

## S. 731, Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Reform Act of 2021

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on December 15, 2021

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2022	2022-2026	2022-2031
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	6	not estimated
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	<b>Mandate Effects</b>	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2032?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

\* = between zero and \$500,000.

S. 731 would change how the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) manages information technology (IT) projects. Specifically, the bill would:

- Require that all VA IT projects be managed by interdisciplinary teams that meet a specific list of qualifications,
- Increase requirements for reporting deviations in the cost and schedule of IT projects; and,
- Require VA to provide additional information on unfunded IT projects in its annual budget submission, as well as other reporting requirements.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that S. 731 will be enacted in the middle of fiscal year 2022.

Although VA generally follows governmentwide IT-reporting requirements, and thus now meets some of the bill's requirements, CBO estimates that the agency would need additional human and IT resources to meet all of the bill's requirements. Using information from VA, CBO estimates that the agency would need the equivalent of 10 full-time employees and that salaries and expenses would average \$130,000 per person. CBO estimates that those personnel costs would total \$4 million over the 2022-2026 period. In addition, using

information from VA, CBO estimates that the necessary IT resources would cost \$2 million over the 2022-2026 period. In total, implementing the bill would cost \$6 million over the period. Such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 700 (veterans benefits and services).

**Table 1.  
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under S. 731**

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars					2022-2026
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
<b>Personnel</b>						
Estimated Authorization	*	1	1	1	1	4
Estimated Outlays	*	1	1	1	1	4
<b>Information Technology</b>						
Estimated Authorization	2	0	0	0	0	2
Estimated Outlays	1	1	*	0	0	2
<b>Total Changes</b>						
Estimated Authorization	2	1	1	1	1	6
Estimated Outlays	1	2	1	1	1	6

\* = between zero and \$500,000.

On February 14, 2022, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for H.R. 2250](#), the Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Reform Act of 2021, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on November 4, 2021. The two bills are similar, and CBO's estimates of the cost of implementing them are the same.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Logan Smith. The estimate was reviewed by Leo Lex, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.