

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT

117-54

OFFERED BY MR. NEGUSE OF COLORADO

Page 1236, after line 17, insert the following:

1 **SEC. _____ IMPROVING PROCESSING BY THE DEPART-**
2 **MENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF DISABILITY**
3 **CLAIMS FOR POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DIS-**
4 **ORDER.**

5 (a) TRAINING FOR CLAIMS PROCESSORS WHO HAN-
6 DLE CLAIMS RELATING TO POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS
7 DISORDER.—

8 (1) UPDATE TRAINING PROGRAMS.—Not later
9 than 180 days after the date of the enactment of
10 this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (in this
11 section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall, acting
12 through the Under Secretary for Benefits (in this
13 section referred to as the “Under Secretary”), up-
14 date an ongoing, national training program for
15 claims processors who review claims for compensa-
16 tion for service-connected post-traumatic stress dis-
17 order.

18 (2) PARTICIPATION REQUIRED.—Beginning on
19 the date that is 180 days after the date of the enact-

1 ment of this Act, the Secretary shall require that
2 each claims processor described in paragraph (1)
3 participates in the training established under para-
4 graph (1) at least once each year beginning in the
5 second year in which the claims processor carries out
6 the duties of the claims processor for the Depart-
7 ment.

8 (3) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—The training estab-
9 lished under paragraph (1) shall include instruction
10 on stressor development and verification.

11 (b) STANDARDIZATION OF TRAINING AT REGIONAL
12 OFFICES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the
13 enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the
14 Under Secretary, shall standardize the training provided
15 at regional offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration
16 to the employees of such regional offices.

17 (c) FORMAL PROCESS FOR CONDUCT OF ANNUAL
18 ANALYSIS OF TRENDS.—Not later than 180 days after the
19 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting
20 through the Under Secretary, shall establish a formal
21 process to analyze, on an annual basis, training needs
22 based on identified processing error trends.

23 (d) FORMAL PROCESS FOR CONDUCT OF ANNUAL
24 STUDIES.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
3 retary, acting through the Under Secretary, shall es-
4 tablish a formal process to conduct, on an annual
5 basis, studies to help guide the national training
6 program established under subsection (a)(1).

7 (2) ELEMENTS.—Each study conducted under
8 paragraph (1) shall cover the following:

9 (A) Military post-traumatic stress disorder
10 stressors.

11 (B) Decision-making claims for claims
12 processors.

13 (e) ANNUAL UPDATES TO POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS
14 DISORDER PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180
15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not
16 less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Sec-
17 retary, acting through the Under Secretary, shall evaluate
18 the guidance relating to post-traumatic stress disorder to
19 determine if updates are warranted to provide claims proc-
20 essors of the Department with better resources regarding
21 best practices for claims processing, including specific
22 guidance regarding development of claims involving com-
23 pensation for service-connected post-traumatic stress dis-
24 order.

