

HONORING THE 70TH
ANNIVERSARY OF WSJS-AM RADIO

HON. RICHARD BURR

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2000

Mr. BURR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize WSJS-AM radio on its 70th anniversary. Since the first broadcast on Easter weekend of 1930, WSJS remains a treasured source of information and entertainment to the Winston-Salem community.

Over the years the station has changed format, its broadcast hours, its transmitter power, its frequency and even its owners. But, the trusted service and the call letters have remained the same.

Getting their start without a network affiliation, WSJS filled its air time with local programming, treating listeners to a variety of community talent—from the Winston-Salem Concert Orchestra to Jack Hawkins playing old favorites on his musical saw. Now a member of a national network conglomerate, WSJS communicates national issues with a local flavor.

Preserving 70 years of tradition, local personalities like Mike Fenley and Glenn Scott have upheld their community reputation as a classy operation. The all-talk format is supported by an enthusiastic staff that continues to attract thousands in the Piedmont Triad to the medium of news radio. On behalf of the citizens of the 5th District of North Carolina, I honor the WSJS radio station for 70 years of quality radio programming.

TRIBUTE TO MEREDITH
ARENSMAN

HON. ANNE M. NORTHUP

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2000

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor a young Kentucky student from my district who has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in her community. Meredith Arensman of Louisville, has been named one of my state's top honorees for The 2000 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism.

Meredith, a senior at Louisville Collegiate School, has organized the annual Louisville Girls Leadership Conference for the past three years, and is now the event chairwoman. Meredith was approached by women in the Louisville area who were concerned about the lack of leadership programs for girls. They wanted Meredith's help in putting together a conference that would help girls choose careers and make life choices with confidence and enthusiasm. Meredith started by creating a planning committee of fellow students who shared her passion for women's rights. They selected workshop topics on mental and physical self-defense, the negative connotation surrounding feminism, and the movement of women into non-traditional careers. Meredith handled public relations, secured an event location, identified speakers and sponsors, and organized

volunteers. More than 500 girls and 400 adults, including Gloria Steinem and Geraldine Ferraro, have participated in the conference. As Meredith said, "We must work to make sure that no one is inhibited by their race, religion, or gender."

It is my honor to pay tribute to someone who has made a difference to so many other young women. In light of numerous statistics that indicate Americans today are less involved in their communities than they once were, it is vital that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contributions this young citizen has made. Young volunteers like Meredith are inspiring examples to all of us and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow.

Meredith should be extremely proud to have been singled out from such a large group of dedicated volunteers. I heartily applaud Meredith for her initiative in seeking to make her community a better place to live and for the positive impact she has had on the lives of others. She has demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world and deserves our sincere respect and admiration. Her actions show that young Americans can, and do, play an important role in our communities and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future. Again, I offer my congratulations to Meredith for this outstanding achievement.

HONORING ARNOLD D. ANDERSON
OF ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to celebrate the contributions that Mr. Arnold D. Anderson, of Ontario, California, has made to his community.

Over the last 62 years, Mr. Anderson has dedicated much of his time to the needs of Ontario. He has served as president of numerous civic organizations, including the Ontario Host Lion's Club, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, and the Ontario Junior Chamber of Commerce. From 1959 to 1963, Mr. Anderson served as a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Chaffey High School Trust. For the past 34 years, Mr. Anderson has served on the Chaffey College Trust Board.

As a result of his extensive community service, Mr. Anderson has received numerous awards and honors. In the 1940's, he received several awards from the U.S. Department of Treasury and the U.S. Department of War for selling war bonds. His contributions have been commended by his Lion's Club, the California Department of Corrections, the West End YMCA, members of the California State Legislature, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, and the City of Ontario.

Although recently confined to a wheelchair, Mr. Anderson has continued to make valuable contributions to those in need, placing his needs second to those of others. It is with great honor that I join the community of Ontario as the Ontario Host Lion's Club celebrates Mr. Anderson's 62 years of perfect attendance with an Honorary Lifetime Membership.

By constantly striving to improve his community, Mr. Anderson has become a true American hero, worthy of our praise and gratitude.

EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM TO
RESHAPE AIR FORCE WORKFORCE

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2000

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague from Ohio, Mr. HOBSON, in introducing the Air Force Workforce Renewal Act, a bill to stabilize employment within the Air Force and bring more current technical skills into the Air Force workforce. The measure will give Air Force managers expanded use of voluntary early retirement incentives to create job openings to be filled by new employees with cutting edge technological skills.

The rapid pace of technology development and its importance to our economy and national defense is well recognized. At the same time, the Defense Department is faced with a rapidly changing and uncertain threat. The convergence of these trends means that the technical challenges faced by defense personnel will be greater than at any other time in our history. Defense employees must be capable of meeting these challenges if our armed services are to remain the most superior fighting force in the world.

Unfortunately, existing personnel laws do not give Defense Department managers the flexibility they need to keep up with rapidly changing personnel needs, especially in the scientific and technical fields. After more than ten years of much needed draw down and virtually no new hiring, the military services have been stymied in their efforts to acquire such personnel.

Since 1989, the Defense Department has reduced the size of its workforce by more than 400,000 positions, or 36 percent. To make this astounding reduction possible, only a small number of new employees have been hired in the last decade. Thus, there has been an alarmingly disproportionate reduction in younger employees. The number of employees below the age of 31 has dropped 76 percent since 1989 and more than a third of the workforce will be eligible for retirement over the next 4 years.

A crisis is looming in the Defense Department. Unless personnel practices are changed, the Pentagon will lurch from a predominantly senior workforce to one that is largely inexperienced. Without a smooth transition, vital institutional knowledge will not be passed on.

This problem is particularly acute for the Air Force because of its historically heavy reliance on science and technology. The preservation and advancement of our Air Force's high tech advantage is more important than ever as new and uncertain threats to the country develop. The Air Force's dominant role in recent operations in Iraq and Kosovo also makes the case for continued improvement of our technological edge.

To prevent a sudden workforce vacuum and allow for the orderly transfer of corporate knowledge to the next workforce, Mr. HOBSON and I have crafted a temporary, experimental

program. The measure makes a simple modification to the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority [VERA] and Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay [VSIP] programs that are already in existing law for Defense Department employees. Because of our special concern for the Air Force and the Air Force's strong support for personnel system reforms, this demonstration program would be conducted by that service.

Under the measure, for a limited time period, Air Force leaders would have the power to offer financial incentives without having to eliminate workforce numbers. The amount of the incentive that an employee could be offered will be determined by the same formula that the current VERA/VSIP law uses, which could be as much as \$25,000. Under this measure, work groups with less critical skills will be given the opportunity to volunteer for early retirement so that new personnel with more essential skills may be hired.

The test program is limited to no more than 1,000 employees annually and terminates after five years.

In addition to permitting the Air Force to reshape and stabilize its workforce, it will also save substantial amounts of money because the salary of a retirement-eligible employee averages almost twice that of a replacement hire. Therefore, despite the initial outlays required for retirement incentives, the Air Force estimates the Hall-Hobson bill will save about \$68,000 over a 5-year period for each senior slot opened for an entry level worker and over a seven year period, the cumulative savings could be as much as \$120 million.

The measure also includes a provision that allows the Air Force to hire entry level personnel more quickly provided that they have strong academic records. It is not enough for us to create positions for new high tech employees. If we are going to get the best, we also have to make the Air Force competitive with high tech industry in hiring them. The hiring process takes too long to attract new college graduates in scientific and technical fields who can get jobs in the private sector in only a fraction of the time it takes in the military services. I am familiar with attempts by the Air Force Research Laboratory to hire new graduates that took more than a year. In many of these cases, the job prospects gave up and took other jobs.

To further strengthen the workforce, the bill also gives the Air Force the authority to hire a small number of eminent scientists from the private sector for periods of 4 years or less. These experts will bring unique cutting-edge skills into the research laboratory that will jump start new efforts in critical technology areas. The temporary nature of these positions gives the Air Force the agility to move at the pace of technology development, rotating experts through as they are needed. This provision is modeled after existing legislation for the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency [DARPA] which has been successful in infusing this defense agency with creative new scientific ideas.

