

(2) in subsection (f)—
(A) by striking “The Comptroller General” and inserting the following:

“(1) PROHIBITION.—The Comptroller General”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) BUDGET INDEPENDENCE.—The Comptroller General shall include the annual budget request of the Inspector General in the budget of the Government Accountability Office without change.”; and

(3) in subsection (g)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the second sentence, by striking “, except that no personnel of the Office may be paid at an annual rate greater than \$1,000 less than the annual rate of pay of the Inspector General”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) LEGAL ADVICE.—The Inspector General shall, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations governing selections, appointments, and employment at the Government Accountability Office, obtain legal advice from a counsel reporting directly to the Inspector General or another Inspector General.”.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator RON WYDEN, intend to object to proceeding to S. 1409, a bill to protect the safety of children on the internet, dated November 15, 2023.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I have eight requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 11 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 3:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

UNITED STATES SENATE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,

Washington, DC, November 13, 2023.

Hon. KAMALA HARRIS,
President of the United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

MADAM: I have the honor to submit a full and complete statement of the receipts and expenditures of the Senate, showing in detail the items of expense under proper appropriations, the aggregate thereof, and exhibiting the exact condition of all public moneys received, paid out, and remaining in my possession from April 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023, in compliance with Section 105 of Public Law 88-454, approved August 20, 1964, as amended.

Sincerely,

SONCERIA A. BERRY,
Secretary of the Senate.

COMMITMENT TO VETERAN SUPPORT AND OUTREACH ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration Calendar No. 117, S. 106.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 106) to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to award grants to States to improve outreach to veterans, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act”.

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO AWARD GRANTS TO STATES TO IMPROVE OUTREACH TO VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 6307 and 6308 and sections 6308 and 6309, respectively; and
(2) by inserting after section 6306 the following new section 6307:

“§6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans

“(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to provide for assistance by the Secretary to

States to carry out programs that improve outreach and assistance to veterans and the spouses, children, and parents of veterans, to ensure that such individuals are fully informed about, and assisted in applying for, any veterans and veterans-related benefits and programs (including State veterans programs) for which they may be eligible.

“(b) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may award grants to States—

“(1) to carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance—

“(A) outreach activities; or

“(B) activities to assist in the development and submittal of claims for veterans and veterans-related benefits; or

“(2) to increase the number of county or tribal veterans service officers serving in the State by hiring new, additional such officers.

“(c) APPLICATION.—(1) To be eligible for a grant under this section, a State shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) A detailed plan for the use of the grant.

“(B) A description of the programs through which the State will meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i).

“(C) A description of how the State will distribute grant amounts equitably among counties with varying levels of urbanization.

“(D) A plan for how the grant will be used to meet the unique needs of American Indian veterans, Alaska Native veterans, or Native Hawaiian veterans, elderly veterans, women veterans, and veterans from other underserved communities.

“(d) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall seek to ensure that grants awarded under this section are equitably distributed among States with varying levels of urbanization.

“(e) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize awarding grants under this section that will serve the following areas:

“(1) Areas with a critical shortage of county or tribal veterans service officers.

“(2) Areas with high rates of—

“(A) suicide among veterans; or

“(B) referrals to the Veterans Crisis Line.

“(f) USE OF COUNTY OR TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS.—A State that receives a grant under this section to carry out an activity described in subsection (b)(1) shall carry out the activity through—

“(1) a county or tribal veterans service officer of the State; or

“(2) if the State does not have a county or tribal veterans service officer, or if the county or tribal veterans service officers of the State cover only a portion of that State, an appropriate entity of a State, local, or tribal government, or another publicly funded entity, as determined by the Secretary.

“(g) REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—Any grant awarded under this section shall be used—

“(1) to expand existing programs, activities, and services;

“(2) to hire new, additional county or tribal veterans service officers; or

“(3) for travel and transportation to facilitate carrying out paragraph (1) or (2).

“(h) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—A grant under this section may be used to provide education and training, including on-the-job training, for State, county, local, and tribal government employees who provide (or when trained will provide) veterans outreach services in order for those employees to obtain accreditation in accordance with procedures approved by the Secretary.

“(i) OUTCOME MEASURES.—(1) The Secretary shall develop and provide to each State that receives a grant under this section written guidance on the following:

“(A) Outcome measures.

“(B) Policies of the Department.

“(2) In developing outcome measures under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the following goals:

“(A) Increasing the use of veterans and veterans-related benefits, particularly among vulnerable populations.

“(B) Increasing the number of county and tribal veterans service officers recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under chapter 59 of this title.

“(j) TRACKING REQUIREMENTS.—(1) With respect to each grant awarded under this section, the Secretary shall track the use of veterans and veterans-related benefits among the population served by the grant, including the average period of time between the date on which a veteran applies for such a benefit and the date on which the veteran receives the benefit, disaggregated by type of benefit.

