

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 700

To ensure that the education and training provided members of the Armed Forces and veterans better assists members and veterans in obtaining civilian certifications and licenses, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 10, 2013

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. BAUCUS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To ensure that the education and training provided members of the Armed Forces and veterans better assists members and veterans in obtaining civilian certifications and licenses, 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 “Troop Talent Act of
5 2013”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) According to the Bureau of Labor Statis-
2 tics, the unemployment rate for recent veterans of
3 military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan was 9.4
4 percent in February 2013, compared with 7.6 per-
5 cent in February 2012.

6 (2) With the unemployment rate among such
7 veterans higher than the national average and the
8 number of veterans receiving unemployment benefits
9 doubling since 2002, there is a significant need to
10 assist members of the Armed Forces as they transi-
11 tion to the civilian workforce.

12 (3) In order to remain competitive in the civil-
13 ian employment market, members of the Armed
14 Forces and veterans require information about how
15 their military skill sets translate to the requirements
16 of the civilian workforce. Members of the Armed
17 Forces currently receive insufficient or inadequate
18 information during their training for military occu-
19 pational specialties on translating skills obtained
20 during such training to civilian occupations and cre-
21 dentials.

22 (4) In addition, there is a need for enhanced ac-
23 cess by accredited credentialing agencies to military
24 training curricula in order to facilitate and enhance

1 the correlation between military training and appli-
 2 cable civilian credentialing courses and exams.

3 (5) The information technology sector is one of
 4 the fastest growing industries, with tremendous job
 5 growth and demand for talented, qualified individ-
 6 uals. The information technology sector has an un-
 7 employment rate of 3.5 percent according to a Bu-
 8 reau of Labor Statistics report from February 2013.

9 (6) The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a
 10 need for 110,000 computer support specialists over
 11 the next decade. Currently, the size of the informa-
 12 tion technology workforce in the Armed Forces is
 13 about 160,000 members.

14 **SEC. 3. ENHANCEMENT OF MECHANISMS TO CORRELATE**
 15 **SKILLS AND TRAINING FOR MILITARY OCCU-**
 16 **PATIONAL SPECIALTIES WITH SKILLS AND**
 17 **TRAINING REQUIRED FOR CIVILIAN CERTIFI-**
 18 **CATIONS AND LICENSES.**

19 (a) IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO
 20 MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES ABOUT CORRELA-
 21 TION.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries of the mili-
 23 tary departments, in coordination with the Under
 24 Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness,
 25 shall, to the maximum extent practicable, make in-

1 formation on civilian credentialing opportunities
2 available to members of the Armed Forces beginning
3 with, and at every stage of, training of members for
4 military occupational specialties, in order to permit
5 members—

6 (A) to evaluate the extent to which such
7 training correlates with the skills and training
8 required in connection with various civilian cer-
9 tifications and licenses; and

10 (B) to assess the suitability of such train-
11 ing for obtaining or pursuing such civilian cer-
12 tifications and licenses.

13 (2) COORDINATION WITH TRANSITION GOALS
14 PLANS SUCCESS PROGRAM.—Information shall be
15 made available under paragraph (1) in a manner
16 consistent with the Transition Goals Plans Success
17 (GPS) program.

18 (3) TYPES OF INFORMATION.—The information
19 made available under paragraph (1) shall include,
20 but not be limited to, the following:

21 (A) Information on the civilian occupa-
22 tional equivalents of military occupational spe-
23 cialties (MOS).

1 (B) Information on civilian license or cer-
2 tification requirements, including examination
3 requirements.

4 (C) Information on the availability and op-
5 portunities for use of educational benefits avail-
6 able to members of the Armed Forces, as ap-
7 propriate, corresponding training, or continuing
8 education that leads to a certification exam in
9 order to provide a pathway to credentialing op-
10 portunities.

11 (4) USE AND ADAPTATION OF CERTAIN PRO-
12 GRAMS.—In making information available under
13 paragraph (1), the Secretaries of the military de-
14 partments may use and adapt appropriate portions
15 of the Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL)
16 programs of the Army and the Navy and the
17 Credentialing and Educational Research Tool
18 (CERT) of the Air Force.

