

FOCUSED ASSISTANCE AND SKILLS TRAINING FOR VET-
ERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION SUCCESS ACT

SEPTEMBER 10, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the
State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BOST, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 4446]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 4446) to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the conditions under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is required to redevelop the individualized vocational rehabilitation plan for a veteran, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

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PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

H.R. 4446, the “FAST VETS Act” was introduced by Representative Maxine Dexter of Oregon on July 16, 2025. The bill would allow a veteran who has a change in their disability rating to apply for changes to their Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E) plan instead of being forced to complete their current rehabilitation plan. The bill would prioritize outcome-focused planning and would help ensure every veteran can succeed in the VA VR&E program and move into the workforce more efficiently.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Section 1: Short Title

This section establishes the title of the bill as the “Focused Assistance and Skills Training for Veterans” Employment and Transition Success Act” or “FAST VETS Act.”

Section 2: Conditions Under which Secretary of Veterans Affairs Shall Redevelop Individualized Rehabilitation Plan

Following passage of the PACT Act [P.L. 117–168] and the expansion of eligibility for VA’s VR&E program that resulted from this law, student veterans in VR&E have experienced delays in enrolling, attending, and graduating. These delays have placed additional burdens on VR&E counselors, affecting their ability to provide each student veteran with adequate attention to their employment training needs.

Veterans in the VR&E program currently can request changes in their vocational goal solely based on their interests, which is costly to the program and results in further delays in the program. Currently, there is nothing in the statute that prohibits this. For example, a veteran could use VR&E to pay for law school and then decide to start their own business, keeping them in the VR&E program longer and utilizing more resources. Furthermore, these decisions are made at each regional office and there is little consistency in decisions related to plan redevelopment.

This section would modify the VR&E program to allow redevelopment of the plan for a disabled veteran if the VR&E counselor determines that a veteran is unlikely to meet the goals of the original plan. The Committee believes that this section would help veterans progress through the VR&E program faster by enabling counselors to focus on the program’s core purpose: supporting meaningful employment for America’s veterans. The Committee expects that this change would also improve outcomes for all veterans in the program by reducing wait times resulting from providing additional assistance for veterans who may be struggling to complete the program.

The Committee believes that the changes that would be made to the program under this section would allow for better consistency in decision-making. Moreover, the Committee believes that there would be less frustration among veterans since the process for changes to the plan would be more clearly outlined and easier for the counselors to administer.

Finally, the Committee believes this section would provide a disabled veteran with more opportunities to pursue a meaningful ca-

reer by allowing them to change their path as their disability changes.

HEARINGS

On March 11, 2025, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a legislative hearing on a discussion draft of this legislation and other bills pending before the subcommittee.

The following witnesses testified:

Mr. John Bell, Executive Director of Loan Guaranty Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Nick Pamperin, Executive Director, Veterans Readiness and Employment, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Mr. Thomas J. Alphonso, Assistant Director, Policy and Implementation, Veterans Benefits Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Jill Albanese, Director of Clinical Operations, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Kristina Keenan, Deputy Director, National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Ms. Julie Howell, Associate Legislative Director for Governmental Relations, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Ms. Elizabeth Balce, Executive Vice President of Servicing at Carrington Mortgage, Mortgage Bankers Association; Mr. Tobias Peter, Co-Director of the Housing Center, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute; and Mr. Will Hubbard, Vice President for Veterans and Military Policy, Veterans Education Success.

The following individuals and organizations submitted statements for the record:

Freedom Mortgage; Student Veterans of America; the Veterans Education Project, National Association of Veterans Program Administrators; National Consumer Law Center, BraunAbility; National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association; and the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

SUBCOMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

There was no subcommittee consideration of H.R. 4446.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

On July 23, 2025, the full Committee met in open markup session, a quorum being present, and ordered H.R. 4446 to be reported favorably to the House of Representatives by voice vote.

A motion by Ranking Member Takano of California to report H.R. 4446 favorably to the House of Representatives was adopted by voice vote

COMMITTEE VOTES

In compliance with clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, there were no recorded votes taken on amendments or in connection with ordering H.R. 4446 reported to the House.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII and clause (2)(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Commit-

tee's oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the descriptive portions of this report.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee's performance goals and objectives are to allow a VR&E counselor to modify a plan for a disabled veteran if their disability changes.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY, ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY, AND TAX EXPENDITURES

In compliance with clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee adopts as its own the estimate of new budget authority, entitlement authority, or tax expenditures or revenues contained in the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

EARMARKS AND TAX AND TARIFF BENEFITS

H.R. 4446 does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

The Committee adopts as its own the cost estimate on H.R. 4446 prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following is the cost estimate for H.R. 4446 provided by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974:

H.R. 4446, Focused Assistance and Skills Training for Veterans' Employment and Transition Success Act			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on July 23, 2025			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2025	2025-2030	2025-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	0	0
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	*	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	*	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.			