“(2) Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the information tracked under paragraph (1).

“(k) PERFORMANCE REVIEW.—(1) The Secretary shall—

“(A) review the performance of each State that receives a grant under this section; and

“(B) make information regarding such performance publicly available.

“(l) REMEDIATION PLAN.—(1) In the case of a State that receives a grant under this section and does not meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i), the Secretary shall require the State to submit a remediation plan under which the State shall describe how and when it plans to meet such outcome measures.

“(2) The Secretary may not award a subsequent grant under this section to a State described in paragraph (1) unless the Secretary approves the remediation plan submitted by the State.

“(m) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant awarded under this section may not exceed 10 percent of amounts made available for grants under this section for the fiscal year in which the grant is awarded.

“(n) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Any grant awarded under this section shall be used to supplement and not supplant State and local funding that is otherwise available.

“(o) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘county or tribal veterans service officer’ includes a local equivalent veterans service officer.

“(2) The term ‘Veterans Crisis Line’ means the toll-free hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of this title.

“(p) FUNDING.—(1) Amounts for the activities of the Department under this section shall be budgeted and appropriated through a separate appropriation account.

“(2) In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the Department budget for any fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested to be appropriated for that fiscal year for the account specified in paragraph (1).

“(q) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025, \$50,000,000 to carry out this section.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 of such title is amended by striking the items relating to sections 6307 and 6308 and inserting the following new items:

“6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans.

“6308. Outreach for eligible dependents.

“6309. Biennial report to Congress.”

MR. SCHUMER. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn; that the Baldwin substitute amendment, which is at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that

the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 1368), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO AWARD GRANTS TO STATES TO IMPROVE OUTREACH TO VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 6307 and 6308 as sections 6308 and 6309, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 6306 the following new section 6307:

“§ 6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans

“(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to provide for assistance by the Secretary to States to carry out programs that improve covered outreach and assistance to veterans and the spouses, children, and parents of veterans, to ensure that such individuals are fully informed about, and assisted in applying for, any veterans and veterans-related benefits and programs (including State veterans programs) for which they may be eligible.

“(b) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may award grants to States—

“(1) to carry out, coordinate, improve, or otherwise enhance—

“(A) covered outreach activities; or

“(B) activities to assist in the development and submittal of claims for veterans and veterans-related benefits; or

“(2) to increase the number of county or tribal veterans service officers serving in the State by hiring new, additional such officers.

“(c) APPLICATION.—(1) To be eligible for a grant under this section, a State shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(2) Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) A detailed plan for the use of the grant.

“(B) A description of the programs through which the State will meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i).

“(C) A description of how the State will distribute grant amounts equitably among counties with varying levels of urbanization.

“(D) A plan for how the grant will be used to meet the unique needs of American Indian veterans, Alaska Native veterans, or Native Hawaiian veterans, elderly veterans, and veterans from other underserved communities.

“(d) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall seek to ensure that grants awarded under this section are equitably distributed among States with varying levels of urbanization.

“(e) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize awarding grants under this section that will serve the following areas:

“(1) Areas with a critical shortage of county or tribal veterans service officers.

“(2) Areas with high rates of—

“(A) suicide among veterans; or

“(B) referrals to the Veterans Crisis Line.

“(f) USE OF COUNTY OR TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS.—A State that receives a

grant under this section to carry out an activity described in subsection (b)(1) shall carry out the activity through—

“(1) a county or tribal veterans service officer of the State; or

“(2) if the State does not have a county or tribal veterans service officer, or if the county or tribal veterans service officers of the State cover only a portion of that State, an appropriate entity of a State, local, or tribal government, or another publicly funded entity, as determined by the Secretary.

“(g) REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—Any grant awarded under this section shall be used—

“(1) to expand existing programs, activities, and services;

“(2) to hire new, additional county or tribal veterans service officers; or

“(3) for travel and transportation to facilitate carrying out paragraph (1) or (2).

“(h) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—A grant under this section may be used to provide education and training, including on-the-job training, for State, county, local, and tribal government employees who provide (or when trained will provide) covered outreach services in order for those employees to obtain accreditation in accordance with procedures approved by the Secretary.

“(i) OUTCOME MEASURES.—(1) The Secretary shall develop and provide to each State that receives a grant under this section written guidance on the following:

“(A) Outcome measures.

“(B) Policies of the Department.

“(2) In developing outcome measures under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the following goals:

“(A) Increasing the use of veterans and veterans-related benefits, particularly among vulnerable populations.

“(B) Increasing the number of county and tribal veterans service officers recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under chapter 59 of this title.

“(j) TRACKING REQUIREMENTS.—(1) With respect to each grant awarded under this section, the Secretary shall track the use of veterans and veterans-related benefits among the population served by the grant, including the average period of time between the date on which a veteran applies for such a benefit and the date on which the veteran receives the benefit, disaggregated by type of benefit.

