



Statement for the Record

of

Wes Smith

President and CEO, National Association of Electrical Distributors

on

H.R. 4105, the Veterans Energy Transition Act of 2025

before the

Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity,

House Veterans Affairs Committee

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Chairman Van Orden, Ranking Member Pappas and distinguished members of the committee,
Thank you for the opportunity to provide a statement in support of H.R. 4105, the Veterans Energy Transition Act of 2025.

About NAED

The National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED) is a nationwide trade association for the \$150+ billion electrical distribution industry which represents more than 600 distributors and manufacturers of electrical products with more than 5,000 locations in all 50 states. Our members are companies of all sizes - from small and mid-sized independents to large regional and national firms.

NAED member distributors are a critical piece of the electrical equipment supply chain, linking manufacturers to electrical contractors, original equipment manufacturers, and others for their maintenance, repair, and operations needs across commercial, industrial and residential applications.

As a former Air Force service member, I found a meaningful, and rewarding career in the electrical distribution industry after my service to the country.

When NAED and our leaders discuss planning for the future, two things are abundantly clear. First, the nation will face unprecedented demand for electrical equipment across the country to strengthen the grid, support new energy generation, and enable the data center buildout. Second, meeting this demand will require a massive influx of dedicated workers to fulfill this mission.

As the committee examines the VET Act, I can think of no better way to help our industry find qualified workers who will benefit from great careers, while helping to strengthen our critical domestic infrastructure.

I will briefly present information on opportunities for veterans and their spouses in our industry, and some specifics on the bill.

Opportunities for Veterans

First, jobseekers seeking fulfilling, long-term careers can find strong opportunities in the electrical distribution industry. NAED is proud that our sector boasts high tenure rates with an average of more than nine years, a number that far exceeds national benchmarks. For comparison, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a median tenure of 3.5 years in the private sector and 6.2 years in the public sector.

NAED member companies also report low turnover, averaging just 18%, which is significantly lower than many logistics-focused industries, which hover around 40%.¹

Second, employees can enter the electrical distribution industry with little or no formal training beyond high-school equivalency. Many times, workers begin their work as a Counter Associate to fill orders or as a Truck Driver to deliver goods to a job site, with a salary ranging from \$17-\$32 dollars an hour.

There are many career paths available for these entry level positions, and workers can seek employment in fields as diverse as Inventory Control, Branch Management, or Purchasing. Many of these positions can provide salaries of \$65 - \$70,000 a year.



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Other career paths include Inside and Outside Sales positions, Digital Solutions Specialists, Transportation and Hub Directors. These salaries range from \$50,000 - \$226,000 a year.

For workers who have obtained a bachelor's degree, other opportunities are available, including positions in Information Technology, Project Management, and high-level Sales, that range in salary from \$48,000 - \$300,000 per year.

The VET Act

NAED, along with our channel partners represented by the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), strongly support **H.R. 4105, the Veterans Energy Transition Act of 2025 (VET Act)**.

If passed into law, the bill would provide manufacturers, distributors, and electrical contractors with a grant of up to \$10,000 for recruiting, onboarding, training, certification, and relocation costs for military personnel transitioning from service, veterans, or their spouses.

This legislative proposal is very timely, not only in relation to providing opportunities for veterans and their spouses, but also it will help to address worker shortages in our industry as well as the manufacturing and contractor sectors, at a time when demand for electrical and grid build out are expected to increase significantly in the coming decades. These positions are supported by the following:

- According to a NAED industry survey, the average age for employees in the electrical distribution industry is over 42 years old, and our members report they are facing headwinds on hiring new employees.
- NEMA estimates that the nation's energy demand can grow by 50% by 2050, and demand for domestically produced electrical equipment is on the rise.
- NECA reports that the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a need for 80,000 new electrician jobs annually through 2031.²

Conclusion

Veterans bring exceptional leadership, discipline, and technical know-how that our nation urgently needs. Their experience in logistics, operations, and problem-solving makes them uniquely equipped to fill critical roles in manufacturing, distribution, and contracting, which is the backbone of America's electrical infrastructure. As our country modernizes the grid, deploys new electricity generation, and deploys advanced technologies to stay globally competitive, demand for this talent will only grow.

Careers across the electrical equipment ecosystem offer veterans and their families not just jobs, but long-term, good-paying careers with purpose. For the men and women who served, it's a chance to continue supporting America's strength and resilience in a rapidly changing world.

Respectfully submitted,

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