, and approving programs of education. The amount VA can spend to support all SAAs each year is capped at \$24 million in 2020; that limit is adjusted annually for inflation.

H.R. 5284 would authorize SAAs to conduct outreach activities, such as providing information on VA education programs to potential beneficiaries if those agencies have performed their enforcement and approval duties. SAAs could be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary costs from the amounts available under current law. Each year, total reimbursements to SAAs for current activities exhaust the funding available under current law, and CBO expects that pattern to continue. Additionally, SAAs can already provide information about VA programs to beneficiaries under current law. Consequently, enacting the bill would not affect federal spending, CBO estimates.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Paul B.A. Holland. The estimate was reviewed by Leo Lex, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.