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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R.

To improve the hiring, training, and efficiency of acquisition personnel and organizations of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

M. _____ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To improve the hiring, training, and efficiency of acquisition personnel and organizations of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. IMPROVEMENT TO HIRING AND TRAINING OF**
4 **ACQUISITION PERSONNEL OF DEPARTMENT**
5 **OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

6 (a) TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS.—

7 (1) PROGRAMS.—Not later than September 30
8 of the fiscal year following the fiscal year during

1 which this Act is enacted, the Secretary shall imple-
2 ment covered training curricula and covered certifi-
3 cation programs.

4 (2) CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT PROGRAMS
5 OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—In designing and
6 implementing covered training curricula and covered
7 certification programs under paragraph (1), the Sec-
8 retary shall use as models existing training curricula
9 and certification programs that have been estab-
10 lished under chapter 87 of title 10, United States
11 Code, as determined relevant by the Secretary.

12 (3) METHOD OF TRAINING.—The Secretary
13 may develop the training curricula under paragraph
14 (1) in a manner that provides such training in any
15 combination of—

16 (A) training provided in person;

17 (B) training provided over an internet
18 website; or

19 (C) training provided by another depart-
20 ment or agency of the Federal Government.

21 (4) LEVELS OF CERTIFICATIONS.—The Sec-
22 retary may develop the certification programs under
23 paragraph (1) in a manner that uses—

24 (A) one level of certification; or

1 (B) more than one level of certification, as
2 determined appropriate by the Secretary with
3 respect to the level of certification for different
4 grades of the General Schedule.

5 (5) INITIAL GOAL.—Not later than September
6 30 of the second fiscal year following the fiscal year
7 during which this Act is enacted, the Secretary shall
8 ensure that the majority of employees subject to the
9 covered certification programs achieve the certifi-
10 cation or the appropriate level of certification pursu-
11 ant to paragraph (4)(B), as the case may be.

12 (6) SUBSEQUENT GOAL.—After carrying out
13 paragraph (5), the Secretary shall ensure that each
14 employee subject to the covered certification pro-
15 grams achieves the certification or the appropriate
16 level of certification pursuant to paragraph (4)(B),
17 as the case may be, as quickly as practicable.

18 (b) IMPROVEMENTS TO HIRING OF ENTRY-LEVEL
19 POSITIONS.—

20 (1) PRIORITY.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
21 fairs shall prioritize the use of acquisition internship
22 programs to hire employees to entry-level positions
23 relating to acquisition in the Department of Vet-
24 erans Affairs.

1 (2) GOAL.—Not later than September 30 of the
2 fiscal year following the fiscal year during which this
3 Act is enacted, the Secretary shall ensure that the
4 annual number of participants in acquisition intern-
5 ship programs is—

6 (A) not fewer than twice the number of
7 participants in such programs during fiscal year
8 2017; and

9 (B) not more than four times the number
10 of participants in such program during such fis-
11 cal year.

12 (3) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out
13 paragraph (2) until the date on which the Secretary
14 certifies to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of
15 the House of Representatives and the Senate that
16 the projected number of graduates of acquisition in-
17 ternship programs is sufficient to satisfy the human
18 capital needs of the Department with respect to ac-
19 quisition, taking into account the rate of attrition
20 and projected retirements of personnel.

21 (c) TRANSFERS.—

22 (1) AUTHORITY.—In addition to any other
23 transfer authority of the Secretary, the Secretary
24 may transfer or reprogram amounts identified under

1 section 2 as cost savings in order to make such
2 amounts available for—

3 (A) the salaries and travel expenses of par-
4 ticipants in acquisition internship programs;

5 (B) covered training programs; or

6 (C) the design and implementation of cov-
7 ered certification programs.

8 (2) AUTHORIZATIONS.—A transfer made from
9 one account to another under the authority of para-
10 graph (1) shall be deemed to increase the amount
11 authorized for the account to which the amount is
12 transferred by an amount equal to the amount
13 transferred.

