

Union Calendar No. 99

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1848

[Report No. 115–151]

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on the use of medical scribes in Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 3, 2017

Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. WALDEN, and Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

MAY 23, 2017

Additional sponsor: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa

MAY 23, 2017

Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union
and ordered to be printed

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on the use of medical scribes in Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Affairs Med-
5 ical Scribe Pilot Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL**
7 **SCRIBE PILOT PROGRAM.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
9 shall carry out a two-year pilot program under which the
10 Secretary shall increase the use of medical scribes at De-
11 partment of Veterans Affairs medical centers.

12 (b) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the
13 pilot program at the 10 medical centers of the Department
14 as follows:

15 (1) At least four such medical centers located
16 in rural areas.

17 (2) At least four such medical centers located
18 in urban areas.

19 (3) Two such medical centers located in areas
20 with need for increased access or increased effi-
21 ciency, as determine by the Secretary.

22 (c) MEDICAL SCRIBES.—

23 (1) HIRING.—Under the pilot program the Sec-
24 retary shall—

1 (A) hire 20 new Department of Veterans
2 Affairs term employees as medical scribes; and

3 (B) seek to enter into contracts with ap-
4 propriate entities for the employment of 20 ad-
5 ditional medical scribes.

6 (2) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall assign
7 four medical scribes to each of the 10 medical cen-
8 ters of the Department where the Secretary carries
9 out the pilot program as follows:

10 (A) Two scribes shall be assigned to each
11 of two physicians.

12 (B) Thirty percent of the scribes shall be
13 employed in the provision of emergency care.

14 (C) Seventy percent of the scribes shall be
15 employed in the provision of speciality care in
16 specialties with the longest patient wait times
17 or lowest efficiency ratings, as determined by
18 the Secretary.

19 (d) REPORTS.—

20 (1) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than
21 180 days after the commencement of the pilot pro-
22 gram required under this section, and every 180
23 days thereafter for the duration of the pilot pro-
24 gram, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit

1 to Congress a report on the pilot program. Each
2 such report shall include each of the following:

3 (A) A separate analysis of each the fol-
4 lowing with respect to medical scribes employed
5 by the Department of Veterans Affairs and
6 medical scribes performing Department of Vet-
7 erans Affairs functions under a contract:

8 (i) Provider efficiency.

9 (ii) Patient satisfaction.

10 (iii) Average wait time.

11 (iv) The number of patients seen per
12 day by each physician or practitioner.

13 (v) The amount of time required to
14 hire and train an employee to perform
15 medical scribe functions under the pilot
16 program.

17 (B) Metrics and data for analyzing the ef-
18 fects of the pilot program, including an evalua-
19 tion of the each of the elements under clauses
20 (i) through (iv) of subparagraph (A) at medical
21 centers who employed scribes under the pilot
22 program for an appropriate period preceding
23 the hiring of such scribes.

24 (2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not
25 later than 90 days after the termination of the pilot

1 program under this section, the Comptroller General
2 of the United States shall submit to Congress a re-
3 port on the pilot program. Such report shall include
4 a comparison of the pilot program with similar pro-
5 grams carried out in the private sector.

6 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) The term “medical scribe” means an unli-
8 censed individual hired to enter information into the
9 electronic health record or chart at the direction of
10 a physician or licensed independent practitioner
11 whose responsibilities include the following:

12 (A) Assisting the physician or practitioner
13 in navigating the electronic health record.

14 (B) Responding to various messages as di-
15 rected by the physician or practitioner.

16 (C) Entering information into the elec-
17 tronic health record, as directed by the physi-
18 cian or practitioner.

19 (2) The terms “urban” and “rural” have the
20 meanings given such terms under the rural-urban
21 commuting codes developed by the Secretary of Agri-
22 culture and the Secretary of Health and Human
23 Services.

24 (f) FUNDING.—The pilot program under this section
25 shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized

1 to be appropriated for the Department of Veterans Af-
2 fairs. No additional amounts are authorized to be appro-
3 priated to carry out such program.

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