

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1786

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the Warrior Training Advancement Course, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to administer a pilot program to employ veterans in positions that relate to conservation and resource management activities of the Department of the Interior, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2023

Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mr. WITTMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the Warrior Training Advancement Course, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to administer a pilot program to employ veterans in positions that relate to conservation and resource management activities of the Department of the Interior, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Get Rewarding Out-
3 door Work for our Veterans Act” or the “GROW Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. REPORTING ON THE WARRIOR TRAINING ADVANCE-**
5 **MENT COURSE OF THE VETERANS BENEFIT**
6 **ADMINISTRATION.**

7 (a) REPORTS REQUIRED.—

8 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than six
9 months after the date of the enactment of this Act,
10 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the
11 Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and
12 House of Representatives a report on WARTAC.

13 (2) ANNUAL REPORT.—One year after the sub-
14 mission under paragraph (1) and annually there-
15 after, the Secretary shall submit to such Committees
16 a report that contains the elements under para-
17 graphs (1) and (3) of subsection (b) with regards to
18 the preceding year.

19 (b) ELEMENTS.—Subject to subsection (a)(2), the re-
20 ports under this section shall include the following ele-
21 ments:

22 (1) BEST PRACTICES.—With regards to best
23 practices of WARTAC—

24 (A) how many covered members have ap-
25 plied to participate in WARTAC;

1 (B) how many covered members have par-
2 ticipated in WARTAC;

3 (C) how the Secretary provides training to
4 covered members during TAP;

5 (D) how many covered members have com-
6 pleted WARTAC; and

7 (E) any other information the Secretary
8 determines appropriate.

9 (2) COST SAVINGS.—With regards to cost sav-
10 ings of WARTAC—

11 (A) how much money the Secretary deter-
12 mines WARTAC saves the United States each
13 fiscal year;

14 (B) how much money the Secretary deter-
15 mines WARTAC has saved the United States
16 since its establishment; and

17 (C) the determination of the Secretary
18 whether other Federal agencies may save money
19 by establishing a program similar to WARTAC.

20 (3) HIRING.—With regards to hiring covered
21 members who complete WARTAC—

22 (A) how the Secretary identifies positions
23 in the Department of Veterans Affairs for
24 which such covered members may qualify;

1 (B) the grades of such positions on the
2 General Schedule under section 5332 of title 5,
3 United States Code; and

4 (C) how many such covered members the
5 Secretary has hired to such positions.

6 (c) DISTRIBUTION.—Not later than 30 days after
7 submitting the report under subsection (a)(1), the Sec-
8 retary of Veterans Affairs shall transmit a copy of the re-
9 port under this section to each head of a Federal agency.

10 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11 (1) The term “covered member” means mem-
12 bers of the Armed Forces participating in TAP.

13 (2) The term “TAP” means the Transition As-
14 sistance Program of the Department of Defense
15 under sections 1142 and 1144 of title 10, United
16 States Code.

17 (3) The term “WARTAC” means the Warrior
18 Training Advancement Course of the Veterans Ben-
19 efit Administration, in which the Secretary provides
20 training to covered members so such covered mem-
21 bers may qualify for certain employment in the Vet-
22 erans Benefit Administration.

1 **SEC. 3. PILOT PROGRAM TO EMPLOY VETERANS IN POSI-**
2 **TIONS RELATING TO CONSERVATION AND RE-**
3 **SOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.**

4 (a) **BEST PRACTICES FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.—**

5 The Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employ-
6 ment and Training, in consultation with the Secretary of
7 Veterans Affairs, shall establish guidelines containing best
8 practices for departments and agencies of the Federal
9 Government that carry out programs to employ veterans
10 who are transitioning from service in the Armed Forces.
11 Such guidelines shall include the findings of the report re-
12 quired under section 2.

13 (b) **PILOT PROGRAM.—**

14 (1) **ESTABLISHMENT.—**The Secretary of the In-
15 terior, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary
16 of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training
17 and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall establish
18 a pilot program under which veterans are employed
19 by the Federal Government in positions that relate
20 to the conservation and resource management activi-
21 ties of the Department of the Interior.

22 (2) **POSITIONS.—**The Secretary of the Interior
23 shall—

24 (A) identify vacant positions in the De-
25 partment of the Interior that are appropriate to
26 fill using the pilot program; and

1 (B) to the extent practicable, fill such posi-
2 tions using the pilot program.

3 (3) APPLICATION OF CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—A
4 veteran employed under the pilot program shall be
5 treated as an employee as defined by section 2105
6 of title 5, United States Code.

7 (4) BRIEFINGS AND REPORT.—

8 (A) INITIAL BRIEFING.—Not later than 60
9 days after the date of the enactment of this
10 Act, the Secretary of the Interior and the As-
11 sistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Em-
12 ployment and Training shall jointly provide to
13 the appropriate congressional committees a
14 briefing on the pilot program under this sub-
15 section, which shall include—

16 (i) a description of how the pilot pro-
17 gram will be carried out in a manner to re-
18 duce the unemployment of veterans; and

19 (ii) any recommendations for legisla-
20 tive actions to improve the pilot program.

21 (B) IMPLEMENTATION BRIEFING.—Not
22 later than one year after the date on which the
23 pilot program under subsection (a) commences,
24 the Secretary of the Interior and the Assistant
25 Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment

1 and Training shall jointly provide to the appro-
2 priate congressional committees a briefing on
3 the implementation of the pilot program.

4 (C) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 30
5 days after the date on which the pilot program
6 under subsection (a) is completed, the Secretary
7 of the Interior and the Assistant Secretary of
8 Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training
9 shall jointly submit to the appropriate congress-
10 sional committees a report on the pilot program
11 that includes the following:

12 (i) The number of veterans who ap-
13 plied to participate in the pilot program.

14 (ii) The number of such veterans em-
15 ployed under the pilot program.

16 (iii) The number of veterans identified
17 in clause (ii) who transitioned to full-time
18 positions with the Federal Government
19 after participating in the pilot program.

20 (iv) Any other information the Sec-
21 retary and the Assistant Secretary deter-
22 mine appropriate with respect to meas-
23 uring the effectiveness of the pilot pro-
24 gram.

1 (5) DURATION.—The authority to carry out the
2 pilot program under this subsection shall terminate
3 on the date that is two years after the date on which
4 the pilot program commences.

5 (c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-
6 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congres-
7 sional committees” means—

8 (1) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the
9 Committee on Natural Resources of the House of
10 Representatives; and

11 (2) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the
12 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the
13 Senate.

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