

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1637

To better connect current and former members of the Armed Forces with employment opportunities by consolidating duplicative Federal Government Internet websites into a single portal, to conserve resources by merging redundant and competing programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 31, 2013

Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To better connect current and former members of the Armed Forces with employment opportunities by consolidating duplicative Federal Government Internet websites into a single portal, to conserve resources by merging redundant and competing programs, 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 “United We Stand to
5 Hire Veterans Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CONSOLIDATED AND COORDINATED FEDERAL GOV-**
2 **ERNMENT INTERNET PORTAL TO CONNECT**
3 **CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF THE**
4 **ARMED FORCES WITH EMPLOYERS SEEKING**
5 **EMPLOYEES WITH SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**
6 **DEVELOPED THROUGH MILITARY SERVICE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
8 ings:

9 (1) Although significant progress has been
10 made, unemployment among veterans remains stub-
11 bornly high.

12 (2) The unemployment rate among younger vet-
13 erans, ages 18 to 24, remains well above the na-
14 tional average.

15 (3) This problem impacts the Department of
16 Defense budget. Over the past 10 years, the Federal
17 Government has expended more than
18 \$9,600,000,000 on unemployment compensation
19 benefits for former members of the Armed Forces.

20 (4) The Department makes significant invest-
21 ments in members of the Armed Forces including
22 specialized technical training in skills that are easily
23 transferrable to civilian career fields.

24 (5) Beyond specific technical training, veterans
25 gain unique leadership, organizational, and other

1 skills that make them valued employees in the pri-
2 vate sector.

3 (6) Government agencies, private sector enti-
4 ties, and nonprofit organizations are responding to
5 the issue of unemployment among veterans.

6 (7) There are now so many programs to assist
7 veterans in finding employment, many within the
8 Government, that veterans may not know where to
9 turn to find assistance in finding employment. While
10 these programs are well intentioned, many are dupli-
11 cative in nature, and compete for scarce resources.

12 (8) The Department of Labor, the Department
13 of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and
14 the Office of Personnel Management are currently
15 working to consolidate the veterans' employment ini-
16 tiatives of the Government into a single, consolidated
17 Internet portal with the goal of connecting veterans
18 who are seeking employment with employers who
19 want to employ them.

20 (9) The consolidated portal would prevent Fed-
21 eral Government agencies from competing with each
22 other to accomplish the same goal, and will save the
23 Federal Government money while providing a com-
24 prehensive, coordinated tool for employers and vet-
25 erans seeking employment.

1 (10) The Federal Government can accomplish
2 this by leveraging the best practices of current pro-
3 grams.

4 (11) While progress has been made, there is no
5 statutory requirement to streamline these Govern-
6 ment programs and coordinate the resources that
7 are all intended to achieve the same goal.

8 (b) CONSOLIDATED INTERNET PORTAL RE-
9 QUIRED.—Commencing not later than one year after the
10 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor
11 shall, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense and
12 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, consolidate Internet
13 portals of the Federal Government on employment for cur-
14 rent and former members of the Armed Forces into a com-
15 prehensive consolidated Internet portal for the purposes
16 of connecting current and former members of the Armed
17 Forces who are seeking employment with employers who
18 want to employ them.

19 (c) ELEMENTS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The consolidated Internet
21 portal under subsection (b) should include the fol-
22 lowing:

23 (A) A means through which current and
24 former members of the Armed Forces may con-
25 nect for employment purposes with employers

1 seeking the experience and skills developed dur-
2 ing service in the Armed Forces, including a
3 means of presenting a profile of each member
4 or former member to employers that includes,
5 at a minimum—

6 (i) the skills obtained by such member
7 or former member during service in the
8 Armed Forces and additional skills such
9 member or former member is interested in
10 pursuing; and

11 (ii) the current or intended residence
12 of such member or former member (includ-
13 ing an option for members or former mem-
14 bers who are willing to reside in various lo-
15 cations).

16 (B) A means of permitting qualified pro-
17 spective employers to post employment openings
18 and seek contact with members or former mem-
19 bers based on their profile for the purposes of
20 requesting the initiation of arrangements or ne-
21 gotiations concerning potential employment.

22 (C) A means of presenting other employ-
23 ment resources, including resume preparation,
24 to members or former members seeking employ-
25 ment.

1 (2) MATTERS CONSIDERED.—In developing the
2 consolidated Internet portal, the Secretaries referred
3 to in subsection (b) should consider, at a minimum,
4 the following:

5 (A) Public and private sector resources on
6 matters relating to the portal.

7 (B) Opportunities to incorporate local em-
8 ployment networks into the portal.

9 (C) Methodologies to determine the most
10 effective employment resources and programs to
11 be incorporated into the portal.

12 (D) Means for streamlining processes
13 through the portal for employers to find and
14 employ former members of the Armed Forces.

15 (d) MEMBER PARTICIPATION.—Participation by a
16 member or former member of the Armed Force in the con-
17 solidated Internet portal under subsection (b) shall be vol-
18 untary. A member or former member participating in the
19 portal may cease participation in the portal at any time.

20 (e) PILOT PROJECT AUTHORITY.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—In order to expedite imple-
22 mentation of the consolidated Internet portal under
23 subsection (b), the Secretaries may carry out one or
24 more pilot projects to evaluate the feasibility and ad-
25 visability of various options for the portal. Any such

1 pilot project may only be a continuation or modifica-
2 tion of an existing program.

3 (2) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out pilot
4 projects under this subsection shall expire on the
5 date that is five years after the date of the enact-
6 ment of this Act.

7 (f) REPORTS.—

8 (1) PRELIMINARY REPORT.—Not later than six
9 months after the date of the enactment of this Act,
10 the Secretaries shall submit to the appropriate com-
11 mittees of Congress a report on the consolidated
12 Internet portal under subsection (b). The report
13 shall include the following:

14 (A) A list of the Internet portals of the
15 Federal Government that are redundant to, or
16 duplicative of, the consolidated Internet portal.

17 (B) An estimate of the cost-savings to be
18 achieved by the Federal Government through
19 the consolidated Internet portal, including
20 through the elimination or consolidation into
21 the consolidated Internet portal of the Internet
22 portals listed under subparagraph (A).

23 (2) REPORT FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF
24 PORTAL.—Not later than one year after the date of
25 the implementation of the portal under subsection

1 (b), the Secretaries shall submit to the appropriate
2 committees of Congress a report on the portal.

3 (3) ELEMENTS.—Each report under this sub-
4 section shall include a description of the portal and
5 such other information on the portal as the Secre-
6 taries consider appropriate.

7 (4) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS
8 DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appro-
9 priate committees of Congress” means—

10 (A) the Committee on Armed Services, the
11 Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and
12 Pensions, the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs,
13 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
14 Senate; and

15 (B) the Committee on Armed Services, the
16 Committee on Education and the Workforce,
17 the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, and the
18 Committee on Appropriations of the House of
19 Representatives.

○