

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2326

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 22, 2019

Received

AN ACT

To amend the Social Security Act, to amend the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, 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 “Navy SEAL Chief
 5 Petty Officer William ‘Bill’ Mulder (Ret.) Transition Im-
 6 provement Act of 2019”.

7 **SEC. 2. TAP DEFINED.**

8 In this Act, the term “TAP” means the Transition
 9 Assistance Program under sections 1142 and 1144 of title
 10 10, United States Code.

11 **SEC. 3. ACCESS FOR THE SECRETARIES OF LABOR AND**
 12 **VETERANS AFFAIRS TO THE FEDERAL DIREC-**
 13 **TORY OF NEW HIRES.**

14 Section 453A(h) of the Social Security Act (42
 15 U.S.C. 653a(h)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 16 lowing new paragraph:

17 “(4) VETERAN EMPLOYMENT.—The Secretaries
 18 of Labor and of Veterans Affairs shall have access
 19 to information reported by employers pursuant to
 20 subsection (b) of this section for purposes of track-
 21 ing employment of veterans.”.

22 **SEC. 4. PILOT PROGRAM FOR OFF-BASE TRANSITION**
 23 **TRAINING FOR VETERANS AND SPOUSES.**

24 (a) EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Subsection
 25 (a) of section 301 of the Dignified Burial and Other Vet-

1 erans’ Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (Public Law
2 112–260; 10 U.S.C. 1144 note) is amended—

3 (1) by striking “During the two-year period be-
4 ginning on the date of the enactment of this Act”
5 and inserting “During the 5-year period beginning
6 on the date of the enactment of the Navy SEAL
7 Chief Petty Officer William ‘Bill’ Mulder (Ret.)
8 Transition Improvement Act of 2019”; and

9 (2) by striking “to assess the feasibility and ad-
10 visability of providing such program to eligible indi-
11 viduals at locations other than military installa-
12 tions”.

13 (b) LOCATIONS.—Subsection (c) of such section is
14 amended—

15 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “not less than
16 three and not more than five States” and inserting
17 “not fewer than 50 locations in States (as defined
18 in section 101 of title 38, United States Code)”; and

19 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “at least two”
20 and inserting “at least 20”.

21 (c) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Subsection (f) of such
22 section is repealed.

1 **SEC. 5. GRANTS FOR PROVISION OF TRANSITION ASSIST-**
2 **ANCE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES**
3 **AFTER SEPARATION, RETIREMENT, OR DIS-**
4 **CHARGE.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 shall make grants to eligible organizations for the provi-
7 sion of transition assistance to members of the Armed
8 Forces who are separated, retired, or discharged from the
9 Armed Forces, and spouses of such members.

10 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—The recipient of a grant under
11 this section shall use the grant to provide to members of
12 the Armed Forces and spouses described in subsection (a)
13 resume assistance, interview training, job recruitment
14 training, and related services leading directly to successful
15 transition, as determined by the Secretary.

16 (c) ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS.—To be eligible for a
17 grant under this section, an organization shall submit to
18 the Secretary an application containing such information
19 and assurances as the Secretary, in consultation with the
20 Secretary of Labor, may require.

21 (d) PRIORITY FOR HUBS OF SERVICES.—In making
22 grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority
23 to an organization that provides multiple forms of services
24 described in subsection (b).

25 (e) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—A grant under this section
26 shall be in an amount that does not exceed 50 percent

1 of the amount required by the organization to provide the
2 services described in subsection (b).

3 (f) DEADLINE.—The Secretary shall carry out this
4 section not later than 6 months after the effective date
5 of this Act.

6 (g) TERMINATION.—The authority to provide a grant
7 under this section shall terminate on the date that is 5
8 years after the date on which the Secretary implements
9 the grant program under this section.

10 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
11 authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 to carry out
12 this section.

13 **SEC. 6. ONE-YEAR INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE EF-**
14 **ECTIVENESS OF TAP.**

15 (a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 90
16 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
17 retary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the cov-
18 ered officials, shall enter into an agreement with an appro-
19 priate entity with experience in adult education to carry
20 out a 1-year independent assessment of TAP, including—

21 (1) the effectiveness of TAP for members of
22 each military department during the entire military
23 life cycle;

24 (2) the appropriateness of the TAP career read-
25 iness standards;

1 (3) a review of information that is provided to
2 the Department of Veterans Affairs under TAP, in-
3 cluding mental health data;

