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Calendar No. 476

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3457

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a veterans jobs corps, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 30, 2012

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY) introduced the following bill; which was read the first time

JULY 31, 2012

Read the second time and placed on the calendar

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a veterans jobs corps, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Veterans Jobs Corps Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. VETERANS JOBS CORPS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in cooperation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, establish a veterans jobs corps to employ veterans—

(1) in conservation, resource management, and historic preservation projects on public lands and maintenance and improvement projects for cemeteries under the jurisdiction of the National Cemetery Administration; and

(2) as firefighters and law enforcement officers.

(b) CONSERVATION, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As part of the veterans jobs corps, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers shall—

(A) employ veterans to carry out projects described in subsection (a)(1); or

(B) award grants to, or enter into contracts with, State governments, local governments, or nongovernmental entities to employ veterans to carry out projects described in subsection (a)(1).

(2) PRIORITY.—In employing or awarding grants or contracts to employ veterans under this subsection, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers shall give priority towards the employment of veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001.

(3) COORDINATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall coordinate the activities of the Attorney General, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers to employ veterans as part of the veterans job corps.

(4) OVERSIGHT OF PROJECTS.—The secretaries referred to in paragraph (1) and the Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engi-

neers shall each provide oversight of the projects for which they employ veterans under subparagraph (A) of such paragraph or award grants or enter into contracts under subparagraph (B) of such paragraph.

(c) FIRST RESPONDERS.—

(1) FIREFIGHTERS.—As part of the veterans jobs corps, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall award grants under section 34 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229a) to hire veterans as firefighters.

(2) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.—As part of the veterans jobs corps, the Attorney General shall award grants under part Q of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd et seq.) to hire veterans as law enforcement officers.

(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this subsection to hire veterans, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General shall give priority to the hiring of veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001.

(d) ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may provide assistance to the secretaries described in subsection (a), the Attorney General, and the Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers to carry out the veterans jobs corps. Such assistance may take the form of a transfer under paragraph (2).

(2) TRANSFERS.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out this section, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may transfer such amounts as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out the veterans jobs corps to the following:

(A) The Attorney General.

(B) The Secretary of Agriculture.

(C) The Secretary of Commerce.

(D) The Secretary of Homeland Security.

(E) The Secretary of the Interior.

(F) The Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

(3) ASSISTANCE FOR CONSERVATION, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.—

(A) APPLICATION.—If a secretary referred to in subsection (b)(1) or the Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers seeks assistance under paragraph (1) to employ a veteran to carry out a project under subparagraph (A) of subsection (b)(1) or to award a grant or contract to carry out a project under subparagraph (B) of such subsection, such secretary or the Commanding General shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may require.

(B) SELECTION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the steering committee established under subparagraph (C), award assistance under this paragraph in accordance with such criteria as the steering committee establishes.

(C) STEERING COMMITTEE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a steering committee—

(I) to establish selection criteria for the awarding of assistance under paragraph (1) to employ a veteran to carry out a project under subparagraph (A) of subsection (b)(1) or to award a grant or contract to carry out a project under subparagraph (B) of such subsection; and

(II) to provide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with advice on awarding assistance under this subsection with respect to projects described in subsection (a)(1) and carrying out the veterans jobs corps under subsection (b).

(ii) COMPOSITION.—The steering committee shall be composed of the following:

(I) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(II) The Secretary of Agriculture.

(III) The Secretary of Commerce.

(IV) The Secretary of the Interior.

(V) The Commanding General of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

(iii) CHAIRPERSON.—The chairperson of the steering committee shall be the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(iv) ADVISORY INPUT.—The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor may provide advice to the steering committee.

(4) ASSISTANCE FOR FIRST RESPONDERS.—Not more than 10 percent of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out this section may be transferred to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security to employ veterans under subsection (c).

(e) REPORTING FRAMEWORK.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a reporting framework to regularly monitor and evaluate the veterans jobs corps to ensure proper oversight and accountability of the veterans jobs corps.

(f) OUTREACH.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that veterans employed under the veterans jobs corps are aware of benefits and assistance available

to them under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is available without further appropriation to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out this section, $1,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2012 through 2017.

(2) LIMITATION.—Of amounts made appropriated or otherwise made available to carry out this section, not more than five percent may be spent to administer the veterans jobs corps.

(h) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''veteran'' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PILOT PROGRAM ON PROVIDING VETERANS WITH ACCESS AT ONE-STOP CENTERS TO INTERNET WEBSITES TO FACILITATE ONLINE JOB SEARCHES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall commence a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing veterans seeking employment with access to computing facilities to facilitate the access of such veterans to Internet websites that—

(1) match such veterans with available jobs based on the skills the veterans acquired as members of the Armed Forces; and

(2) allow employers to post information about available jobs.

(b) DURATION.—The pilot program required by subsection (a) shall be carried out during the one-year period beginning on the date on which the Secretary commences the pilot program.

(c) LOCATIONS.—The pilot program shall be carried out at such one-stop centers and such other locations as the Secretary of Labor considers appropriate for purposes of the pilot program.

