

[H.R. 313, Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, September 28, 2015, the House will consider [H.R. 313](#), *the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 313 was introduced on January 13, 2015 by Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which ordered the bill reported by voice vote on January 27, 2015.

SUMMARY

H.R. 313 grants newly-hired federal workers with a service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or greater access to up to 13 days of sick leave for medical treatment related to their disability during their first year of civilian employment. Such leave is capped at 104 hours and any leave not used during the employee's first year must be forfeited. Individuals utilizing this new category of leave must certify that the use of such leave was related to treatment of their disability subject to regulations prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management. The bill defines 'service-connected disability' to include non-combat related injuries.

BACKGROUND

Under current law, "full-time federal workers accrue four hours of sick leave each full biweekly pay period, totaling 13 days of sick leave per year."¹ However, since newly-hired federal workers start with a zero sick leave balance, "disabled veterans beginning civilian jobs often have insufficient leave to receive necessary medical treatment"² for a variety of service-connected disabilities. Consequently, such wounded warriors "must often take unpaid leave to care for their injuries, or forego their medical appointments."³

According to the bill sponsor, "it is unacceptable that our wounded warrior federal employees who are just starting out in the federal workforce are often faced with the difficult choice of having to take unpaid leave to attend their VA appointments or miss their medical visits. The Wounded Warriors

¹ [House Report 114-180](#) at 2.

² Id.

³ Id.

Federal Leave Act of 2015 provides vital federal leave for our heroic and dedicated wounded warriors so that they are able to take the time they need to address their disabilities, while continuing their much appreciated service to our country.”⁴

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 313 would cost \$55 million over the next five years, subject to appropriation of the necessary funds. Pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply to this legislation because it would not affect direct spending or revenues.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

⁴ See Press Release—“[Congressman Lynch Introduces Bipartisan Legislation to Support Wounded Warriors in the Federal Workforce](#),” January 14, 2015.