



116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To provide for phased-in payment of Social Security Disability Insurance payments during the waiting period for individuals with a terminal illness.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. REED, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HASSAN, and Ms. COLLINS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To provide for phased-in payment of Social Security Disability Insurance payments during the waiting period for individuals with a terminal illness.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Expedited Disability
5 Insurance Payments for Terminally Ill Individuals Act of
6 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. PHASED-IN PAYMENT OF SSDI BENEFITS DURING**
2 **THE WAITING PERIOD FOR THE TERMINALLY**
3 **ILL.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 223 of the Social Security
5 Act (42 U.S.C. 423) is amended—

6 (1) in subsection (a)—

7 (A) in paragraph (1), in the matter fol-
8 lowing subparagraph (E), by striking “or (ii)”
9 and inserting “(ii) subject to paragraph (2)(B),
10 for each month beginning with the first month
11 during all of which the individual is determined
12 under subparagraph (D) of subsection (d)(2) to
13 be under a disability and in which he becomes
14 so entitled to such insurance benefits, or (iii)”;

15 (B) in paragraph (2)—

16 (i) in subparagraph (A), by striking
17 “or” at the end;

18 (ii) by redesignating subparagraph
19 (B) as subparagraph (C);

20 (iii) in subparagraph (C), as so redес-
21 ignated, by striking “(ii)” and inserting
22 “(iii)”;

23 (iv) by inserting after subparagraph
24 (A) the following new subparagraph:

25 “(B) in any case in which clause (ii) of para-
26 graph (1) of this subsection is applicable, the first

1 month for which the individual becomes entitled to
2 such disability insurance benefits, subject to the
3 phase-in percentage period described in paragraph
4 (3)(A), or”; and

5 (C) by adding at the end the following new
6 paragraph:

7 “(3)(A) For purposes of paragraph (2)(B), in any
8 case in which clause (ii) of paragraph (1) of this sub-
9 section is applicable, an individual’s disability insurance
10 benefit for the earliest period of 2 consecutive calendar
11 months throughout which the individual has been entitled
12 to such insurance benefits shall be equal to the product
13 of the benefit amount determined under paragraph (2)(B)
14 (as determined before application of this paragraph)
15 and—

16 “(i) for the first calendar month, 50 percent;
17 and

18 “(ii) for the second calendar month, 75 percent.

19 “(B) If an individual who has been determined under
20 subparagraph (D) of subsection (d)(2) to be under a dis-
21 ability has been entitled to a disability insurance benefit
22 on such basis for 12 consecutive calendar months, the in-
23 dividual’s disability insurance benefit for any month dur-
24 ing the subsequent period of 12 consecutive calendar
25 months shall be equal to—

1 “(i) the benefit amount determined under para-
2 graph (2)(B) (as determined before application of
3 subparagraph (A)); minus

4 “(ii) the quotient obtained by dividing the total
5 amount of disability insurance benefits provided to
6 the individual during the earliest period of five con-
7 secutive calendar months for which the individual
8 was entitled to such benefits on such basis by 12.

9 “(C) If an individual who has been determined under
10 subparagraph (D) of subsection (d)(2) to be under a dis-
11 ability has been entitled to a disability insurance benefit
12 on such basis for 24 consecutive calendar months, the in-
13 dividual’s disability insurance benefit for any subsequent
14 month shall be equal to 95 percent of the benefit amount
15 determined under paragraph (2)(B) (as determined before
16 application of subparagraphs (A) and (B)).”; and

17 (2) in subsection (d)(2), by adding at the end
18 the following:

19 “(D) For purposes of clause (ii) of paragraph
20 (1) of subsection (a), an individual shall be deter-
21 mined to be under a disability upon submission of a
22 diagnosis of a terminal illness (as defined in section
23 1861(dd)(3)(A)) that has been certified by not less
24 than 2 physicians (as defined in section 1861(r)(1))
25 who are not related (as defined in section 267(e)(4)

1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) and are not
2 in the same physician group practice.”.

3 (b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

4 (1) REPORT BY SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRA-
5 TION.—Not later than 12 months after the date of
6 the enactment of this Act, and each year thereafter,
7 the Commissioner of the Social Security Administra-
8 tion, in coordination with the Inspector General of
9 the Social Security Administration, shall submit to
10 the relevant committees of Congress a report that
11 evaluates the provision of disability insurance bene-
12 fits to terminally ill individuals, including—

13 (A) the total number of individuals who—

14 (i) file applications for disability in-
15 surance benefits (as determined under sec-
16 tion 223(a)(3) of the Social Security Act)
17 based on a diagnosis of a terminal illness;

18 (ii) receive such benefits;

19 (iii) die within 6 months of first re-
20 ceiving such benefits;

21 (iv) die within 12 months of first re-
22 ceiving such benefits;

23 (v) receive such benefits during the
24 period described in section 223(a)(3)(B) of
25 the Social Security Act; and

1 (vi) receive such benefits during the
2 period described in section 223(a)(3)(C) of
3 the Social Security Act;

4 (B) the total amount expended, including
5 related administrative expenses, for the provi-
6 sion of disability insurance benefits under sec-
7 tion 223(a)(3) of the Social Security Act to in-
8 dividuals diagnosed with a terminal illness; and

9 (C) recommendations for such legislation
10 and administrative actions as are determined
11 appropriate for preventing fraud, waste, and
12 abuse related to such benefits.

13 (2) REPORT BY GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY
14 OFFICE.—Not later than 4 years after the date of
15 the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
16 of the United States shall submit a report to the rel-
17 evant committees of Congress that evaluates the pro-
18 vision of disability insurance benefits to terminally ill
19 individuals and provides recommendations for such
20 legislation and administrative actions as are deter-
21 mined appropriate to improve the provision of such
22 benefits to such individuals.

23 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE; SUNSET.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
25 the amendments made by this section shall apply to

1 benefits payable for months beginning after Decem-
2 ber 31, 2019.

3 (2) SUNSET.—The amendments made by sub-
4 section (a) shall cease to have effect on January 1,
5 2025, and upon such date, section 223 of the Social
6 Security Act shall read as such section read on the
7 day before the date of the enactment of this Act.