“(2) Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the information tracked under paragraph (1).

“(k) PERFORMANCE REVIEW.—(1) The Secretary shall—

“(A) review the performance of each State that receives a grant under this section; and

“(B) make information regarding such performance publicly available.

“(l) REMEDIATION PLAN.—(1) In the case of a State that receives a grant under this section and does not meet the outcome measures developed by the Secretary under subsection (i), the Secretary shall require the State to submit a remediation plan under which the State shall describe how and when it plans to meet such outcome measures.

“(2) The Secretary may not award a subsequent grant under this section to a State described in paragraph (1) unless the Secretary approves the remediation plan submitted by the State.

“(m) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘county or tribal veterans service officer’ includes a local equivalent veterans service officer.

“(2) The term ‘covered outreach’ means outreach with respect to—

“(A) benefits administered by the Under Secretary for Benefits; or

“(B) similar benefits administered by a State or Indian Tribe.

“(3) The term ‘Veterans Crisis Line’ means the toll-free hotline for veterans established under section 1720F(h) of this title.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 of such title is amended by striking the items relating to sections 6307 and 6308 and inserting the following new items:

“6307. Grants to States to improve outreach to veterans.

“6308. Outreach for eligible dependents.

“6309. Biennial report to Congress.”.

The bill (S. 106), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

GAO INSPECTOR GENERAL PARITY ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration Calendar No. 191, S. 1510.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1510) to amend provisions relating to the Office of the Inspector General of the Government Accountability Office, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which was reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Braun substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 1369) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “GAO Inspector General Parity Act”.

SEC. 2. OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.

Section 705 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting “(A)” before “The Inspector General”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A), as so designated, by striking the second sentence; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) If the Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within the Government Accountability Office, the Comptroller General shall communicate in writing the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons, for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress (including to the appropriate congressional committees), not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer.

“(C) If there is an open or completed inquiry into the Inspector General that relates to the removal or transfer of the Inspector General under subparagraph (A), the written

communication required under subparagraph (B) shall—

“(i) identify each entity that is conducting, or that conducted, the inquiry; and

“(ii) in the case of a completed inquiry, contain the findings made during the inquiry.

“(D) Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit a personnel action otherwise authorized by law, other than transfer or removal.”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3)(A) Subject to the other provisions of this paragraph, only the Comptroller General may place the Inspector General on non-duty status.

“(B) If the Comptroller General places the Inspector General on non-duty status, the Comptroller General shall communicate in writing the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons, for the change in status to both Houses of Congress (including to the appropriate congressional committees) not later than 15 days before the date on which the change in status takes effect, except that the Comptroller General may submit that communication not later than the date on which the change in status takes effect if—

“(i) the Comptroller General has made a determination that the continued presence of the Inspector General in the workplace poses a specific threat; and

“(ii) in the communication, the Comptroller General includes a report on the determination described in clause (i), which shall include—

“(I) the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons, for the determination made under clause (i);

“(II) an identification of each entity that is conducting, or that conducted, any inquiry upon which the determination under clause (i) was made; and

“(III) in the case of an inquiry described in subclause (II) that is completed, the findings made during that inquiry.

“(C) The Comptroller General may not place the Inspector General on non-duty status during the 30-day period preceding the date on which the Inspector General is removed or transferred under paragraph (2)(A) unless the Comptroller General—

“(i) has made a determination that the continued presence of the Inspector General in the workplace poses a specific threat; and

“(ii) not later than the date on which the change in status takes effect, submits to both Houses of Congress (including to the appropriate congressional committees) a written communication that contains the information required under subparagraph (B), including the report required under clause (ii) of that subparagraph.

“(D) Nothing in this paragraph may be construed to limit or otherwise modify any statutory protection that is afforded to the Inspector General or a personnel action that is otherwise authorized by law.”;

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking “The Comptroller General” and inserting the following:

“(1) PROHIBITION.—The Comptroller General”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) BUDGET INDEPENDENCE.—The Comptroller General shall include the annual budget request of the Inspector General in the budget of the Government Accountability Office without change.”; and

(3) in subsection (g)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the second sentence, by striking “, except that no personnel of the Office may be paid at an annual

rate greater than \$1,000 less than the annual rate of pay of the Inspector General”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) LEGAL ADVICE.—The Inspector General shall, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations governing selections, appointments, and employment at the Government Accountability Office, obtain legal advice from a counsel reporting directly to the Inspector General or another Inspector General.”.

The bill (S. 1510), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 468, S. Res. 469, S. Res. 470, S. Res. 471.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023, THROUGH MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, November 17 at 7:30 a.m.; Tuesday, November 21, at 10 a.m.; Friday, November 24, at 11 a.m.; further, that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, November 24, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, November 27; that on Monday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Bryan nomination; further, that the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 27.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.