This legislation is a win-win situation for everyone. The Air Force will get the skills it wants and those people considering retirement are given the financial boost that allows them to retire early. The Air Force also saves money in the long term and our country will be better positioned to maintain our national security.

Moreover, this experimental pilot program will provide valuable information that can be used to address similar workforce problems in the other services and non-defense Federal agencies.

H.R. —

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Air Force Work Force Renewal Act".

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY AUTHORITY REGARDING VOLUNTARY SEPARATION INCENTIVES AND EARLY RETIREMENT FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE.

(a) SEPARATION PAY.—Section 5597(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following: "Under such program separation pay may also be offered for the purpose of maintaining continuity of skills among employees of the Department of the Air Force and adapting the skills of the workforce of such Department to emerging technologies critical to the needs and goals of such Department."

(b) RETIREMENT UNDER CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM.—Section 8336 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(c)(1) An employee of the Department of the Air Force who is separated from the service voluntarily as a result of a determination described in paragraph (2) after completing 25 years of service or after becoming 50 years of age and completing 20 years of service is entitled to an annuity.

"(2) A determination under this paragraph is a determination by the Secretary of the Air Force that the separation described in paragraph (1) is necessary for the purpose of maintaining continuity of skills among employees of the Department of the Air Force and adapting the skills of the workforce of the Department to emerging technologies critical to the needs and goals of the Department."

(c) RETIREMENT UNDER FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM.—Section 8414 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d)(1) An employee of the Department of the Air Force who is separated from the service voluntarily as a result of a determination described in paragraph (2) after completing 25 years of service or after becoming 50 years of age and completing 20 years of service is entitled to an annuity.

"(2) A determination under this paragraph is a determination by the Secretary of the Air Force that the separation described in paragraph (1) is necessary for the purpose of maintaining continuity of skills among employees of the Department of the Air Force and adapting the skills of the workforce of the Department to emerging technologies critical to the needs and goals of the Department."

(d) LIMITATION OF APPLICABILITY.—The authority to provide separation pay and retirement benefits under the amendments made by this section—

(1) may be exercised with respect to not more than 1000 civilian employees of the Department of the Air Force during each calendar year; and

(2) shall expire on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. AIR FORCE EXPERIMENTAL PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR TECHNICAL PERSONNEL.

(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air

Force may carry out a program of experimental use of the special personnel management authority provided in subsection (b) in order to facilitate recruitment of civilian personnel to perform the following:

(1) Research and exploratory or advanced development.

(2) Acquisition of major weapons systems, excluding sustainment activities.

(b) SPECIAL PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY.—(1) Under the program, the Secretary may—

(A) appoint eminent scientists and engineers from outside the civil service and uniformed services (as such terms are defined in section 2101 of title 5, United States Code) to not more than 62 positions in the Department of the Air Force without regard to the provisions of such title governing the appointment of employees in the civil service, except that the Secretary shall—

(i) provide for consideration of veterans' preference eligibility as described in section 2108 of such title; and

(ii) follow merit system principles, as established in chapter 23 of such title;

(B) prescribe the rates of basic pay for positions to which employees are appointed under subparagraph (A) at rates not in excess of the rate payable for positions at level 1 of the Executive Schedule under section 5312 of such title; and

(C) make payments to any employee appointed under subparagraph (A) in addition to basic pay within the limitation applicable to the employee under subsection (d)(1).

(2) Of the 62 positions described in paragraph (1)—

(A) 50 of such positions shall be allocated to organizations performing research and exploratory or advanced development; and

(B) 12 of such positions shall be allocated to organizations whose primary mission is the development and acquisition of major weapons systems, excluding sustainment activities.

(c) LIMITATION ON TERM OF APPOINTMENT.—

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the service of an employee under an appointment under subsection (b)(1) may not exceed 4 years.

(2) The Secretary may, in the case of a particular employee, extend the period to which service is limited under paragraph (1) by not more than 2 years if the Secretary determines that such action is necessary to promote the efficiency of the Department of the Air Force.

