

(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2878

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a Native VetSuccess at Tribal Colleges and Universities Pilot Program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GALLEGO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a Native VetSuccess at Tribal Colleges and Universities Pilot Program.

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 "Native VetSuccess at
5 Tribal Colleges and Universities Pilot Program Act".

1 **SEC. 2. NATIVE VETSUCCESS AT TRIBAL COLLEGES AND**
2 **UNIVERSITIES PILOT PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after
4 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
5 Veterans Affairs shall carry out a five-year pilot program,
6 to be known as the “Native VetSuccess at Tribal Colleges
7 and Universities Pilot Program”. Under such pilot pro-
8 gram the Secretary shall—

9 (1) identify three regional Native VetSuccess
10 service areas consisting of at least two participating
11 Tribal colleges or universities;

12 (2) assign to each regional Native VetSuccess
13 service area a VetSuccess on Campus counselor and
14 a full-time Vet Center outreach coordinator, both of
15 whom shall be based on one or more of the partici-
16 pating Tribal colleges or universities in the service
17 area; and

18 (3) provide for eligible students at such partici-
19 pating colleges and universities with all services for
20 which such students would be eligible under the
21 VetSuccess on Campus program of the Department
22 of Veterans Affairs.

23 (b) ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.—For purposes of the pilot
24 program, an eligible student is a student who is a veteran,
25 member of the Armed Forces, or dependent of a veteran
26 or member of the Armed Forces who is eligible for any

1 service or benefit under the VetSuccess on Campus pro-
2 gram of the Department.

3 (c) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—In developing
4 the pilot program under this section, the Secretary, acting
5 through the Veteran Readiness and Employment Program
6 of the Department of Veterans Affairs and in coordination
7 with the Office of Tribal Government Relations of the De-
8 partment, shall consult with Indian tribes, Tribal organi-
9 zations, and veterans service organizations regarding each
10 of the following:

11 (1) The design of the pilot program.

12 (2) The selection of the three regional Native
13 VetSuccess service areas and participating Tribal
14 colleges and universities, taking into consideration—

15 (A) the number of eligible students en-
16 rolled in the college or university and in the re-
17 gional service area;

18 (B) the capacity of the colleges and univer-
19 sities in the regional service area to accommo-
20 date a full-time VetSuccess on Campus coun-
21 selor and a full-time Vet Center outreach coor-
22 dinator;

23 (C) the lack of information available at the
24 colleges and universities in the regional service
25 area about and lack of access to benefits and

1 services under the laws administered by the
2 Secretary; and

3 (D) any other factor that the Secretary or
4 the Indian tribes, Tribal organizations, and vet-
5 erans service organizations identify as relevant.

6 (3) The most effective way to provide culturally
7 competent outreach and services to eligible students
8 at Tribal colleges and universities.

9 (d) OUTREACH TO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.—
10 The Secretary shall provide notice of the pilot program
11 to all Tribal colleges and universities and encourage all
12 Tribal colleges and universities to coordinate with each
13 other to create regional service areas to participate in the
14 pilot program.

15 (e) BRIEFINGS AND REPORTS.—

16 (1) IMPLEMENTATION BRIEFING.—Not later
17 than one year after the date of the enactment of this
18 Act, the Secretary shall provide for the Committee
19 on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Natural
20 Resources of the House of Representatives and the
21 Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee
22 on Indian Affairs of the Senate a briefing on—

23 (A) the design, structure, and objectives of
24 the pilot program; and

1 (B) the three regional Native Vet Success
2 service areas and the Tribal colleges and uni-
3 versities selected for participation in the pilot
4 program and the reason for the selection of
5 such service areas and such colleges and univer-
6 sities.

7 (2) REPORT.—Not later than four years after
8 the date on which the Secretary establishes the pilot
9 program, the Secretary shall submit to such Com-
10 mittees a report on the pilot program. Such report
11 shall include each of the following:

12 (A) The number of eligible students pro-
13 vided services through the pilot program.

14 (B) The types of services that eligible stu-
15 dents received through the pilot program.

16 (C) The graduation rate of eligible stu-
17 dents who received services through the pilot
18 program.

19 (D) The rate of employment within one
20 year of graduation for eligible students who re-
21 ceived services through the pilot program.

22 (E) Feedback from each Tribal college or
23 university that participated in the pilot pro-
24 gram, including on the regional nature of the
25 program.

1 (F) Analysis of the feasibility of expanding
2 a regionally based Native VetSuccess at Tribal
3 Colleges and Universities Program, including an
4 explanation of the challenges of such a model
5 due to issues with distance, communication, and
6 coordination, and to the level of unmet services.

7 (G) A detailed legislative proposal regard-
8 ing a long-term extension of the pilot program,
9 including a budget, if the Secretary determines
10 that such an extension is appropriate.

11 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

12 (1) The term “Tribal college or university” has
13 the meaning given such term under section 316 of
14 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
15 1059c).

16 (2) The term “tribal organization” has the
17 meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian
18 Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act
19 (25 U.S.C. 450b).

20 (3) The term “culturally competent” means
21 considerate of the unique values, customs, traditions,
22 cultures, and languages of Native American vet-
23 erans.