

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4453

To provide a process by which certain wounded warriors who face medical discharge from the Armed Forces may instead continue to serve in the Armed Forces as remotely piloted aircraft pilots or remotely piloted aircraft sensor operators in the Air Force.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 17, 2017

Mr. PEARCE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To provide a process by which certain wounded warriors who face medical discharge from the Armed Forces may instead continue to serve in the Armed Forces as remotely piloted aircraft pilots or remotely piloted aircraft sensor operators in the Air Force.

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. SERVICE OF WOUNDED WARRIORS AS RE-**
2 **MOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT PILOTS OR RE-**
3 **MOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT SENSOR OPERA-**
4 **TORS IN THE AIR FORCE.**

5 (a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of the Air
6 Force shall establish a program under which a qualified
7 wounded warrior who faces retirement or separation from
8 the Armed Forces for physical disability may continue, in
9 lieu of such retirement or separation, to serve in the
10 Armed Forces as a remotely piloted aircraft pilot or re-
11 motely piloted aircraft sensor operator in the Air Force.

12 (b) ELIGIBILITY QUALIFICATIONS.—

13 (1) MODIFICATION OF PHYSICAL REQUIRE-
14 MENTS.—In the case of wounded warriors only, the
15 Secretary of the Air Force shall modify the physical
16 fitness requirements applicable to a wounded warrior
17 who is seeking to serve, or is serving, as a remotely
18 piloted aircraft pilot or remotely piloted aircraft sen-
19 sor operator if the wounded warrior is incapable of
20 meeting such requirements, such as completing an
21 annual physical training test, due to the service-re-
22 lated disability, but otherwise satisfies the remotely
23 piloted aircraft medical standard.

24 (2) MEDICAL WAIVERS.—The restriction on
25 medical waivers contained in section 6.4.5.1 of Air

1 Force Instruction 48–123 shall not apply to the pro-
2 gram required by this section.

3 (3) CONTINUED APPLICABILITY OF OTHER RE-
4 QUIREMENTS.—To serve as a remotely piloted air-
5 craft pilot or remotely piloted aircraft sensor oper-
6 ator, a wounded warrior applicant would still have to
7 pass—

8 (A) the applicable Air Force Officer Quali-
9 fying Test or Armed Services Vocational Apti-
10 tude Battery; and

11 (B) the applicable security and mental
12 health requirements.

13 (4) AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION.—A wound-
14 ed warrior may not be selected to serve, or continue
15 to serve, as a remotely piloted aircraft pilot or re-
16 motely piloted aircraft sensor operator if the Sec-
17 retary of the Air Force determines that—

18 (A) the wounded warrior presents a hazard
19 to flying safety or mission completion;

20 (B) performance of the duty would be haz-
21 ardous to the health of the wounded warrior; or

22 (C) the wounded warrior is diagnosed with
23 post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain
24 injury, or any other mental disorder that could
25 hinder mission performance.

1 (c) PRIORITY FOR CERTAIN WOUNDED WARRIORS.—

2 In selecting wounded warriors to serve as a remotely pi-
3 loted aircraft pilot or remotely piloted aircraft sensor oper-
4 ator, the Secretary of the Air Force shall give priority to
5 wounded warriors whose disability was incurred—

6 (1) in the line of duty in a combat zone des-
7 igned by the Secretary of Defense; or

8 (2) during the performance of duty in combat-
9 related operations as designated by the Secretary of
10 Defense.

11 (d) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—In the case of a wound-
12 ed warrior who is not a member of the Air Force, the Sec-
13 retary of the Air Force shall cooperate with the Secretary
14 concerned having jurisdiction over the wounded warrior to
15 transfer the wounded warrior from the other Armed Force
16 to the Air Force to permit the wounded warrior to be se-
17 lected for the program under this section.

18 (e) WOUNDED WARRIOR DEFINED.—In this section,
19 the term “wounded warrior” means a member of the
20 Armed Forces who—

21 (1) is unfit to perform the duties of the mem-
22 ber’s office, grade, rank, or rating because of phys-
23 ical disability incurred in the line of duty; and

24 (2) is under consideration for retirement or sep-
25 aration under chapter 61 of title 10, United States

- 1 Code, or has been placed on the temporary disability
- 2 retired list.

