

**S. 3388, Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2021**

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on December 15, 2021

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2022	2022-2026	2022-2031
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	130	not estimated
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	<b>Mandate Effects</b>	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2032?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

S. 3388 would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to:

- Provide electronic notification of its decisions about claims for benefits,
- Publish several reports and make certain documents publicly available,
- Establish internship programs,
- Increase outreach to groups and individuals that represent veterans, and
- Permit contractors who help process benefits claims to view federal tax information.

Under current law, VA must notify people by mail of its decisions on their claims for benefits. Section 302 would require VA to establish a system where people may elect to receive electronic notification of decisions regarding their application for benefits. Under the system, people may revoke their consent to receive electronic notification at any time.

Costs associated with establishing the system would include technology infrastructure such as text message and email systems, configuration and integration costs, support services such as help desk communications, and two full-time equivalent employees to oversee the system. Using information from VA on costs to establish and support the electronic communications system, CBO estimates that implementing section 302 would cost \$130 million over the 2022-2026 period. Such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. (See Table 1).

VA is satisfying many of the other requirements under existing authorities. Using information from the department, CBO estimates that meeting other requirements, such as producing additional reports, conducting outreach, and permitting contractors to view federal tax information, would have insignificant costs; any spending to cover those costs also would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 700 (veterans benefits and services).

**Table 1.**  
**Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under S. 3388**

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars					2022-2026
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
Estimated Authorization	0	35	35	35	35	140
Estimated Outlays	0	28	34	34	34	130

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Logan Smith. The estimate was reviewed by Leo Lex, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.