(d) ASSISTANCE WITH USE OF INTERNET WEBSITES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Under the pilot program, the Secretary of Labor shall provide each veteran using computing facilities made available under the pilot program with assistance in using such facilities to find employment via Internet websites described in subsection (a).

(2) DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS AND LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVES.—Each State that employs a disabled veterans' outreach program specialist under

section 4103A of title 38, United States Code, or a local veterans' employment representative under section 4104 of such title shall make such employees available to the Secretary of Labor for purposes of providing assistance under paragraph (1).

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 455 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Heath, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program that includes the findings of the Secretary with respect to the feasibility and advisability of providing computing facilities as described in subsection (a) with assistance as described in subsection (d) at all one-stop centers.

(f) FUNDING.—Amounts made available to the Secretary of Labor to make grants or contracts under section 4102A(b)(5) of title 38, United States Code, shall be available to the Secretary to carry out the pilot program required by subsection (a).

(g) ONE-STOP CENTER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''one-stop center'' means a center described in section 134(c) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2864(c)).

SEC. 4. STATE CONSIDERATION OF MILITARY TRAINING IN GRANTING CERTAIN STATE CERTIFICATIONS AND LICENSES AS A CONDITION ON THE RECEIPT OF FUNDS FOR VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4102A(c) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(9)(A) As a condition of a grant or contract under which funds are made available to a State in order to carry out section 4103A or 4104 of this title for any program year, the Secretary shall require the State—

''(i) to demonstrate that when the State approves or denies a certification or license described in subparagraph (B) for a veteran the State takes into consideration any training received or experience gained by the veteran while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces; and

''(ii) to disclose to the Secretary in writing the following:

''(I) Criteria applicants must satisfy to receive a certification or license described in subparagraph (B) by the State.

''(II) A description of the standard practices of the State for evaluating training received by veterans while serving on active duty

in the Armed Forces and evaluating the documented work experience of such veterans during such service for purposes of approving or denying a certification or license described in subparagraph (B).

''(III) Identification of areas in which training and experience described in subclause (II) fails to meet criteria described in subclause (I).''

''(B) A certification or license described in this subparagraph is any of the following:

''(i) A license to be a State tested nursing assistant or a certified nursing assistant.

''(ii) A commercial driver's license.

''(iii) An emergency medical technician license EMT–B or EMT–I.

''(iv) An emergency medical technician–paramedic license.

''(C) The Secretary shall share the information the Secretary receives under subparagraph (A)(ii) with the Secretary of Defense to help the Secretary of Defense improve training for military occupational specialties so that individuals who receive such training are able to receive a certification or license described in subparagraph (B) from a State.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a program year beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. MINIMUM FUNDING LEVELS FOR DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS AND LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Clause (iii) of section 4102A(c)(2)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(i)(I) In carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary shall establish minimum funding levels and may establish hold-harmless criteria for States.

''(II) Except as provided in subclause (III), at a minimum, the minimum funding levels establish under subclause (I) shall ensure that each State receives sufficient funding to support at least one disabled veterans' outreach program specialist appointed under section 4103A(a)(1) of this title and one local veterans' employment representative assigned under section 4104(b) of this title per 5,000 square miles of service delivery area within the State.

''(III) In determining minimum funding levels under subclause (II), the Secretary may exclude consideration of

counties with a population density of less than one person per square mile.''.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall submit to Congress a report on the effect of the amendment made by subsection (a) on veterans who reside in highly rural areas.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A description of the effect of the amendment made by subsection (a) on veterans who reside in highly rural areas.

(B) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the provision of contracts and grants under section 4102A(b)(5) of such title to meet the needs of veterans who reside in highly rural areas and are eligible for services furnished under chapter 41 of such title.

(3) HIGHLY RURAL DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''highly rural'', in the case of an area, means that the area consists of a county or

counties having a population of less than seven persons per square mile.

SEC. 6. OFF-BASE TRANSITION TRAINING.

(a) PROVISION OF OFF-BASE TRANSITION TRAINING.—During the one-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall provide the Transition Assistance Program under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code, to eligible individuals at locations other than military installations to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing such program to eligible individuals at locations other than military installations.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this section, an eligible individual is a veteran or the spouse of a veteran.

(c) LOCATIONS.—

(1) NUMBER OF STATES.—The Secretary shall carry out the training under subsection (a) in not less than three and not more than five States selected by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

(2) SELECTION OF STATES WITH HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT.—Of the States selected by the Secretary under paragraph (1), at least two shall be States with high rates of unemployment among veterans.

(3) NUMBER OF LOCATIONS IN EACH STATE.—The Secretary shall provide training under subsection (a) to eligible individuals at a sufficient number of locations within each State selected under this subsection to meet the needs of eligible individuals in such State.

(4) SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall select locations for the provision of training under subsection (a) to facilitate access by participants and may not select any location on a military installation other than a National Guard or reserve facility that is not located on an active duty military installation.

(d) INCLUSION OF INFORMATION ABOUT VETERANS BENEFITS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the training provided under subsection (a) generally follows the content of the Transition Assistance Program under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than March 1 of any year during which the Secretary provides training under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the provision of such training.

