

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6590

To defer action regarding certain debts arising from benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a period of time including the COVID-19 emergency period.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 2020

Mr. PAPPAS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To defer action regarding certain debts arising from benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a period of time including the COVID-19 emergency period.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. DEFERRAL OF CERTAIN DEBTS ARISING FROM**
4 **BENEFITS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY**
5 **THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—During the covered period, the
7 Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not—

1 (1) take any action to collect a covered debt (in-
2 cluding the offset of any payment by the Secretary);

3 (2) record a covered debt;

4 (3) issue notice of a covered debt to a person
5 or a consumer reporting agency;

6 (4) allow any interest to accrue on a covered
7 debt; or

8 (5) apply any administrative fee to a covered
9 debt.

10 (b) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a),
11 the Secretary may collect a payment regarding a covered
12 debt (including interest or any administrative fee) from
13 a person (or the fiduciary of that person) who elects to
14 make such a payment during the covered period.

15 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 (1) The term “consumer reporting agency” has
17 the meaning given that term in section 5701 of title
18 38, United States Code.

19 (2) The term “covered debt” means a debt—

20 (A) owed by a person (including a fidu-
21 ciary) to the United States;

22 (B) arising from a benefit under a covered
23 law; and

24 (C) that is not subject to recovery under—

1 (i) section 3729 of title 31, United
2 States Code;

3 (ii) section 1729 of title 38, United
4 States Code; or

5 (iii) Public Law 87–693 (42 U.S.C.
6 2651).

7 (3) The term “covered law” means any law ad-
8 ministered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
9 through—

10 (A) the Under Secretary for Health; or

11 (B) the Under Secretary for Benefits.

12 (4) The term “covered period” means—

13 (A) the COVID-19 emergency period; and

14 (B) the 60 days immediately following the
15 date of the end of the COVID-19 emergency pe-
16 riod.

17 (5) The term “COVID-19 emergency period”
18 means the emergency period described in section
19 1135(g)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
20 1320b–5(g)(1)(B)).

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