To amend the Small Business Act to codify the Boots to Business Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2021

Mr. SCHNEIDER (for himself and Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Small Business

OCTOBER 12, 2021

Additional sponsors: Ms. SHERRILL and Ms. HOULAHAN

OCTOBER 12, 2021

Reported from the Committee on Small Business; committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed
A BILL

To amend the Small Business Act to codify the Boots to Business Program, and for other purposes.
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Veteran Entrepreneur-
ship Training Act of 2021”.

SEC. 2. BOOTS TO BUSINESS PROGRAM.

Section 32 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657b) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) BOOTS TO BUSINESS PROGRAM.—

“(1) COVERED INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this
subsection, the term ‘covered individual’ means—

“(A) a member of the Armed Forces, in-
cluding the National Guard or Reserves;

“(B) an individual who is participating in
the Transition Assistance Program established
under section 1144 of title 10, United States
Code;

“(C) an individual who—

“(i) served on active duty in any
branch of the Armed Forces, including the
National Guard or Reserves; and

“(ii) was discharged or released from
such service under conditions other than
dishonorable; and

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“(D) a spouse or dependent of an individual described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C).

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—Beginning on the first October 1 after the enactment of this subsection and for the subsequent 4 fiscal years, the Administrator shall carry out a program to be known as the ‘Boots to Business Program’ to provide entrepreneurship training to covered individuals.

“(3) GOALS.—The goals of the Boots to Business Program are to—

“(A) provide assistance and in-depth training to covered individuals interested in business ownership; and

“(B) provide covered individuals with the tools, skills, and knowledge necessary to identify a business opportunity, draft a business plan, identify sources of capital, connect with local resources for small business concerns, and start up a small business concern.

“(4) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Boots to Business Program may include—

“(i) a presentation providing exposure to the considerations involved in self-em-
ployment and ownership of a small business concern;

“(ii) an online, self-study course focused on the basic skills of entrepreneurship, the language of business, and the considerations involved in self-employment and ownership of a small business concern;

“(iii) an in-person classroom instruction component providing an introduction to the foundations of self employment and ownership of a small business concern; and

“(iv) in-depth training delivered through online instruction, including an online course that leads to the creation of a business plan.

“(B) COLLABORATION.—The Administrator may—

“(i) collaborate with public and private entities to develop course curricula for the Boots to Business Program; and

“(ii) modify program components in coordination with entities participating in a Warriors in Transition program, as defined in section 738(e) of the National Defense
Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013
(10 U.S.C. 1071 note).

“(C) USE OF RESOURCE PARTNERS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

“(I) ensure that Veteran Business Outreach Centers regularly participate, on a nationwide basis, in the Boots to Business Program; and

“(II) to the maximum extent practicable, use a variety of other resource partners and entities in administering the Boots to Business Program.

“(ii) GRANT AUTHORITY.—In carrying out clause (i), the Administrator may make grants to Veteran Business Outreach Centers, other resource partners, or other entities to carry out components of the Boots to Business Program.

“(D) AVAILABILITY TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—The Administrator shall make available to the Secretary of Defense information regarding the Boots to Business Program, including all course materials and outreach ma-
terials related to the Boots to Business Pro-
gram, for inclusion on the website of the De-
partment of Defense relating to the Transition
Assistance Program, in the Transition Assist-
ance Program manual, and in other relevant
materials available for distribution from the
Secretary of Defense.

“(E) AVAILABILITY TO VETERANS AF-
FAIRS.—In consultation with the Secretary of
Veterans Affairs, the Administrator shall make
available for distribution and display at local fa-
cilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs
outreach materials regarding the Boots to Busi-
ness Program which shall, at a minimum—

“(i) describe the Boots to Business
Program and the services provided; and

“(ii) include eligibility requirements
for participating in the Boots to Business
Program.

“(5) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after
the date of the enactment of this subsection and
every year thereafter, the Administrator shall submit
to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepre-
neurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small
Business of the House of Representatives a report
on the performance and effectiveness of the Boots to Business Program, which may be included as part of another report submitted to such Committees by the Administrator, and which shall include—

“(A) information regarding grants awarded under paragraph (4)(C);

“(B) the total cost of the Boots to Business Program;

“(C) the number of program participants using each component of the Boots to Business Program;

“(D) the completion rates for each component of the Boots to Business Program;

“(E) to the extent possible—

“(i) the demographics of program participants, to include gender, age, race, relationship to military, military occupational specialty, and years of service of program participants;

“(ii) the number of small business concerns formed or expanded with assistance under the Boots to Business Program;
“(iii) the gross receipts of small business concerns receiving assistance under the Boots to Business Program;

“(iv) the number of jobs created with assistance under the Boots to Business Program;

“(v) the number of referrals to other resources and programs of the Administration;

“(vi) the number of program participants receiving financial assistance under loan programs of the Administration;

“(vii) the type and dollar amount of financial assistance received by program participants under any loan program of the Administration; and

“(viii) results of participant satisfaction surveys, including a summary of any comments received from program participants;

“(F) an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Boots to Business Program in each region of the Administration during the most recent fiscal year;
“(G) an assessment of additional performance outcome measures for the Boots to Business Program, as identified by the Administrator;

“(H) any recommendations of the Administrator for improvement of the Boots to Business Program, which may include expansion of the types of individuals who are covered individuals;

“(I) an explanation of how the Boots to Business Program has been integrated with other transition programs and related resources of the Administration and other Federal agencies; and

“(J) any additional information the Administrator determines necessary.”
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[Report No. 117–139]