

# Union Calendar No. 794

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 562

[Report No. 118-945]

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to permit Members of Congress to use facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of meeting with constituents, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 26, 2023

Mr. MAST (for himself, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mr. BAIRD, Mrs. KIM of California, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. DUNN of Florida, Ms. VAN DUYNE, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. FLOOD, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

DECEMBER 24, 2024

Additional sponsors: Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina, Mr. HUDSON, Ms. SHERRILL, Mr. NUNN of Iowa, Mr. FALLON, Mr. SELF, Mr. OBERNOLTE, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LALOTA, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. CROW, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. NEGUSE, and Ms. CARAVEO

DECEMBER 24, 2024

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on January 26, 2023]

# **A BILL**

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to permit Members of Congress to use facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of meeting with constituents, and for other purposes.

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 “Improving Veterans Ac-*  
5 *cess to Congressional Services Act of 2023”.*

6 **SEC. 2. USE OF FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**  
7 **ERANS AFFAIRS BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.**

8 *(a) IN GENERAL.—Upon request of a Member of Con-*  
9 *gress and subject to regulations prescribed under subsection*  
10 *(b), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall permit the Mem-*  
11 *ber to use a facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs*  
12 *(other than a facility of the National Cemetery Administra-*  
13 *tion) for the purposes of meeting with veterans who are con-*  
14 *stituents of the Member. The Secretary and the Adminis-*  
15 *trator of General Services shall jointly identify available*  
16 *spaces in facilities of the Department for such purposes.*

17 *(b) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the*  
18 *date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Af-*  
19 *airs shall prescribe regulations regarding such use of a fa-*  
20 *cility of the Department of Veterans Affairs by Members*  
21 *of Congress. Regulations prescribed under this subsection—*

22 *(1) shall require that a space within a facility*  
23 *of the Department provided to a Member under sub-*  
24 *section (a) is—*

25 *(A) available during normal business hours;*

1           (B) located in an area that is visible and  
2           accessible to veterans who are constituents of the  
3           Member; and

4           (C) subject to a rate of rent (payable from  
5           the Member's Representational Allowance or the  
6           Senator's Official Personnel and Office Expense  
7           Account, as the case may be) that is similar to  
8           the rate charged by the Administrator of General  
9           Services for office space in the area of the facil-  
10          ity;

11          (2) may not prohibit a Member from advertising  
12          the use by the Member of a space within a facility of  
13          the Department under subsection (a);

14          (3) shall comply with sections 7321 through 7326  
15          of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to  
16          as the "Hatch Act") and section 1.218(a)(14) of title  
17          38, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regula-  
18          tion), by prohibiting activities including—

19                (A) campaigning in support of or opposi-  
20                tion to any political office;

21                (B) statements or actions that solicit, sup-  
22                port, or oppose any change to Federal law or  
23                policy;

24                (C) any activity that interferes with secu-  
25                rity or normal operation of the facility;

1           (D) photographing or recording a veteran  
2           patient at such facility;

3           (E) photographing or recording a patient,  
4           visitor to the facility, or employee of the Depart-  
5           ment without the consent of such individual; and

6           (F) photography or recording for the pur-  
7           pose of political campaign materials;

8           (4) may not permit a Member of Congress to use  
9           such a facility during the 60-day period preceding an  
10          election for Federal office in the jurisdiction in which  
11          such facility is located; and

12          (5) may not unreasonably restrict use of a facil-  
13          ity of the Department by a Member under subsection  
14          (a) if—

15               (A) there is space in such facility not in  
16               regular use by personnel of the Department; and

17               (B) use of such space shall not impede oper-  
18               ations of the Department in such facility.

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