

Calendar No. _____

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION**S. 2264**

[Report No. 119-_____]]

To improve the emergency management capabilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 14, 2025

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Ms. HIRONO) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

_____ (legislative day, _____), _____

Reported by _____, with an amendment

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

A BILL

To improve the emergency management capabilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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 “~~Advancing VA’s Emer-~~
5 ~~gency Response to (AVERT) Crises Act of 2025”.~~

1 **SEC. 2. REPORT ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ROLES**
2 **FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
5 erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'
6 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-
7 fairs of the House of Representatives a report outlining
8 the roles and responsibilities of all offices of the Depart-
9 ment of Veterans Affairs involved with emergency man-
10 agement.

11 (b) **CONSULTATION.**—In preparing the report re-
12 quired by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
13 shall consult with the Comptroller General of the United
14 States, the Inspector General of the Department of Vet-
15 erans Affairs, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and
16 such other Federal agencies as the Secretary of Veterans
17 Affairs considers relevant, to obtain insights from their
18 experience and trends that they have found, and such rec-
19 ommendations as they may have with respect to the man-
20 agement by the Department of Veterans Affairs of emer-
21 gency management functions.

22 (c) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted pursuant to
23 subsection (a) shall include the following:

24 (1) A description of the organizational structure
25 of each office, both during normal operations and
26 during emergency or disaster operations.

1 (2) The roles and responsibilities of each office.

2 (3) A detailed description of roles and respon-
3 sibilities that are shared by both the Office of Emer-
4 gency Management of the Department and the Of-
5 fice of Operations, Security, and Preparedness of the
6 Department, including an analysis of how each office
7 plays a part in emergency management functions.

8 (4) Recommendations for improving the struc-
9 ture and alignment of relevant offices to better pre-
10 pare the Department for emergencies, remove
11 redundancies, and improve accountability.

12 (5) An analysis of the feasibility and advis-
13 ability of consolidating relevant offices into one cen-
14 tralized emergency management office to improve
15 communication and streamline emergency prepared-
16 ness and response efforts of the Department.

17 **SEC. 3. REPORT ON REGIONAL READINESS CENTERS OF**
18 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Vet-
21 erans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans'
22 Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Af-
23 fairs of the House of Representatives a report on the Re-
24 gional Readiness Centers of the Department of Veterans
25 Affairs.

1 (b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted pursuant to
2 subsection (a) shall include the following:

3 (1) The number of requests made by facilities
4 of the Department to obtain supplies from a Re-
5 gional Readiness Center since the inception of the
6 Regional Readiness Center program, disaggregated
7 by Regional Readiness Center.

8 (2) Information on types and amounts of mate-
9 rial distributed since the inception of the Regional
10 Readiness Center program, disaggregated by Re-
11 gional Readiness Center.

12 (3) Current inventory, disaggregated by Re-
13 gional Readiness Center.

14 (4) An overview of the change in inventory in
15 each Regional Readiness Center during the two-year
16 period ending on the date of the enactment of this
17 Act.

18 (5) The percentage of inventory that is expired
19 or that will expire in the next month, disaggregated
20 by Regional Readiness Center.

21 (6) Operational costs since the inception of the
22 Regional Readiness Center program, disaggregated
23 by Regional Readiness Center.

24 (7) An analysis of the types and sizes of emer-
25 gencies, including natural disasters, public health

1 emergencies, or Fourth Mission activations of the
2 Department, with respect to which each Regional
3 Readiness Center would be able to provide sufficient
4 resources to respond to, based on the current capac-
5 ity of the Regional Readiness Center.

6 (8) Any plans of the Secretary to realign or
7 change the number of Regional Readiness Centers.

