

Veterans Data Integrity and Accountability Act of 2025

A BILL

To establish criminal penalties for knowing and willful falsification of Department of Veterans Affairs performance data, to hold leadership accountable, to protect employees from coercion, and to require validated justification when the Department rejects oversight findings.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the *Veterans Data Integrity and Accountability Act of 2025*.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

Congress finds:

1. Veterans depend on accurate VA performance data—including wait times, consult tracking, and staffing ratios—for timely and safe access to care.
2. Repeated scandals, including falsified wait times in Phoenix, flawed drive-time tools at Bay Pines, and mismanaged consult reporting in the Consult Toolbox, demonstrate that inaccurate or falsified data causes harm and delays to veterans.
3. Public Law 113-146 prohibits falsification of certain VA data and authorizes administrative penalties, yet OIG and GAO reports show systemic manipulation persists.
4. Current federal statutes (18 U.S.C. § 1001, False Claims Act) address false statements and financial fraud but are not routinely applied to VA performance metrics.
5. Employees often face coercive pressure from leadership to alter data, while those who report wrongdoing face retaliation.
6. Data integrity is not an administrative formality—it is a matter of patient safety and public trust.

Purpose. This Act deters falsification, holds leadership accountable, protects employees from coercion, and requires evidence-based justification when VA rejects oversight findings.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

- **Covered Data.** Performance metrics directly tied to patient care, access, or safety, including wait times, consult tracking, quality indicators, and staffing ratios. *Excludes* financial billing and claims data.
- **Falsify.** To knowingly and willfully alter, conceal, misrepresent, or fabricate Covered Data with intent to mislead supervisors, oversight bodies, Congress, or the public.
- **Leadership Official.** Any VA employee at GS-13 or higher, or equivalent, including contractors serving in supervisory or executive functions.

SEC. 4. OFFENSE.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any VA officer, employee, contractor, or agent to knowingly and willfully falsify Covered Data.

(b) A violation constitutes a federal offense punishable by—

- Fines under Title 18, U.S. Code; and/or
- Imprisonment for not more than 5 years.

SEC. 5. LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) Any Leadership Official who directs, pressures, or knowingly benefits from falsification shall be subject to the same penalties.

(b) Command responsibility standard: Leaders may be held liable if they knew or reasonably should have known falsification occurred and failed to prevent or report it.

SEC. 6. WHISTLEBLOWER AND SAFE HARBOR PROTECTIONS.

(a) Employees who disclose suspected falsification to OIG, GAO, or Congress shall be protected from retaliation under 5 U.S.C. § 2302.

(b) Employees coerced into falsification who promptly report such coercion shall not be criminally liable under this Act.

SEC. 7. OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING.

- (a) The OIG shall investigate violations of this Act.
- (b) Substantiated cases shall be referred to the Department of Justice.
- (c) The OIG shall submit an annual report to Congress, including—
 - 1. Investigations conducted under this Act;
 - 2. Nature of violations;
 - 3. Disciplinary or prosecutorial outcomes.

SEC. 8. OIG/GAO NON-CONCURRENCE JUSTIFICATION.

If the VA does not concur with an OIG or GAO recommendation, the Department must, within 60 days, submit to Congress a justification supported by validated data and analysis.

SEC. 9. SAVINGS CLAUSE.

Nothing in this Act shall limit existing administrative or civil penalties under Public Law 113-146, 18 U.S.C. § 1001, the False Claims Act, or VA internal policies. This Act supplements existing law by establishing criminal penalties and oversight mechanisms for knowing and willful falsification of performance metrics.