14 **SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENT TO EFFICIENCY OF ACQUISITION**
15 **ORGANIZATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF**
16 **VETERANS AFFAIRS. .**

17 (a) PLAN.—The Secretary shall develop a plan to re-
18 duce duplication and to increase efficiencies with respect
19 to the acquisition functions of the Department of Veterans
20 Affairs, with an emphasis on procurement and logistics
21 functions, in a manner that achieves cost savings in an
22 amount necessary to carry out section 1. The Secretary
23 shall ensure that such plan—

24 (1) in all respects and to the greatest extent
25 practicable, seeks to place procurement employees

1 and logistics employees in close geographic proximity
2 to the other employees of the Department for whom
3 the procurement employees and logistics employees
4 procure supplies or services;

5 (2) does not place any procurement employee in
6 a formal reporting or subordinate-supervisor rela-
7 tionship with an employee of the Department for
8 whom the procurement employee procures supplies
9 or services;

10 (3) may achieve cost savings through attrition,
11 redistribution of functions or duties in an organiza-
12 tion, or transfer of a function, as defined in part
13 351 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or other
14 similar methods; and

15 (4) may not achieve cost savings through demo-
16 tions, furloughs, or liquidations, as defined in such
17 part 351.

18 (b) MATTERS INCLUDED.—In developing the plan
19 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall determine wheth-
20 er to carry out the following activities:

21 (1) Consolidate or abolish (and transfer func-
22 tions to the procurement or logistics activities of in-
23 dividual facilities of the Veterans Health Adminis-
24 tration, the Network Contracting Offices of the Vet-
25 erans Health Administration, the Procurement and

1 Logistics Office of the Veterans Health Administra-
2 tion, or the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and
3 Construction of the Department)—

4 (A) the Service Area Office East;

5 (B) the Service Area Office Central;

6 (C) the Service Area Office West;

7 (D) the Program Contacting Activity Cen-
8 tral Office.

9 (2) With respect to the functions of the Pro-
10 curement and Logistics Office of the Veterans
11 Health Administration and the Office of Acquisition,
12 Logistics, and Construction of the Department, con-
13 solidate one or more of the following functions into
14 one of the respective offices:

15 (A) Policy making functions.

16 (B) Contract quality assurance and review
17 functions.

18 (C) Real property management functions.

19 (D) Business operations functions.

20 (E) Health care acquisition.

21 (F) Logistics functions.

22 (c) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 180 days after the
23 fiscal year during which this Act is enacted, the Secretary
24 shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of

1 the House of Representatives and the Senate the plan de-
2 veloped under subsection (a).

3 (d) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall com-
4 mence implementation of the plan developed under sub-
5 section (a) beginning on the date that is 30 days after
6 submitting the plan under subsection (c).

7 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

8 In this Act:

9 (1) The term “acquisition internship programs”
10 means programs administered by the Secretary of
11 Veterans Affairs, including the Warriors to Work-
12 force Program and the Acquisition Intern Program,
13 under which the Secretary employs—

14 (A) a veteran, while the veteran earns an
15 undergraduate degree and completes
16 foundational training courses relating to acqui-
17 sition; or

18 (B) an individual who completes progres-
19 sive training courses relating to acquisition and
20 participates in rotational work assignments re-
21 lating to acquisition.

22 (2) The term “covered certification programs”
23 means—

1 (A) with respect to logistics employees, a
2 program to certify knowledge and skills relating
3 to logistics; and

4 (B) with respect to employees of the De-
5 partment who are members of occupational se-
6 ries relating to construction or facilities man-
7 agement, or who award or administer contracts
8 for major construction, minor construction, or
9 non-recurring maintenance, including as con-
10 tract specialists or contracting officers' rep-
11 resentatives, a program to certify knowledge
12 and skills relating to construction or facilities
13 management.

14 (3) The term “covered training curricula”
15 means—

16 (A) with respect to logistics employees, a
17 training curriculum relating to logistics; and

18 (B) with respect to employees specified in
19 paragraph (2)(B), a training curriculum relat-
20 ing to construction or facilities management.

21 (4) The term “logistics” includes supply chain
22 management.

23 (5) The term “logistics employee” means an
24 employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs who
25 is a member of an occupational series relating to lo-

1 logistics, or who performs logistics functions within
2 the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construc-
3 tion of the Department or the Veterans Health Ad-
4 ministration.

5 (6) The term “procurement employee” means
6 an employee of the Department who is a member of
7 an occupational series relating to procurement.