H.R. 4446 would modify the process the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) follows to amend individualized plans for veterans' vocational rehabilitation. Under the bill, those plans could be amended only when changes in the barriers to a veteran's employment make an existing plan infeasible and when a different plan will make it more likely that the veteran's vocational goals can be met.

Under the Veteran Readiness and Employment program, VA collaborates with veterans to tailor their rehabilitation plans to achieve long-range goals. Veterans whose service-connected disabilities present barriers to employment are eligible for services that could include educational assistance, job training, skills counseling, and independent-living services. Those benefits are paid from mandatory appropriations and thus are reflected in the budget as direct spending. VA periodically reviews each plan and may amend it, in collaboration with the veteran, if the veteran's long-range goals are no longer feasible or if, because of new circumstances or information, rehabilitation is more likely for a different goal.

CBO expects that the effects of the modified process would be minor and that amended individualized plans could cost more or less than previous plans. Thus, enacting H.R. 4446 would change direct spending by less than \$500,000 over the 2025–2035 period.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Paul B.A. Holland. The estimate was reviewed by Christina Hawley Anthony, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director, Congressional Budget Office.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of Federal mandates regarding H.R. 4446 prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act would be created by H.R. 4446.

STATEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, H.R. 4446 is authorized by Congress' power to "provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States."

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that H.R. 4446, does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

STATEMENT ON DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(5) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds that no provision of H.R. 4446 establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program, a pro-

gram that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTED RULEMAKING

Pursuant to section 3(i) of H. Res. 5, 115th Cong. (2017), the Committee estimates that H.R. 4446 contains no directed rule-making that would require the Secretary to prescribe regulations.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1: Short title

This section would establish the short title as the “Focused Assistance and Skills Training for Veterans” Employment and Transition Success Act” or the “FAST VETS Act”.

Section 2: Conditions under which Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall redevelop individualized rehabilitation plan

This section would amend 38 USC §3107 to require redevelopment of the plans for VR&E must not be solely based on interests alone. Redevelopment must only occur when the achievement of the current goal is no longer reasonably feasible due to changes in the disabilities or changes in the veteran’s circumstances that would make rehabilitation more likely with a different goal.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

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PART III—READJUSTMENT AND RELATED BENEFITS

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CHAPTER 31—TRAINING AND REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

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§ 3107. Individualized vocational rehabilitation plan

(a) The Secretary shall formulate an individualized written plan of vocational rehabilitation for a veteran described in section 3106(b) of this title. Such plan shall be developed with such veteran and shall include, but not be limited to (1) a statement of long-range rehabilitation goals for such veteran and intermediate rehabilitation objectives related to achieving such goals, (2) a statement of the specific services (which shall include counseling in all cases) and assistance to be provided under this chapter, (3) the projected date for the initiation and the anticipated duration of each such service, and (4) objective criteria and an evaluation procedure and schedule for determining whether such objectives and goals are being achieved.

(b) **【The Secretary shall review】** *(1) The Secretary shall review at least annually the plan formulated under subsection (a) of this section for a veteran and shall afford such veteran the opportunity to participate in each such review. 【On the basis of such review, the Secretary shall (1) redevelop such plan with such veteran if the Secretary determines, under regulations which the Secretary shall prescribe, that redevelopment of such plan is appropriate, or (2) disapprove redevelopment of such plan if the Secretary determines, under such regulations, that redevelopment of such plan is not appropriate.】*

(2) On the basis of such review, the Secretary shall—

(A) redevelop such plan with such veteran if the Secretary determines the achievement of the long-range rehabilitation goals for such veteran is—

(i) no longer feasible due to changes in the employment handicap of the veteran; and

(ii) likelier under a different plan formulated under subsection (a); or

(B) disapprove redevelopment of such plan if the Secretary determines such redevelopment is not appropriate.

(c)(1) Each veteran for whom a plan has been developed or redeveloped under subsection (a) or (b)(1), respectively, of this section or in whose case redevelopment of a plan has been disapproved under subsection (b)(2) of this section, shall be informed of such veteran's opportunity for a review as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(2) In any case in which a veteran does not agree to such plan as proposed, to such plan as redeveloped, or to the disapproval of redevelopment of such plan, such veteran may submit to the person described in section 3106(f) of this title a written statement containing such veteran's objections and request a review of such plan as proposed or redeveloped, or a review of the disapproval of redevelopment of such plan, as the case may be.

(3) The Secretary shall review the statement submitted under paragraph (2) of this subsection and the plan as proposed or as redeveloped, and, if applicable, the disapproval of redevelopment of the plan, and render a decision on such review not later than ninety days after the date on which such veteran submits such statement, unless the case is one for which a longer period for review, not to exceed 150 days after such veteran submits such statement, is allowed under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, in which

case the Secretary shall render a decision no later than the last day of the period prescribed in such regulations.

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