

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2326

[Report No. 116-]

To amend the Social Security Act, to amend the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 15, 2019

Mr. LEVIN of California (for himself, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. CISNEROS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, and Mrs. LEE of Nevada) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Ways and Means, 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

MAY --, 2019

Reported from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on April 15, 2019]

A BILL

To amend the Social Security Act, to amend the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, 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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Navy SEAL Chief Petty*
5 *Officer William “Bill” Mulder (Ret.) Transition Improve-*
6 *ment Act of 2019”.*

7 **SEC. 2. TAP DEFINED.**

8 *In this Act, the term “TAP” means the Transition As-*
9 *sistance Program under sections 1142 and 1144 of title 10,*
10 *United States Code.*

11 **SEC. 3. ACCESS FOR THE SECRETARIES OF LABOR AND VET-**
12 **ERANS AFFAIRS TO THE FEDERAL DIREC-**
13 **TORY OF NEW HIRES.**

14 *Section 453A(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.*
15 *653a(h)) is amended by adding at the end the following*
16 *new paragraph:*

17 *“(4) VETERAN EMPLOYMENT.—The Secretaries of*
18 *Labor and of Veterans Affairs shall have access to in-*
19 *formation reported by employers pursuant to sub-*
20 *section (b) of this section for purposes of tracking em-*
21 *ployment of veterans.”.*

22 **SEC. 4. PILOT PROGRAM FOR OFF-BASE TRANSITION TRAIN-**
23 **ING FOR VETERANS AND SPOUSES.**

24 *(a) EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Subsection (a)*
25 *of section 301 of the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans’*

1 *Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–260;*
2 *10 U.S.C. 1144 note) is amended—*

3 (1) *by striking “During the two-year period be-*
4 *ginning on the date of the enactment of this Act” and*
5 *inserting “During the five-year period beginning on*
6 *the date of the enactment of the Navy SEAL Chief*
7 *Petty Officer William “Bill” Mulder (Ret.) Transition*
8 *Improvement Act of 2019”;* and

9 (2) *by striking “to assess the feasibility and ad-*
10 *visability of providing such program to eligible indi-*
11 *viduals at locations other than military installa-*
12 *tions”.*

13 (b) *LOCATIONS.—Subsection (c) of such section is*
14 *amended—*

15 (1) *in paragraph (1), by striking “not less than*
16 *three and not more than five States” and inserting*
17 *“not fewer than 50 locations in States (as defined in*
18 *section 101 of title 38, United States Code)”;* and

19 (2) *in paragraph (2), by striking “at least two”*
20 *and inserting “at least 20”.*

21 (c) *CONFORMING REPEAL.—Subsection (f) of such sec-*
22 *tion is repealed.*

1 **SEC. 5. GRANTS FOR PROVISION OF TRANSITION ASSIST-**
2 **ANCE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES**
3 **AFTER SEPARATION, RETIREMENT, OR DIS-**
4 **CHARGE.**

5 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary of Veterans Affairs*
6 *shall make grants to eligible organizations for the provision*
7 *of transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces*
8 *who are separated, retired, or discharged from the Armed*
9 *Forces, and spouses of such members.*

10 (b) *USE OF FUNDS.*—*The recipient of a grant under*
11 *this section shall use the grant to provide to members of*
12 *the Armed Forces and spouses described in subsection (a)*
13 *resume assistance, interview training, job recruitment*
14 *training, and related services leading directly to successful*
15 *transition, as determined by the Secretary.*

16 (c) *ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS.*—*To be eligible for a*
17 *grant under this section, an organization shall submit to*
18 *the Secretary an application containing such information*
19 *and assurances as the Secretary, in consultation with the*
20 *Secretary of Labor, may require.*

21 (d) *PRIORITY FOR HUBS OF SERVICES.*—*In making*
22 *grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority*
23 *to an organization that provides multiple forms of services*
24 *described in subsection (b).*

25 (e) *AMOUNT OF GRANT.*—*A grant under this section*
26 *shall be in an amount that does not exceed 50 percent of*

1 *the amount required by the organization to provide the serv-*
2 *ices described in subsection (b).*

3 *(f) DEADLINE.—The Secretary shall carry out this sec-*
4 *tion not later than six months after the effective date of*
5 *this Act.*

6 *(g) TERMINATION.—The authority to provide a grant*
7 *under this section shall terminate on the date that is five*
8 *years after the date on which the Secretary implements the*
9 *grant program under this section.*

10 *(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is*
11 *authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 to carry out this*
12 *section.*

13 **SEC. 6. ONE-YEAR INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE EF-**
14 **ECTIVENESS OF TAP.**

15 *(a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 90*
16 *days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-*
17 *retary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the covered*
18 *officials, shall enter into an agreement with an appropriate*
19 *entity with experience in adult education to carry out a*
20 *one-year independent assessment of TAP, including—*

21 *(1) the effectiveness of TAP for members of each*
22 *military department during the entire military life*
23 *cycle;*

24 *(2) the appropriateness of the TAP career readi-*
25 *ness standards;*

1 (3) a review of information that is provided to
2 the Department of Veterans Affairs under TAP, in-
3 cluding mental health data;