4 (4) whether TAP effectively addresses the chal-
5 lenges veterans face entering the civilian workforce
6 and in translating experience and skills from mili-
7 tary service to the job market;

8 (5) whether TAP effectively addresses the chal-
9 lenges faced by the families of veterans making the
10 transition to civilian life;

11 (6) appropriate metrics regarding TAP out-
12 comes for members of the Armed Forces 1 year
13 after separation, retirement, or discharge from the
14 Armed Forces;

15 (7) what the Secretary, in consultation with the
16 covered officials and veterans service organizations
17 determine to be successful outcomes for TAP;

18 (8) whether members of the Armed Forces
19 achieve successful outcomes for TAP, as determined
20 under paragraph (7);

21 (9) how the Secretary and the covered officials
22 provide feedback to each other regarding such out-
23 comes;

24 (10) recommendations for the Secretaries of the
25 military departments regarding how to improve out-

1 comes for members of the Armed Forces after sepa-
2 ration, retirement, and discharge; and

3 (11) other topics the Secretary and the covered
4 officials determine would aid members of the Armed
5 Forces as they transition to civilian life.

6 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the com-
7 pletion of the independent assessment under subsection
8 (a), the Secretary and the covered officials, shall submit
9 to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and
10 House of Representatives and the Committees on Armed
11 Services of the Senate and House of Representatives—

12 (1) the findings and recommendations (includ-
13 ing recommended legislation) of the independent as-
14 sessment prepared by the entity described in sub-
15 section (a); and

16 (2) responses of the Secretary and the covered
17 officials to the findings and recommendations de-
18 scribed in paragraph (1).

19 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 (1) The term “covered officials” is comprised
21 of—

22 (A) the Secretary of Defense;

23 (B) the Secretary of Labor;

24 (C) the Administrator of the Small Busi-
25 ness Administration; and

1 (D) the Secretaries of the military depart-
2 ments.

3 (2) The term “military department” has the
4 meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10,
5 United States Code.

6 **SEC. 7. LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON CHANGES TO TAP.**

7 (a) STUDY.—Not later than 90 days after the date
8 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans
9 Affairs, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense
10 and Labor and the Administrator of the Small Business
11 Administration, shall conduct a 5-year longitudinal study
12 regarding TAP on three separate cohorts of members of
13 the Armed Forces who have separated from the Armed
14 Forces, including—

15 (1) a cohort that has attended TAP counseling
16 as implemented on the date of the enactment of this
17 Act;

18 (2) a cohort that attends TAP counseling after
19 the Secretaries of Defense and Labor implement
20 changes recommended in the report under section
21 6(b) of this Act; and

22 (3) a cohort that has not attended TAP coun-
23 seling.

24 (b) PROGRESS REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days
25 after the day that is 1 year after the date of the initiation

1 of the study under subsection (a) and annually thereafter
2 for the 3 subsequent years, the Secretaries of Veterans
3 Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the Administrator of the
4 Small Business Administration, shall submit to the Com-
5 mittees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of
6 Representatives and the Committees on Armed Services
7 of the Senate and House of Representatives a progress
8 report of activities under the study during the immediately
9 preceding year.

10 (c) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after
11 the completion of the study under subsection (a), the Sec-
12 retaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the
13 Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall
14 submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Sen-
15 ate and House of Representatives and the Committees on
16 Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representa-
17 tives a report of final findings and recommendations based
18 on the study.

19 (d) ELEMENTS.—The final report under subsection
20 (c) shall include information regarding the following:

21 (1) The percentage of each cohort that received
22 unemployment benefits during the study.

23 (2) The numbers of months members of each
24 cohort were employed during the study.

1 (3) Annual starting and ending salaries of
2 members of each cohort who were employed during
3 the study.

4 (4) How many members of each cohort enrolled
5 in an institution of higher learning, as that term is
6 defined in section 3452(f) of title 38, United States
7 Code.

8 (5) The academic credit hours, degrees, and
9 certificates obtained by members of each cohort dur-
10 ing the study.

11 (6) The annual income of members of each co-
12 hort.

13 (7) The total household income of members of
14 each cohort.

15 (8) How many members of each cohort own
16 their principal residences.

17 (9) How many dependents that members of
18 each cohort have.

19 (10) The percentage of each cohort that
20 achieves a successful outcome for TAP, as deter-
21 mined under section 6(a)(7) of this Act.

(11) Other criteria the Secretaries and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration determine appropriate.

Passed the House of Representatives May 21, 2019.

Attest: **CHERYL L. JOHNSON,**
Clerk.