

H.R. 1286, Simplifying Forms for Veterans Claims Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on March 6, 2025

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2025	2025-2030	2025-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	-4
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	-4
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	2	2
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

H.R. 1286 would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center (FFRDC) to assess the forms that the department sends to people who have applied for VA benefits. The bill also would reduce the amount of VA pensions the department pays to certain veterans and survivors who reside in nursing homes.

Spending Subject to Appropriation

Section 2 would require VA to enter into an agreement with an FFRDC to assess forms sent to claimants for benefits administered by VA. (FFRDCs are public-private partnerships between the federal government and universities or corporations that conduct research and development for the federal government.) The FFRDC would consult with organizations and individuals who assist veterans to determine if such forms could be better organized and clearer to claimants. The bill would require VA to submit the assessment to the Congress and implement any such recommendations within two years of receipt of the assessment. Using information on the cost of similar studies, CBO estimates that the assessment would cost \$1 million in fiscal year 2026. Based on information from VA, CBO estimates that it would cost the department \$1 million to analyze and implement the assessment's recommendations.

See also

[CBO's Cost Estimates Explained](#), [CBO Describes Its Cost-Estimating Process](#), [Glossary](#)



In total, implementing section 2 would cost \$2 million over the 2025-2035 period. Such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriations (See Table 1).

Table 1. Estimated Budgetary Effects of H.R. 1286													
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars												2025-2030	2025-2035
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035		
Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation													
Estimated Authorization	*	1	*	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Estimated Outlays	*	1	*	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Decreases (-) in Direct Spending													
Budget Authority	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-4	0	0	0	0	-4
Estimated Outlays	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-4	0	0	0	0	-4

* = between zero and \$500,000.

Direct Spending

Section 3 would extend through December 31, 2031, the reduction of pension payments for veterans and survivors who reside in a Medicaid nursing home. Under current law, VA reduces payments to those beneficiaries to \$90 per month. The requirement to reduce pension payments expires on November 30, 2031. CBO estimates that extending that requirement by one month would reduce VA benefits by \$10 million. (Those benefits are paid from mandatory appropriations and are therefore considered direct spending.) As a result of that reduction in beneficiaries' income, Medicaid would pay more of the cost of their care, increasing spending in that program by \$6 million. On net, capping pensions for the approximately 4,000 veterans and survivors in Medicaid nursing homes would reduce outlays by \$4 million over the 2025-2035 period.

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

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