(d) LIMITATIONS ON ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS.—(1) The total amount of additional payments paid to an employee under subsection (b)(1)(C) for any 12-month period may not exceed the lesser of the following amounts:

(A) \$25,000.

(B) The amount equal to 25 percent of the employee's annual rate of basic pay.

(2) An employee appointed under subsection (b)(1) is not eligible for a bonus, monetary award, or other monetary incentive for service other than payments authorized under subsection (b)(1)(C).

(e) PERIOD OF PROGRAM.—(1) The program authorized under this section shall terminate at the end of the 5-year period referred to in subsection (a).

(2) After the termination of the program—

(A) no appointment may be made under subsection (b)(1);

(B) a rate of basic pay prescribed under subsection (b)(1)(B) may not take effect for a position; and

(C) no period of service may be extended under subsection (c).

(f) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—In the case of an employee who, on the day before the termination of the program, is serving in a position pursuant to an appointment under subsection (b)(1)—

(1) the termination of the program shall not terminate the employee's employment in that position before the expiration of the lesser of—

(A) the period for which the employee was appointed; or

(B) the period to which the employee's service is limited under subsection (c), including any extension made under paragraph (2) of that subsection before the termination of the program; and

(2) the rate of basic pay prescribed for the position under subsection (b)(1)(B) may not be reduced for so long (within the period applicable to the employee under paragraph (1)) as the employee continues to serve in the position without a break in service.

(g) ANNUAL REPORT.—(1) Not later than October 15 of each of years 2001 through 2006, the Secretary shall submit a report on the program to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(2) The annual report shall contain, for the period covered by the report, the following:

(A) A detailed discussion of the exercise of authority under this section.

(B) The sources from which individuals appointed under subsection (b)(1) were recruited.

(C) The methodology used for identifying and selecting such individuals.

(D) Any additional information that the Secretary considers helpful for assessing the utility of the authority under this section.

SEC. 4. AIR FORCE EXPERIMENTAL HIRING PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air Force may carry out a program of experimental use of the authority provided in subsections (b), (c), and (d) in order to facilitate recruitment of civilian personnel to carry out the following:

(1) Research and exploratory or advanced development.

(2) Acquisition of major weapons systems, excluding sustainment activities.

(b) CATEGORY RANKING.—(1) Notwithstanding sections 3309, 3313 3317(a), and 3318(a) of title 5, United States Code, the Secretary may provide that applicants for positions in the Department of the Air Force be evaluated according to a quality category rating system based on relative degrees of merit, rather than according to numerical ratings.

(2) Under the system described in paragraph (1), each applicant who meets the minimum qualification requirements shall be assigned to the appropriate category based on an evaluation of the quality of the applicant's knowledge, skills, and abilities relative to successful performance in the position to be filled.

(3) Within each such quality category, applicants who are eligible for veterans' preference under section 2108 of such title shall have priority over applicants who are not eligible for such preference.

(4)(A) Each applicant, other than applicants for scientific and professional positions at the GS-9 level or above, or the equivalent, who meets the minimum qualifications requirements and who is eligible for veterans' preference under section 2108(3)(C) of such title and who has a compensable service-connected disability of 10 percent or more shall have the highest priority in the quality category.

(B) Applicants for scientific or professional positions at the GS-9 level or above, or the equivalent, shall be listed within their category grouping, except that applicants who are eligible for veterans' preference under such section 2108 shall have priority over applicants who are not eligible for preference.

Among preference eligibles, preference shall be given without regard to the type of preference.

Under the system described in paragraph (1), an appointing official may select any qualified applicant within the highest category, except that such an official may not pass over a preference eligible for an individual who is not a preference eligible in the same category unless the requirements of section 3312(b) or 3318(b) of title 5, United States Code, are satisfied. If fewer than 3 applicants have been assigned to the highest category, an appointing official may select any qualified applicant in the next lower category or categories, if necessary to provide a pool of at least 3 qualified applicants. An appointing official may not pass over a preference eligible applicant to select a non-preference eligible applicant in a lower category.

