

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5229

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 24, 2016

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

AN ACT

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a study to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, especially in regards to women veterans and minority veterans, in transitioning to civilian life, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Transition
3 Programs for All Veterans Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) The rate of unemployment for women vet-
7 erans is higher than the rate for male veterans. In
8 2015, the unemployment rate for women veterans
9 remained relatively unchanged at 5.4 percent, while
10 the rate for male veterans declined to 4.5 percent.

11 (2) Women veterans, on average, earn less than
12 male veterans. In 2013, the median income for
13 women veterans was \$35,264, while the median in-
14 come for male veterans was \$41,310.

15 (3) Women veterans and veterans with disabil-
16 ities are more likely to become homeless.

17 (4) Service-connected disabled veterans with rel-
18 atively high disability ratings have a higher unem-
19 ployment rate than those with relatively low dis-
20 ability ratings. In 2015, the unemployment rate for
21 veterans with a service-connected disability rating of
22 60 percent or higher was 9.6 percent, much higher
23 than the 4.0 percent rate for veterans with a service-
24 connected disability rating of 30 percent or lower.

1 (5) In 2013, American Indian and Alaska Na-
2 tive veterans had the lowest median personal in-
3 comes of any group of minority veterans.

4 (6) In 2013, American Indian and Alaska Na-
5 tive veterans were less likely to have finished an ad-
6 vanced degree than other veterans.

7 (7) American Indian and Alaska Native vet-
8 erans were more likely to have a service-connected
9 disability rating compared to all other veterans. In
10 2013, the rate of American Indian and Alaska Na-
11 tive veterans with a service-connected disability rat-
12 ing was about 26 percent compared to 18.2 percent
13 for all other veterans.

14 (8) There is a lack of data on, and an under-
15 standing of, the challenges and needs of veterans
16 who are residents of a territory of the United States
17 and veterans who are part of the indigenous popu-
18 lation of a territory of the United States.

19 **SEC. 3. STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF VETERANS**
20 **TRANSITION EFFORTS.**

21 (a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in
22 coordination with the Secretaries of Labor and Defense,
23 shall carry out a study to evaluate programs to assist vet-
24 erans of the Armed Forces in their transition to civilian
25 life. Such study shall be designed to determine the effec-

1 tiveness of current programs, especially in regards to the
2 unique challenges faced by women veterans, veterans with
3 disabilities, Native American veterans, veterans who are
4 residents of a territory of the United States, veterans who
5 are part of the indigenous population of a territory of the
6 United States, and other groups of minority veterans iden-
7 tified by the Secretaries, including whether such pro-
8 grams—

9 (1) effectively address the challenges veterans
10 face in pursuing higher education, especially the
11 challenges faced by women veterans, veterans with
12 disabilities, Native American veterans, veterans who
13 are residents of a territory of the United States, vet-
14 erans who are part of the indigenous population of
15 a territory of the United States, and other groups of
16 minority veterans identified by the Secretaries;

17 (2) effectively address the challenges such vet-
18 erans face entering the civilian workforce and in
19 translating experience and skills from military serv-
20 ice to the job market; and

21 (3) effectively address the challenges faced by
22 the families of such veterans transitioning to civilian
23 life.

24 (b) REPORT.—Eighteen months after the enactment
25 of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit

1 a report to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the
2 Senate and House of Representatives regarding the find-
3 ings and recommendations of the study required under
4 subsection (a) of this section.

5 **SEC. 4. PROHIBITION ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-**
6 **TIONS.**

7 No additional funds are authorized to carry out the
8 requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be car-
9 ried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

Passed the House of Representatives May 23, 2016.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.