(f) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the termination of the one-year period described in subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the

United States shall submit to Congress a report on the training provided under such subsection. The report shall include the evaluation of the Comptroller General regarding the feasibility and advisability of carrying out off-base transition training at locations nationwide.

SEC. 7. 100 PERCENT CONTINUOUS LEVY ON PAYMENT TO MEDICARE PROVIDERS AND SUPPLIERS.

Paragraph (3) of section 6331(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting ", or, with respect to payments made during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Veterans Jobs Corps Act of 2012, to a Medicare provider or supplier under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.".

SEC. 8. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR ULTRA-DEEPWATER AND UNCONVENTIONAL NATURAL GAS AND OTHER PETROLEUM RESOURCES.

(a) REPEAL.—Subtitle J of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16371 et seq.) is repealed.

(b) RESCISSION.—The unobligated balances of funds made available for fiscal year 2012 under section 999H of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16378) (as it existed before the amendment made by subsection (a)) are rescinded permanently.

SEC. 9. REVOCATION OR DENIAL OF PASSPORT IN CASE OF CERTAIN UNPAID TAXES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter D of chapter 75 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 7345. REVOCATION OR DENIAL OF PASSPORT IN CASE OF CERTAIN TAX DELINQUENCIES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary receives certification by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue that any individual has a seriously delinquent tax debt in an amount in excess of $50,000, the Secretary shall transmit such certification to the Secretary of State for action with respect to denial, revocation, or limitation of a passport pursuant to section 4 of the Act entitled 'An Act to regulate the issue and validity of passports, and for other purposes', approved July 3, 1926 (22 U.S.C. 211a et seq.), commonly known as the 'Passport Act of 1926'.

''(b) SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBT.—For purposes of this section, the term 'seriously delinquent tax debt' means an outstanding debt under this title for which a notice of lien has been filed in public records pursuant to section 6323 or a notice of levy has been filed pursuant to section 6331, except that such term does not include—

''(1) a debt that is being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement under section 6159 or 7122, and

''(2) a debt with respect to which a collection due process hearing under section 6330, or relief under subsection (b), (c), or (f) of section 6015, is requested or pending.

''(c) ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION.—In the case of a calendar year beginning after 2012, the dollar amount in subsection (a) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

''(1) such dollar amount, multiplied by

''(2) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year, determined by substituting 'calendar year 2011' for 'calendar year 1992' in subparagraph (B) thereof.

If any amount as adjusted under the preceding sentence is not a multiple of $1,000, such amount shall be rounded to the next highest multiple of $1,000.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subchapter D of chapter 75 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 7345. Revocation or denial of passport in case of certain tax delinquencies.''.

(c) AUTHORITY FOR INFORMATION SHARING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (l) of section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is

amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(23) DISCLOSURE OF RETURN INFORMATION TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PURPOSES OF PASSPORT REVOCATION UNDER SECTION 7345.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, upon receiving a certification described in section 7345, disclose to the Secretary of State return information with respect to a taxpayer who has a seriously delinquent tax debt described in such section. Such return information shall be limited to—

''(i) the taxpayer identity information with respect to such taxpayer, and

''(ii) the amount of such seriously delinquent tax debt.

''(B) RESTRICTION ON DISCLOSURE.—Return information disclosed under subparagraph (A) may be used by officers and employees of the Department of State for the purposes of, and to the extent necessary in, carrying out the requirements of section 4 of the Act entitled 'An Act to regulate the issue and validity of passports, and for other purposes', approved

July 3, 1926 (22 U.S.C. 211a et seq.), commonly known as the 'Passport Act of 1926'.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (4) of section 6103(p) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''or (22)'' each place it appears in subparagraph (F)(ii) and in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and inserting ''(22), or (23)''.

(d) REVOCATION AUTHORIZATION.—The Act entitled ''An Act to regulate the issue and validity of passports, and for other purposes'', approved July 3, 1926 (22 U.S.C. 211a et seq.), commonly known as the ''Passport Act of 1926'', is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 4. AUTHORITY TO DENY OR REVOKE PASSPORT.

''(a) INELIGIBILITY.—

''(1) ISSUANCE.—Except as provided under subsection (b), upon receiving a certification described in section 7345 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 from the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State may not issue a passport or passport card to any individual who has a seriously delinquent tax debt described in such section.

''(2) REVOCATION.—The Secretary of State shall revoke a passport or passport card previously

issued to any individual described in subparagraph (A).

''(b) EXCEPTIONS.—

''(1) EMERGENCY AND HUMANITARIAN SITUATIONS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), the Secretary of State may issue a passport or passport card, in emergency circumstances or for humanitarian reasons, to an individual described in subsection (a)(1).

''(2) LIMITATION FOR RETURN TO UNITED STATES.—Notwithstanding subsection (a)(2), the Secretary of State, before revocation, may—

''(A) limit a previously issued passport or passport card only for return travel to the United States; or

''(B) issue a limited passport or passport card that only permits return travel to the United States.''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2013.

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