

Union Calendar No. 262

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1458

[Report No. 119–308]

To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the criteria for approval of certain independent study programs for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 21, 2025

Mr. CISCOMANI (for himself and Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

Additional sponsors: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. NEGUSE, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Mr. SOTO, Mr. McDOWELL, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. VINDMAN, and Mr. VASQUEZ

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[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 February 21, 2025]

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the criteria for approval of certain independent study programs for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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 “Veterans Education and*
 5 *Technical Skills Opportunity Act of 2025” or the “VETS*
 6 *Opportunity Act of 2025”.*

7 **SEC. 2. REPAYMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES**
 8 **FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS POST-9/11**
 9 **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE: TIMING; MECHA-**
 10 **NISM FOR INDIVIDUALS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR A**
 11 **MONTHLY HOUSING STIPEND.**

12 *(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (f) of section 3327 of*
 13 *title 38, United States Code, is amended—*

14 *(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “together” and*
 15 *all that follows through “before” and inserting “not*
 16 *later than 60 days after”; and*

17 *(2) by adding at the end the following new para-*
 18 *graph:*

19 *“(4) ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR AN INDI-*
 20 *VIDUAL NOT ELIGIBLE FOR A MONTHLY HOUSING STI-*
 21 *PEND.—In the case of an individual making an elec-*
 22 *tion under subsection (a) who is described by sub-*
 23 *paragraph (A), (C), or (E) of paragraph (1) of that*
 24 *subsection, and who is not eligible for a monthly sti-*
 25 *pend payable under section 3313(c) of this title, the*

1 *educational assistance payable to the individual*
 2 *under this chapter shall be paid—*

3 *“(A) in a lump sum calculated by multi-*
 4 *plying—*

5 *“(i) the total amount of contributions*
 6 *described in paragraph (1)(A) with regards*
 7 *to such individual; and*

8 *“(ii) the sum of the number of months*
 9 *described in subclauses (I) and (II) of para-*
 10 *graph (1)(B)(i) with regards to such indi-*
 11 *vidual; and*

12 *“(B) to the individual not later than 60*
 13 *days after the exhaustion of the individual’s enti-*
 14 *tlement to educational assistance under this*
 15 *chapter.”.*

16 (b) *TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS AND CONFORMING*
 17 *AMENDMENT.—Such subsection is further amended—*

18 (1) *by striking “paragraphs (2) through (7)”*
 19 *and inserting “paragraphs (2) through (6)”;* and

20 (2) *in paragraph (1), in the heading, by insert-*
 21 *ing “FOR AN INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBLE FOR A MONTHLY*
 22 *HOUSING STIPEND” after “ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE”.*

23 (c) *EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this*
 24 *section shall take effect on August 1, 2025.*

1 **SEC. 3. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN INDEPENDENT STUDY**
 2 **PROGRAMS UNDER EDUCATIONAL ASSIST-**
 3 **ANCE PROGRAMS OF DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
 4 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 3680A(a)(4)(A)(ii)(III) of
 6 such title is amended—

7 (1) by inserting “that requires regular and sub-
 8 stantive interaction between students and instructors”
 9 after “course of study”;

10 (2) in item (aa), by striking “; or” and inserting
 11 a semicolon;

12 (3) in item (bb), by striking “; and” and insert-
 13 ing “; or”; and

14 (4) by adding at the end by following new item:

15 “(cc) an institution of higher
 16 education, as such term is defined
 17 in section 102 of the Higher Edu-
 18 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
 19 1002), that is approved to partici-
 20 pate or participating in the stu-
 21 dent financial assistance pro-
 22 grams authorized by title IV of
 23 that Act; and”.

24 (b) *APPLICABILITY.*—The amendment made by sub-
 25 section (a) shall apply with respect to a quarter, semester,

1 *or term, as applicable, that begins on or after August 1,*
 2 *2025.*

3 **SEC. 4. ABSENCE FROM CERTAIN EDUCATION DUE TO CER-**
 4 **TAIN SERVICE.**

5 *(a) OPTIONS.—Section 3691A of such title is amended*
 6 *by striking paragraph (1) of subsection (a) and inserting*
 7 *the following:*

8 *“(1) A covered member may, after receiving orders to*
 9 *enter a period of covered service—*

10 *“(A) withdraw from covered education;*

11 *“(B) take a leave of absence from covered edu-*
 12 *cation; or*

13 *“(C) subject to subsection (d), enter into an*
 14 *agreement with the institution concerned to complete*
 15 *a course of covered education to the satisfaction of*
 16 *such institution concerned.”.*

17 *(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Such subsection is*
 18 *further amended, in paragraph (2)(A), by striking “or takes*
 19 *a leave of absence” and inserting “, takes a leave of absence,*
 20 *or enters into an agreement”.*

21 *(c) AGREEMENT.—Such section is further amended—*

22 *(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection*
 23 *(e); and*

24 *(2) by inserting, after subsection (c), the fol-*
 25 *lowing new subsection (d):*

1 “(d) *AGREEMENT WITH INSTITUTION CONCERNED.*—
 2 *A covered member may enter into an agreement under sub-*
 3 *section (a) only if the covered member has completed at least*
 4 *half of a course of covered education.”.*

5 (d) *SECTION HEADING.*—*Such section is further*
 6 *amended by striking the heading and inserting “**Absence***
 7 ***from certain education due to certain service**”.*

8 (e) *TABLE OF SECTIONS.*—*The table of sections at the*
 9 *beginning of chapter 36 of such title is amended by striking*
 10 *the item relating to section 3691A and inserting the fol-*
 11 *lowing new item:*

“3691A. *Absence from certain education due to certain service.*”.

12 **SEC. 5. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMPLIANCE**
 13 **SURVEYS.**

14 *Section 3693 of such title is amended—*

15 (1) *in subsection (c)—*

16 (A) *by striking “not more than 10 business*
 17 *days of notice”;*

18 (B) *by striking “this section.” and inserting*
 19 *“this section—”; and*

20 (C) *by adding at the end the following new*
 21 *paragraphs:*

22 “(1) *in the case of an educational institution or*
 23 *training establishment with a time stamp database*
 24 *collection feature, not fewer than 10, and not more*
 25 *than 15, business days of notice; and*

1 “(2) in the case of any other educational institu-
 2 tion or training establishment, not more than 10
 3 business days of notice.”; and

4 (2) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the
 5 following new subsection (d):

6 “(d) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

7 “(1) The terms ‘educational institution’ and
 8 ‘training establishment’ have the meanings given such
 9 terms in section 3452 of this title.

10 “(2) The term ‘school certifying official’ means
 11 an employee of an educational institution with pri-
 12 mary responsibility for certifying veteran enrollment
 13 at the educational institution.”.

14 **SEC. 6. NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS**
 15 **OF HANDBOOK UPDATES.**

16 (a) *IN GENERAL.—Not later than 14 business days*
 17 *after updating the school certifying official handbook of the*
 18 *Department of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Veterans*
 19 *Affairs shall provide notice to all school certifying officials*
 20 *of such update.*

21 (b) *SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIAL DEFINED.—The*
 22 *term “school certifying official” means an employee of an*
 23 *educational institution with primary responsibility for cer-*
 24 *tifying veteran enrollment at the educational institution.*

1 **SEC. 7. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF**
2 **PENSION.**

3 *Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is*
4 *amended by striking “November 30, 2031” and inserting*
5 *“March 31, 2033”.*

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