19 (b) IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS OF ACCREDITED CI-
20 VILIAN CREDENTIALING AGENCIES TO MILITARY TRAIN-
21 ING CONTENT.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries of the mili-
23 tary departments, in coordination with the Under
24 Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness,
25 shall, to the maximum extent practicable consistent

with national security requirements, make available to accredited civilian credentialing agencies that issue certifications or licenses, upon request of such agencies, information such as military course training curricula, syllabi, and materials, levels of military advancement attained, and professional skills developed.

(2) CENTRAL REPOSITORY.—The actions taken pursuant to paragraph (1) may include the establishment of a central repository of information on training and training materials provided members in connection with military occupational specialties that is readily accessible by accredited civilian credentialing agencies described in that paragraph in order to meet requests described in that paragraph.

**SEC. 4. USE OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR COURSES
IN PURSUIT OF CIVILIAN CERTIFICATIONS
OR LICENSES.**

(a) COURSES UNDER DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AUTHORITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 101 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2015 the following new section:

1 **“§ 2015a. Civilian certifications and licenses: use of**
 2 **educational assistance for courses in pur-**
 3 **suit of civilian certifications or licenses**

4 “(a) LIMITATION ON USE OF ASSISTANCE.—In the
 5 case of a member of the armed forces who is enrolled in
 6 an educational institution in a State for purposes of ob-
 7 taining employment in an occupation or profession requir-
 8 ing the approval or licensure of a board or agency of that
 9 State, educational assistance specified in subsection (b)
 10 may be used by the member for a course offered by the
 11 educational institution that is a required element of the
 12 curriculum to be satisfied to obtain employment in that
 13 occupation or profession only if—

14 “(1) the successful completion of the cur-
 15 rriculum fully qualifies a student to—

16 “(A) take any examination required for
 17 entry into the occupation or profession, includ-
 18 ing satisfying any State or professionally man-
 19 dated programmatic and specialized accredita-
 20 tion requirements; and

21 “(B) be certified or licensed or meet any
 22 other academically related pre-conditions that
 23 are required for entry into the occupation or
 24 profession; and

25 “(2) in the case of State licensing or profes-
 26 sionally mandated requirements for entry into the

1 occupation or profession that require specialized ac-
2 creditation, the curriculum meets the requirement
3 for specialized accreditation through its accreditation
4 or pre-accreditation by an accrediting agency or as-
5 sociation recognized by the Secretary of Education
6 or designated by that State as a reliable authority
7 as to the quality or training offered by the institu-
8 tion in that program.

9 “(b) COVERED EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—The
10 educational assistance specified in this subsection is edu-
11 cational assistance as follows:

12 “(1) Educational assistance for members of the
13 armed forces under section 2007 and 2015 of this
14 title.

15 “(2) Educational assistance for persons enlist-
16 ing for active duty under chapter 106A of this title.

17 “(3) Educational assistance for members of the
18 armed forces held as captives under section 2183 of
19 this title.

20 “(4) Educational assistance for members of the
21 Selected Reserve under chapter 1606 of this title.

22 “(5) Educational assistance for reserve compo-
23 nent members supporting contingency operations
24 and other operations under chapter 1607 of this
25 title.

1 “(6) Such other educational assistance provided
 2 members of the armed forces under the laws admin-
 3 istered by the Secretary of Defense or the Secre-
 4 taries of the military departments as the Secretary
 5 of Defense shall designate for purposes of this sec-
 6 tion.”.

7 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
 8 tions at the beginning of chapter 101 of such title
 9 is amended by inserting after the item relating to
 10 section 2015 the following new item:

“2015a. Civilian certifications and licenses: use of educational assistance for
 courses in pursuit of civilian certifications or licenses.”.