4 (4) whether TAP effectively addresses the chal-
5 lenges veterans face entering the civilian workforce
6 and in translating experience and skills from mili-
7 tary service to the job market;

8 (5) whether TAP effectively addresses the chal-
9 lenges faced by the families of veterans making the
10 transition to civilian life;

11 (6) appropriate metrics regarding TAP outcomes
12 for members of the Armed Forces one year after sepa-
13 ration, retirement, or discharge from the Armed
14 Forces;

15 (7) what the Secretary, in consultation with the
16 covered officials and veterans service organizations
17 determine to be successful outcomes for TAP;

18 (8) whether members of the Armed Forces achieve
19 successful outcomes for TAP, as determined under
20 paragraph (7);

21 (9) how the Secretary and the covered officials
22 provide feedback to each other regarding such out-
23 comes;

24 (10) recommendations for the Secretaries of the
25 military departments regarding how to improve out-

1 *comes for members of the Armed Forces after separa-*
2 *tion, retirement, and discharge; and*

3 *(11) other topics the Secretary and the covered*
4 *officials determine would aid members of the Armed*
5 *Forces as they transition to civilian life.*

6 *(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the comple-*
7 *tion of the independent assessment under subsection (a), the*
8 *Secretary and the covered officials, shall submit to the Com-*
9 *mittees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of*
10 *Representatives and the Committees on Armed Services of*
11 *the Senate and House of Representatives—*

12 *(1) the findings and recommendations (including*
13 *recommended legislation) of the independent assess-*
14 *ment prepared by the entity described in subsection*
15 *(a); and*

16 *(2) responses of the Secretary and the covered of-*
17 *icials to the findings and recommendations described*
18 *in paragraph (1).*

19 *(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

20 *(1) The term “covered officials” is comprised*
21 *of—*

22 *(A) the Secretary of Defense;*

23 *(B) the Secretary of Labor;*

24 *(C) the Administrator of the Small Business*
25 *Administration; and*

1 (D) the Secretaries of the military depart-
2 ments.

3 (2) The term “military department” has the
4 meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10,
5 United States Code.

6 **SEC. 7. LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON CHANGES TO TAP.**

7 (a) *STUDY.*—Not later than 90 days after the date of
8 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs,
9 in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Labor
10 and the Administrator of the Small Business Administra-
11 tion, shall conduct a five-year longitudinal study regarding
12 TAP on three separate cohorts of members of the Armed
13 Forces who have separated from the Armed Forces, includ-
14 ing—

15 (1) a cohort that has attended TAP counseling as
16 implemented on the date of the enactment of this Act;

17 (2) a cohort that attends TAP counseling after
18 the Secretaries of Defense and Labor implement
19 changes recommended in the report under section 6(b)
20 of this Act; and

21 (3) a cohort that has not attended TAP coun-
22 seling.

23 (b) *PROGRESS REPORTS.*—Not later than 90 days
24 after the day that is one year after the date of the initiation
25 of the study under subsection (a) and annually thereafter

1 *for the three subsequent years, the Secretaries of Veterans*
2 *Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the Administrator of the*
3 *Small Business Administration, shall submit to the Com-*
4 *mittees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of*
5 *Representatives and the Committees on Armed Services of*
6 *the Senate and House of Representatives a progress report*
7 *of activities under the study during the immediately pre-*
8 *ceding year.*

9 (c) *FINAL REPORT.*—*Not later than 180 days after the*
10 *completion of the study under subsection (a), the Secretaries*
11 *of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the Adminis-*
12 *trator of the Small Business Administration, shall submit*
13 *to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and*
14 *House of Representatives and the Committees on Armed*
15 *Services of the Senate and House of Representatives a re-*
16 *port of final findings and recommendations based on the*
17 *study.*

18 (d) *ELEMENTS.*—*The final report under subsection (c)*
19 *shall include information regarding the following:*

20 (1) *The percentage of each cohort that received*
21 *unemployment benefits during the study.*

22 (2) *The numbers of months members of each co-*
23 *hort were employed during the study.*

1 (3) *Annual starting and ending salaries of mem-*
2 *bers of each cohort who were employed during the*
3 *study.*

4 (4) *How many members of each cohort enrolled*
5 *in an institution of higher learning, as that term is*
6 *defined in section 3452(f) of title 38, United States*
7 *Code.*

8 (5) *The academic credit hours, degrees, and cer-*
9 *tificates obtained by members of each cohort during*
10 *the study.*

11 (6) *The annual income of members of each co-*
12 *hort.*

13 (7) *The total household income of members of*
14 *each cohort.*

15 (8) *How many members of each cohort own their*
16 *principal residences.*

17 (9) *How many dependents that members of each*
18 *cohort have.*

19 (10) *The percentage of each cohort that achieves*
20 *a successful outcome for TAP, as determined under*
21 *section 6(a)(7) of this Act.*

22 (11) *Other criteria the Secretaries and the Ad-*
23 *ministrator of the Small Business Administration de-*
24 *termine appropriate.*