

# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

REPUBLICANS | RANKING MEMBER MIKE BOST

## **H.R. 293: VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance (HELP) Act**

### **Background:**

Human resources (HR) professionals in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) play a vital role in ensuring that VA is prepared to provide our nation's veterans with the timely, high-quality care and services that they have earned. However, those HR professionals use two very different personnel systems to bring employees on-board. The personnel system in title 5 United States Code (U.S.C) is used to competitively hire most employees in VA and across the Federal government. The personnel system in title 38 U.S.C. is used to directly hire clinicians and certain support staff in VA medical facilities. Given the inherent complexities involved in using two personnel systems and the importance of ensuring that VA is appropriately staffed, it is critical that VA's HR workforce is well qualified and highly trained. Unfortunately, there have been several instances across the country where it has been made clear that VA's HR departments struggle to carry out their important duties, which, in turn, has impaired VA's ability to serve veterans.

The VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance – or, HELP – Act would require VA to establish qualification standards and performance metrics for HR professionals working in the Veterans Health Administration. VA would be required to report to Congress on the standards and metrics established under the Act and the Government Accountability Office would be required to report to Congress on the implementation and quality of those standards and metrics.

### **The Message:**

- Veterans deserve to be treated by the best providers available, but VA's complex hiring processes and lack of HR expertise hinders the Department's ability to serve veterans.
- The VA HELP Act would require VA to establish qualification standards and performance metrics for HR professionals to help them navigate VA's complex personnel systems and bring the very best staff on board.
- The VA HELP Act would put commonsense reforms in place to help ensure that VA medical centers and clinics are prepared to provide our nation's veterans with top-notch care.