11 (b) COURSES UNDER EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE
 12 AUTHORITIES ADMINISTERED BY SECRETARY OF VET-
 13 ERANS AFFAIRS.—Section 3679 of title 38, United States
 14 Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new
 15 subsection:

16 “(c) A course offered by an educational institution
 17 in a State that is a required element of the curriculum
 18 to be satisfied to obtain employment in an occupation or
 19 profession requiring the approval or licensure of a board
 20 or agency of that State may be treated as approved for
 21 purposes of this chapter by an individual seeking to obtain
 22 employment in that occupation or profession only if—

23 “(1) the successful completion of the cur-
 24 riculum fully qualifies a student to—

1 “(A) take any examination required for
2 entry into the occupation or profession, includ-
3 ing satisfying any State or professionally man-
4 dated programmatic and specialized accredita-
5 tion requirements; and

6 “(B) be certified or licensed or meet any
7 other academically related pre-conditions that
8 are required for entry into the occupation or
9 profession; and

10 “(2) in the case of State licensing or profes-
11 sionally mandated requirements for entry into the
12 occupation or profession that require specialized ac-
13 creditation, the curriculum meets the requirement
14 for specialized accreditation through its accreditation
15 or pre-accreditation by an accrediting agency or as-
16 sociation recognized by the Secretary of Education
17 or designated by that State as a reliable authority
18 as to the quality or training offered by the institu-
19 tion in that program.”.

20 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
21 this section shall take effect on August 1, 2014, and shall
22 apply with respect to courses pursued on or after that
23 date.

1 **SEC. 5. COVERAGE OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIAL-**
2 **TIES RELATING TO MILITARY INFORMATION**
3 **TECHNOLOGY UNDER PILOT PROGRAM ON**
4 **RECEIPT OF CIVILIAN CREDENTIALS FOR**
5 **SKILLS REQUIRED FOR MILITARY OCCUPA-**
6 **TIONAL SPECIALTIES.**

7 The military occupational specialties designated for
8 purposes of the pilot program on receipt of civilian creden-
9 tials for skills required for military occupational specialties
10 under section 558 of the National Defense Authorization
11 Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (10 U.S.C. 2015 note) shall in-
12 clude military occupational specialties relating to the mili-
13 tary information technology workforce.

14 **SEC. 6. REVIVAL OF PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION AND**
15 **LICENSURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE**
16 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
18 shall reestablish the Professional Certification and Licen-
19 sure Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans
20 Affairs provided for under section 3689(e) of title 38,
21 United States Code. The Committee shall be reestablished
22 in accordance with the provisions of such section 3689(e),
23 as amended by subsection (b), and shall carry out its du-
24 ties in conformance with, and subject to the requirements
25 of such section, as so amended.

1 (b) MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES AND REQUIRE-
2 MENTS.—Section 3689(e) of title 38, United States Code,
3 is amended—

4 (1) in paragraph (2)—

5 (A) by inserting “(A)” after “(2)”; and

6 (B) by adding at the end the following new
7 subparagraph:

8 “(B) In addition to the duties under subparagraph
9 (A), the Committee shall—

10 “(i) develop, in coordination with other appro-
11 priate agencies, guidance to be used by the Depart-
12 ment or other entities to perform periodic audits of
13 licensure and certification programs to ensure the
14 highest quality education is available to veterans and
15 members of the Armed Forces; and

16 “(ii) develop, in coordination with the Depart-
17 ment of Defense, appropriate certification agencies,
18 and other appropriate non-profit organizations, a
19 plan to improve outreach to veterans and members
20 of the Armed Forces on the importance of licensing
21 and certification, as well as educational benefits
22 available to them.”;

23 (2) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking “and the
24 Secretary of Defense” and inserting “the Secretary
25 of Defense, and the Secretary of Education”;

1 (3) in paragraph (4), by striking subparagraph
2 (B) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

3 “(B) The Committee shall meet with such frequency
4 as the Committee determines appropriate.”; and

5 (4) in paragraph (5), by striking “December
6 31, 2006” and inserting “December 31, 2019”.

7 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
8 of the reestablishment of the Professional Certification
9 and Licensure Advisory Committee of the Department of
10 Veterans Affairs pursuant to this section, the Committee
11 shall submit to Congress a report setting forth an assess-
12 ment of the feasibility and advisability of permitting mem-
13 bers of the Armed Forces to use educational assistance
14 to which they are entitled under chapters 30 and 33 of
15 title 38, United States Code, to obtain or pursue civilian
16 employment certifications or licenses without the use of
17 such assistance for that purpose being charged against the
18 entitlement of such members to such educational assist-
19 ance.

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