

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1971

To authorize a competitive grant program to assist members of the National Guard and Reserve and former and current members of the Armed Forces in securing employment in the private sector, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 2, 2007

Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. BOND, Mr. BAUCUS, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DODD, and Ms. STABENOW) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To authorize a competitive grant program to assist members of the National Guard and Reserve and former and current members of the Armed Forces in securing employment in the private sector, 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 “Hire a Hero Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. COMPETITIVE AWARD OF GRANTS TO NONPROFIT**
2 **ORGANIZATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE OF MEM-**
3 **BERS AND FORMER MEMBERS OF THE**
4 **ARMED FORCES IN SECURING PRIVATE SEC-**
5 **TOR EMPLOYMENT.**

6 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

7 (1) the unemployment rate of former members
8 of the Armed Forces who served in Iraq or Afghani-
9 stan exceeds the national average unemployment
10 rate; and

11 (2) career training and employment services
12 dedicated to providing former members of the
13 Armed Forces with professional skills and technical
14 competency in various trades have shown remarkable
15 levels of success and are helping to ameliorate the
16 high unemployment rate among former members of
17 the Armed Forces.

18 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
19 gress that the Federal Government should support private
20 sector employment initiatives for military personnel in
21 order to help ensure that those who serve or have served
22 in the Armed Forces have access to gainful employment.

23 (c) AWARD OF GRANTS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief of the National
25 Guard Bureau may, utilizing amounts authorized to
26 be appropriated by subsection (h), award grants to

1 nonprofit organizations to assist individuals de-
2 scribed in paragraph (2) in securing employment in
3 the private sector. The nonprofit organizations to be
4 awarded grants shall be determined on a competitive
5 basis.

6 (2) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—An individual de-
7 scribed in this paragraph is any individual as fol-
8 lows:

9 (A) A member of the National Guard or
10 Reserve.

11 (B) A member of the Armed Forces who is
12 nearing separation, discharge, or release from
13 the Armed Forces.

14 (C) A former member of the Armed
15 Forces.

16 (3) GRANT TERM.—A grant under paragraph
17 (1) may be for a term of one or more years, as de-
18 termined by the Chief of the National Guard Bu-
19 reau.

20 (4) EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.—The Chief of
21 the National Guard Bureau may specify in any
22 grant under paragraph (1) dates by which specific
23 percentages of funds under the grant shall be ex-
24 pended.

1 (5) EMPLOYMENT IN PARTICULAR AREAS OF
2 ECONOMY.—It is the sense of Congress that the
3 Chief of the National Guard Bureau should, in
4 awarding grants under this section, consider non-
5 profit organizations that partner with entities and
6 associations in the private sector involved in con-
7 struction, energy, transportation, aerospace, domes-
8 tic security, and other areas of the economy in which
9 the employment of individuals having past military
10 service would be of particular utility.

11 (d) UTILIZATION OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—A nonprofit organization
13 awarded a grant under subsection (c) may utilize the
14 grant for operating expenses, job training, public in-
15 formation activities, and such other activities as the
16 Chief of the National Guard Bureau determines ap-
17 propriate.

18 (2) EXCEPTION FOR SALARIES.—The Chief of
19 the National Guard Bureau shall determine the per-
20 centage of amounts received by a nonprofit organiza-
21 tion pursuant to a grant awarded under subsection
22 (c) that may be used to provide salaries to employ-
23 ees of the organization. Any such determination
24 shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

1 (e) FISCAL CONTROL, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND PRO-
2 GRAM PERFORMANCE.—The Chief of the National Guard
3 Bureau shall establish fiscal control, accountability, and
4 program performance measures for nonprofit organiza-
5 tions awarded grants under subsection (c) in the adminis-
6 tration of such grants.

7 (f) REPORTS.—

8 (1) PROGRESS REPORT.—Not later than 180
9 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
10 Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall submit to
11 the congressional defense committees a report set-
12 ting forth the following:

13 (A) An assessment of the progress made
14 toward implementing the requirements of this
15 section.

16 (B) A description of any grants awarded
17 under subsection (c).

18 (2) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days
19 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and an-
20 nually thereafter, the Chief of the National Guard
21 Bureau shall submit to the congressional defense
22 committees a report containing a description of each
23 grant awarded under subsection (c) during the pre-
24 ceding fiscal year.

1 (g) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES DE-
2 FINED.—The term “congressional defense committees”
3 has the meaning given that term in section 101(a)(16) of
4 title 10, United States Code.

5 (h) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appro-
6 priated for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012 for the
7 Department of Defense for operation and maintenance for
8 the Army National Guard, \$25,000,000 to carry out this
9 section.

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