

**AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5620**  
**OFFERED BY MR. O’ROURKE OF TEXAS**

Add at the end the following new section:

1 **SEC. 11. POSTING OF AVERAGE NATIONAL WAIT TIMES FOR**  
2 **HEALTH CARE APPOINTMENTS AND AVER-**  
3 **AGE PROCESSING TIMES OF DISABILITY COM-**  
4 **PENSATION CLAIMS AND APPEALS.**

5 (a) FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.—

6 (1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

7 (A) According to the Suicide Data Report,  
8 2012, of the Department of Veterans Affairs,  
9 22 veterans commit suicide every day.

10 (B) According to estimates of the Depart-  
11 ment, only approximately five of these 22 vet-  
12 erans are enrolled in the mental health care  
13 system of the Department.

14 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
15 Congress that—

16 (A) The Department of Veterans Affairs  
17 must be more urgent and effective in its ap-  
18 proach to addressing veteran suicide and pro-  
19 viding veterans access to mental health care;  
20 and

1 (B) Congress urges the Department to en-  
2 sure that preventing veteran suicide and pro-  
3 viding veterans access to mental health care is  
4 the top reform priority of the Department.

5 (b) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—Not later than 30  
6 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and on  
7 a monthly basis thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Af-  
8 fairs shall—

9 (1) determine, with respect to the one-year pe-  
10 riod before the date of the determination—

11 (A) the average national wait times (in  
12 days) for a veteran enrolled in the health care  
13 system established under section 1705(a) of  
14 title 38, United States Code—

15 (i) to receive an appointment for men-  
16 tal health care at a medical facility of the  
17 Department of Veterans Affairs; and

18 (ii) to receive an appointment for pri-  
19 mary health care at such a facility;

20 (B) the average claims processing time of  
21 the Secretary with respect to claims for dis-  
22 ability compensation under chapter 11 of such  
23 title 38; and

1 (C) the average appeals processing time of  
2 the Secretary to decide an appeal to such a  
3 claim for disability compensation; and

4 (2) provide the Secretary of Defense with such  
5 information determined under paragraph (1).

6 (c) POSTING OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary of  
7 Defense shall place in a conspicuous location at each ca-  
8 reer counselor or career assistance advisor office a sign  
9 that—

10 (1) is not less than 18 inches tall by 24 inches  
11 wide; and

12 (2) is continuously updated to display the most  
13 current information received by the Secretary pursu-  
14 ant to subsection (b)(2).

15 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 (1) The term “appeals processing time” means,  
17 with respect to a veteran filing an appeal to a deci-  
18 sion of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs denying a  
19 claim for disability compensation under chapter 11  
20 of title 38, United States Code, the period beginning  
21 on the date on which the claimant files a notice of  
22 disagreement and ending on the date on which the  
23 claimant is informed of the decision to such notice  
24 of disagreement.

1           (2) The term “claims processing time” means,  
2           with respect to a veteran filing a claim for disability  
3           compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United  
4           States Code, the period beginning on the date on  
5           which the claim is originally received by the Sec-  
6           retary of Veterans Affairs and ending on the date on  
7           which the Secretary informs the claimant of the de-  
8           cision.

9           (3) The term “wait time” means, with respect  
10          to a veteran receiving an appointment for health  
11          care at a medical facility of the Department of Vet-  
12          erans Affairs, the period beginning on the date on  
13          which the veteran first requests such appointment  
14          and ending on the date on which such appointment  
15          occurs.

