

[Floor Situation](#) | [Summary](#) | [Background](#) | [Cost](#) | [Staff Contact](#)

[S. 2082, Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Tuesday, September 29, 2015, the House will consider [S. 2082](#), *the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015*, under suspension of the rules. S. 2082 was introduced on September 25, 2015 by Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-GA) and passed the Senate by unanimous consent the same day.

SUMMARY

S. 2082 extends authority for certain expiring Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care, benefit, disability, housing, education, job training, and other assistance programs. The bill also modifies the authorization for a major medical facility project at the VA medical center in Tampa, Florida, and in addition, authorizes four new major medical facility projects located at: Canandaigua, New York; Long Beach, California; West Los Angeles, California; and, San Diego, California.

The bill also increases the authorization for the Denver VA medical center replacement project from \$1.05 billion to \$1.675 billion. The bill defines a super construction project as a project exceeding \$100 million and requires that such projects be managed by a non-department federal entity. This super construction designation would apply to the ongoing VA project in Denver and any project authorized on or after enactment of this Act.

BACKGROUND

The VA estimates that the veteran population was 21.9 million as of September 30, 2014. The VA operates 1,203 VA outpatient sites, 300 Vet Centers, over 150 hospitals and medical centers, 131 national cemeteries, and 56 regional offices. There are 9.1 million veterans enrolled in the VA health care system, while 4 million are receiving VA disability compensation.¹

¹ See VA document—[“Department of Veterans Affairs Statistics at a Glance,”](#) June 30, 2015.

According to reports, the Denver VA medical center replacement project is designed to replace old and crowded VA facilities for nearly 400,000 veterans in Colorado and neighboring states. The project is significantly over budget and many reports have cited bad management of the project within the VA as a reason for overruns.² S. 2082 requires the project to be managed by a non-department federal entity.

COST

A Congressional Budget Office (CBO) cost estimate is currently unavailable.

STAFF CONTACT

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

² See NPR article, [“The Unfinished VA Hospital That's More Than \\$1 Billion Over Budget.”](#) June 9, 2015.