

At a Glance

H.R. 617, Department of Energy Veterans' Health Initiative Act

As reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on December 17, 2019

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2020	2020-2025	2020-2030
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	3	87	not estimated
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2031?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

The act would

- Authorize appropriations totaling \$87 million over the 2020-2024 period for the Department of Energy (DOE) to address challenges with large data sets and for the Department of Veterans Affairs and DOE to conduct collaborative research on veterans' health care data

Estimated budgetary effects would primarily stem from

- Spending of the authorized appropriations

Detailed estimate begins on the next page.

Act Summary

H.R. 617 would authorize appropriations totaling \$87 million over the 2020-2024 period for the Department of Energy (DOE) to address challenges with large data sets and for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and DOE to conduct collaborative research on veterans’ health care data.

Estimated Federal Cost

The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 617 is shown in Table 1. The costs of the legislation fall within budget functions 250 (general science, space, and technology) and 700 (veterans benefits and services).

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under H.R. 617

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars						2020-2025
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Department of Energy							
Authorization	15	15	15	15	0	0	60
Estimated Outlays	3	17	15	15	7	3	60
Department of Veterans Affairs							
Authorization ^a	0	7	7	7	6	0	27
Estimated Outlays	0	6	7	7	6	1	27
Total Changes							
Authorization	15	22	22	22	6	0	87
Estimated Outlays	3	23	22	22	13	4	87

a. H.R. 617 would authorize the appropriation of \$27 million over the 2020-2024 period but does not specify in which years that money should be appropriated. For this estimate, CBO has displayed specific amounts in each year from 2021 through 2024 that total \$27 million.

Basis of Estimate

For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 617 will be enacted in 2020 and that the authorized amounts will be appropriated. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for the affected activities. CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 617 would cost \$87 million over the 2020-2025 period.

Department of Energy

Section 5 would authorize the annual appropriation of \$15 million over the 2020-2023 period for DOE to conduct research, development, and demonstration projects to address challenges with large data sets. CBO estimates that implementing the provision would cost \$60 million over the 2020-2025 period.

Department of Veterans Affairs

Section 4 of the act would authorize the appropriation of \$27 million over the 2020-2024 period for VA and DOE to implement a collaborative research program to analyze large-scale health and genomic data. The legislation does not specify the amount for each year, so CBO assumes that between \$6 million and \$7 million would be used each year beginning in 2021. VA has spent at least \$15 million since 2017 for similar efforts.

Under H.R. 617, VA would reimburse DOE for research expenses associated with the program. The legislation also would require DOE to report to the Congress on those collaborative efforts. CBO estimates that implementing section 4 would cost \$27 million over the 2020-2025 period.

Pay-As-You-Go Considerations: None.

Increase in Long-Term Deficits: None.

Mandates: None.

Previous CBO Estimate

On August 7, 2019, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for S. 143](#), the Department of Energy Veterans' Health Initiative Act, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on July 16, 2019. The two pieces of legislation are similar but would authorize the appropriation of different amounts for DOE's data analysis activities. CBO's estimates of the budgetary effects reflect that difference.

Estimate Prepared By

Federal Costs: Janani Shankaran (Department of Energy)
Ann Futrell (Department of Veterans Affairs)

Mandates: Brandon Lever

Estimate Reviewed By

Kim P. Cawley
Chief, Natural and Physical Resources Cost Estimates Unit

David Newman
Chief, Defense, International Affairs and Veterans' Affairs Cost Estimates Unit

H. Samuel Papenfuss
Deputy Director of Budget Analysis