(c) SHORTAGE AND CRITICAL NEED HIRING AUTHORITY.—(1) Notwithstanding section 3304(b) of title 5, United States Code, the Secretary of the Air Force may appoint individuals into the competitive service to fill civilian positions in the Department of the Air Force without competition, provided public notice has been given and the positions meet one of the following criteria:

(A) There is a severe shortage of qualified candidates for the position.

(B) There is a need for expedited hiring for the position.

(C) The position is unique and has special qualifications.

(D) The position has a historically high turnover rate.

(2) The Secretary may appoint individuals with exceptional academic qualifications or special experience to positions described in paragraph (1). Individuals who qualify on the basis of education must possess a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale (or the equivalent grade point average on a different scale).

(3) Applicants who are eligible for veterans' preference under section 2108 of title 5, United States Code, shall have priority over applicants who are not eligible for such preference. Among preference eligibles, a preference eligible applicant under subparagraphs (C) through (G) of section 2108(3) of such title shall have priority over an applicant who is eligible for preference under subparagraph (A) or (B) of such section. An appointing official may not pass over a preference eligible applicant to select a non-preference eligible applicant unless the requirements of section 3312(b) or 3318(b) of such title are satisfied.

AIR FORCE WORK FORCE RENEWAL ACT

SECTION-BY-SECTION DESCRIPTION

Section 1. Designates the legislation as "Air Force Work Force Renewal Act"

Section 2. Temporary Authority Regarding Voluntary Separation Incentives and Early Retirement for Employees of the Department of the Air Force

2(a). Permits the Air Force to offer incentive bonuses of up to \$25,000 for maintaining continuity of skills among employees of the Air Force and for adapting the skills of the work force to critical emerging technologies. This is an extension of the existing Department of Defense separation pay program.

2(b). Establishes that a retiring employee of the Air Force who is under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) may become eligible for an annuity after completing 25 year of service or after becoming 50 years of age and completing 20 years of service; and if the Air Force Secretary determines that the separation is necessary for the purpose of maintaining continuity of skills in the Air Force and for adapting the skills of the work force to critical emerging technologies.

2(c) Establishes the same early retirement authority as paragraph 1(b) for Air Force employees under the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS).

2(d) Limits the separation pay and retirement benefits established in this section to 1000 positions per calendar year for a period of five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Section 3. Air Force Experimental Personnel Management Program for Technical Personnel

3(a) On an experimental basis for a five-year period, to facilitate recruitment of civilian personnel, authorizes the Air Force to fill positions for 1) research and exploratory or advanced development, and 2) acquisition of major weapons systems.

3(b) Limits the hiring authority under this section to a total of 62 eminent scientists and engineers from outside the civil service and uniformed services. Of his number, 50 shall be allocated to organizations performing research and exploratory or advanced development, and 12 shall be allocated to organizations whose primary mission is the development and acquisition of major weapon systems, excluding sustainment activities. Certain civil service rules are waived. Veterans' preference is preserved.

3(c) In general, limits appointments under this section to no more than four years; however, the Secretary of the Air Force may extend an appointment an additional two years.

3(d) Limits the total annual amount of additional payments (such as bonuses or monetary awards), paid to an employee hired under this section to \$25,000 or an amount equal to 25 percent of the employee's annual salary, which ever is less.

3(e) Provides that no employee may be hired under this section (or appointment extended) after the five-year experimental program expires.

3(f) Allows employees appointed under this section to finish their existing term, (without extension), following the expiration of the authority under this section.

3(g) Requires the Air Force to provide an annual report on the experimental program to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Section 4. Air Force Experimental Hiring Program

4(a) On an experimental basis for a five-year period, to facilitate recruitment of civilian personnel, authorizes the Air Force to fill positions for 1) research and exploratory or advanced development, and 2) acquisition of major weapons systems.

4(b) Provides for a system to rate candidates for employment positions under this section. Veterans' preference is preserved.

4(c) Under specific conditions, authorizes the hiring with expedited competition of individuals with exceptional academic qualifications or unique experience under this section.

PHILIP ANSCHUTZ IS AN HONOREE AT THE HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION OF DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this moment to recognize an exceptional man who I am honored to call my friend. Philip