8 **SEC. 4. PLAN TO ALLOW FUEL SHARING AND INCREASED**
9 **COORDINATION BETWEEN THE FEDERAL**
10 **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY AND**
11 **THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

12 Not later than 90 days after the date of the enact-
13 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall,
14 after consulting with the Administrator of the Federal
15 Emergency Management Agency, submit to the Com-
16 mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate, the Committee
17 on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives, the
18 Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs
19 of the Senate, and the Committee on Homeland Security
20 of the House of Representatives a report regarding—

21 (1) the current limitations preventing the Fed-
22 eral Emergency Management Agency from providing
23 fuel or other resources to the Department of Vet-
24 erans Affairs during emergencies;

1 ~~(2) whether the Department requires action by~~
2 ~~Congress to allow such resource provision to occur;~~

3 ~~(3) whether the Secretary has been unable to~~
4 ~~coordinate with the Administrator during prior~~
5 ~~emergencies or Fourth Mission activations due to a~~
6 ~~lack of authority for such coordination; and~~

7 ~~(4) whether the Secretary requires action by~~
8 ~~Congress to address any of the issues mentioned~~
9 ~~under paragraph (3).~~

10 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

11 *This Act may be cited as the “Advancing Department*
12 *of Veterans Affairs Emergency Response to Crises Act of*
13 *2026” or the “AVERT Crises Act of 2026”.*

14 **SEC. 2. REPORT ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ROLES FOR**
15 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

16 *(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the*
17 *date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans*
18 *Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs*
19 *of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of*
20 *the House of Representatives a report outlining the roles*
21 *and responsibilities of all offices of the Department of Vet-*
22 *erans Affairs involved with emergency management.*

23 *(b) CONSULTATION.—In preparing the report required*
24 *by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall*
25 *consult with the Comptroller General of the United States,*

1 *the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs,*
2 *the Secretary of Homeland Security, and such other Federal*
3 *agencies as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers rel-*
4 *evant, to obtain insights from their experience and trends*
5 *that they have found, and such recommendations as they*
6 *may have with respect to the management by the Depart-*
7 *ment of Veterans Affairs of emergency management func-*
8 *tions.*

9 (c) *CONTENTS.—The report submitted pursuant to*
10 *subsection (a) shall include the following:*

11 (1) *A description of the organizational structure*
12 *of each office, both during normal operations and*
13 *during emergency or disaster operations.*

14 (2) *The roles and responsibilities of each office.*

15 (3) *A detailed description of roles and respon-*
16 *sibilities that are shared by both the Office of Emer-*
17 *gency Management of the Department and the Office*
18 *of Operations, Security, and Preparedness of the De-*
19 *partment, including an analysis of how each office*
20 *plays a part in emergency management functions.*

21 (4) *Recommendations for improving the struc-*
22 *ture and alignment of relevant offices to better pre-*
23 *pare the Department for emergencies, remove*
24 *redundancies, and improve accountability.*

1 (5) *An analysis of the feasibility and advis-*
2 *ability of consolidating relevant offices into one cen-*
3 *tralized emergency management office to improve*
4 *communication and streamline emergency prepared-*
5 *ness and response efforts of the Department.*

6 **SEC. 3. PLAN TO ALLOW FUEL SHARING AND INCREASED**
7 **COORDINATION BETWEEN THE FEDERAL**
8 **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY AND THE**
9 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

10 *Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment*
11 *of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, after con-*
12 *sulting with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency*
13 *Management Agency, submit to the Committee on Veterans'*
14 *Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs*
15 *of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Home-*
16 *land Security and Government Affairs of the Senate, and*
17 *the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Rep-*
18 *resentatives a report regarding—*

19 (1) *the current limitations preventing the Fed-*
20 *eral Emergency Management Agency from providing*
21 *fuel or other resources to the Department of Veterans*
22 *Affairs during emergencies;*

23 (2) *whether the Department requires action by*
24 *Congress to allow such resource provision to occur;*

1 (3) *whether the Secretary has been unable to co-*
2 *ordinate with the Administrator during prior emer-*
3 *gencies or Fourth Mission activations due to a lack*
4 *of authority for such coordination;*

5 (4) *whether the Secretary requires action by*
6 *Congress to address any of the issues mentioned under*
7 *paragraph (3); and*

8 (5) *whether the Secretary requires action by*
9 *Congress to address the issue of Department employ-*
10 *ees or responders being unable to use Department-*
11 *purchased fuel.*