

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2910

To establish aviation accession training programs for the Commissioned Officer Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to prepare students for commissioned service as pilots in the Corps, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 20, 2019

Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To establish aviation accession training programs for the Commissioned Officer Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to prepare students for commissioned service as pilots in the Corps, 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. AVIATION ACCESSION TRAINING PROGRAMS**

4 **FOR COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS OF NA-**
5 **TIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMIN-**
6 **ISTRATION.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
2 trator” means the Under Secretary of Commerce for
3 Oceans and Atmosphere and the Administrator of
4 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
5 tion.

6 (2) CORPS.—The term “Corps” means the
7 Commissioned Officer Corps of the National Oceanic
8 and Atmospheric Administration.

9 (3) MEMBER OF THE PROGRAM.—The term
10 “member of the program” means a student who is
11 enrolled in the program.

12 (4) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means an
13 aviation accession training program of the Corps es-
14 tablished pursuant to subsection (b).

15 (b) AVIATION ACCESSION TRAINING PROGRAMS.—

16 (1) ESTABLISHMENT AUTHORIZED.—The Ad-
17 ministrator, under regulations prescribed by the Sec-
18 retary of Commerce, shall establish and maintain
19 one or more aviation accession training programs for
20 the Corps at institutions described in paragraph (2).

21 (2) INSTITUTIONS DESCRIBED.—An institution
22 described in this paragraph is an educational institu-
23 tion—

1 (A) that requests to enter into an agree-
2 ment with the Administrator providing for the
3 establishment of the program at the institution;

4 (B) that has, as a part of its curriculum,
5 a 4-year baccalaureate program of professional
6 flight and piloting instruction that is accredited
7 by the Aviation Accreditation Board Inter-
8 national;

9 (C) that is located—

10 (i) not more than 250 miles from the
11 National Weather Service Training Center;
12 and

13 (ii) in a geographic area that—

14 (I) experiences a wide variation
15 in climate-related activity, including
16 frequent high winds, convective activ-
17 ity (including tornadoes), periods of
18 low visibility, heat, and snow and ice
19 episodes, to provide opportunities for
20 pilots to demonstrate skill in all
21 weather conditions compatible with fu-
22 ture encounters during their service in
23 the Corps; and

24 (II) has a climate that can ac-
25 commodate both primary and ad-

1 vanced flight training activity at least
 2 75 percent of the year; and

3 (D) at which the Administrator determines
 4 that—

5 (i) there will be at least 1 student en-
 6 rolled in the program; and

7 (ii) the provisions of this section are
 8 otherwise satisfied.

9 (3) LIMITATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH PAR-
 10 TICULAR INSTITUTIONS.—The program may not be
 11 established or maintained at an institution unless—

12 (A) the senior commissioned officer or em-
 13 ployee of the Corps who is assigned as an advi-
 14 sor to the program at that institution is given
 15 the academic rank of adjunct professor; and

16 (B) the institution fulfills the terms of its
 17 agreement with the Administrator.

18 (4) MEMBERSHIP IN CONNECTION WITH STA-
 19 TUS AS STUDENT.—At institutions at which the pro-
 20 gram is established, the membership of students in
 21 the program shall be elective, as provided by State
 22 law or the authorities of the institution concerned.

23 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—

24 (1) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for member-
 25 ship in the program an individual must—

1 (A) be a student at an institution at which
 2 the program is established;

3 (B) be a citizen of the United States;

4 (C) contract in writing, with the consent of
 5 a parent or guardian if a minor, with the Ad-
 6 ministrator, to—

7 (i) accept an appointment, if offered,
 8 as a commissioned officer in the Corps;
 9 and

10 (ii) to serve in the Corps for not fewer
 11 than 4 years;

12 (D) enroll in—

13 (i) a 4-year baccalaureate program of
 14 professional flight and piloting instruction;
 15 and

16 (ii) other training or education, in-
 17 cluding basic officer training, which is pre-
 18 scribed by the Administrator as meeting
 19 the preliminary requirement for admission
 20 to the Corps; and

21 (E) execute a certificate or take an oath
 22 relating to morality and conduct in such form
 23 as the Administrator prescribes.

24 (2) COMPLETION OF PROGRAM.—A member of
 25 the program may be appointed as a regular officer

1 in the Corps if the member meets all requirements
 2 for appointment as such an officer.

3 (d) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR QUALIFIED MEM-
 4 BERS.—

5 (1) EXPENSES OF COURSE OF INSTRUCTION.—

6 (A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a mem-
 7 ber of the program who meets such qualifica-
 8 tions as the Administrator establishes for pur-
 9 poses of this subsection, the Administrator may
 10 pay the expenses of the member in connection
 11 with pursuit of a course of professional flight
 12 and piloting instruction under the program, in-
 13 cluding tuition, fees, educational materials such
 14 as books, training, certifications, travel, and
 15 laboratory expenses.

16 (B) ASSISTANCE AFTER FOURTH ACA-
 17 DEMIC YEAR.—In the case of a member of the
 18 program described in subparagraph (A) who is
 19 enrolled in a course described in that subpara-
 20 graph that has been approved by the Adminis-
 21 trator and requires more than 4 academic years
 22 for completion, including elective requirements
 23 of the program, assistance under this sub-
 24 section may also be provided during a fifth aca-

1 demic year or during a combination of a part
2 of a fifth academic year and summer sessions.

3 (2) ROOM AND BOARD.—In the case of a mem-
4 ber eligible to receive assistance under paragraph
5 (1), the Administrator may, in lieu of payment of all
6 or part of such assistance, pay the room and board
7 expenses of the member, and other educational ex-
8 penses, of the educational institution concerned.

9 (3) FAILURE TO COMPLETE PROGRAM OR AC-
10 CEPT COMMISSION.—A member of the program who
11 receives assistance under this subsection and who
12 does not complete the course of instruction, or who
13 completes the course but declines to accept a com-
14 mission in the Corps when offered, shall be subject
15 to the repayment provisions of subsection (e).

16 (e) REPAYMENT OF UNEARNED PORTION OF FINAN-
17 CIAL ASSISTANCE WHEN CONDITIONS OF PAYMENT NOT
18 MET.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—A member of the program
20 who receives or benefits from assistance under sub-
21 section (d), and whose receipt of or benefit from
22 such assistance is subject to the condition that the
23 member fully satisfy the requirements of subsection
24 (c), shall repay to the United States an amount
25 equal to the assistance received or benefitted from if

1 the member fails to fully satisfy such requirements
2 and may not receive or benefit from any unpaid
3 amounts of such assistance after the member fails to
4 satisfy such requirements, unless the Administrator
5 determines that the imposition of the repayment re-
6 quirement and the termination of payment of unpaid
7 amounts of such assistance with regard to the mem-
8 ber would be—

9 (A) contrary to a personnel policy or man-
10 agement objective;

11 (B) against equity and good conscience; or

12 (C) contrary to the best interests of the
13 United States.

14 (2) REGULATIONS.—The Administrator may es-
15 tablish, by regulations, procedures for determining
16 the amount of the repayment required under this
17 subsection and the circumstances under which an ex-
18 ception to repayment may be granted. The Adminis-
19 trator may specify in the regulations the conditions
20 under which financial assistance to be paid to a
21 member of the program will not be made if the
22 member no longer satisfies the requirements in sub-
23 section (c) or qualifications in subsection (d) for
24 such assistance.

1 (3) NATURE OF OBLIGATION.—An obligation to
2 repay the United States under this subsection is, for
3 all purposes, a debt owed the United States.

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