

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

REPUBLICANS | RANKING MEMBER MIKE BOST

The Expediting Temporary Ratings for Veterans Act

Background:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General has documented widespread errors with veterans not receiving the temporary disability rating increases they are due, receiving them late, and being underpaid or overpaid. As a result, sick veterans who are hospitalized and suffering from aggressive cancers and other disabilities are not getting the benefits they deserve. In order to deliver these veterans with the benefits they need, VA's temporary 100% disability rating process must be sped up and improved through advanced technology.

The Expediting Temporary Ratings for Veterans Act would automate eligible veterans' claims for temporary disability rating increases to 100% when they are hospitalized for at least 21 days for service-connected illnesses or disabilities. This bill would also require VA to modify its IT systems to streamline processing of these temporary rating claims. Further, the *Expediting Temporary Ratings for Veterans Act* would also direct VA to use medical records information it already has in its corporate data warehouse to make rating adjustments faster, building on a successful pilot VA has been conducting involving temporary disability rating increases for veterans hospitalized with cancer.

The Message:

- Sick and suffering veterans should not have to worry about how they will afford to make ends meet.
- By making rating adjustments timelier and more accurate through the *Expediting Temporary Ratings for Veterans Act*, VA will avoid errors and delays that harm veterans.
- *The Expediting Temporary Ratings for Veterans Act* would build on actions VA is already taking to better serve veterans with cancer and other serious illnesses or disabilities.