

on September 11 of last year, VA medical professionals stepped up to care for victims—not only veterans, but anyone in need.

VA medical centers are more than just the backbone of the Federal clinical infrastructure, they are integral parts of communities, and those communities turn to them during crises. The compromise agreement highlights this mission, authorizing VA to provide medical care to those affected by or responding to declared disasters, or following activation of the National Disaster Medical System. I wish to stress to my colleagues that this reflects VA's already enormous contribution to public safety, a mission that VA will carry out in the future as part of the Nation's homeland security strategy.

Following last year's attacks, Congress sought new tools and new strategies to protect the American people from the suddenly evident threat posed by terrorists wielding weapons of mass destruction. We learned—at the price of five lives lost and months of fear, confusion, and the disruption of the Senate that our public health resources and our scientific expertise could be overwhelmed by a biological assault aimed at a handful of public figures.

We must do more than bemoan the slow starvation of our public health care system, the chronic underfunding of the laboratories that detect outbreaks, and the managed care principles that have stripped away our hospitals' surge capacity. We must use the resources at hand as efficiently as possible to ready ourselves for whatever disasters may come.

In conclusion, I want to thank Senator SPECTER and his staff Bill Tuerk, Bill Cahill, and David Goetz for diligently working with me and my staff Kim Lipsky and Julie Fischer to craft this legislation. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, particularly Chairman Christopher Smith and his staff Pat Ryan, Kingston Smith, Jeannie McNally, Peter Dickinson, Kathleen Greve, and John Bradley and Ranking Member Lane Evans and his staff, Michael Durishin and Susan Edgerton, for their essential contributions to this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support these preparedness improvements for veterans and VA. This bipartisan measure represents a vital step in ensuring VA's preparedness, with a potentially enormous pay-off in public safety.

Mr. DASCHLE. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, which is at the desk, that the amendment be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4883) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT

Mr. DASCHLE. I ask unanimous consent that the Veterans Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4015, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4015) to amend title 38, of the United States Code, to revise and improve employment, training and placement services furnished to veterans, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, as Chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am pleased the Senate supports H.R. 4015, the proposed "Jobs for Veterans Act," as modified by a Manager's Amendment which reflects a final compromise developed by the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees. This legislation would improve the employment, training and placement services furnished to the men and women who have served our Nation.

At the conclusion of World War II, Congress made job placement for veterans a national priority. Legislation passed then created special employment services for returning troops, establishing hiring priorities for veterans in federal employment and giving them early notice of jobs in the private sector.

Later, Congress provided grants to states to hire experts with experience in placing veterans into civilian jobs. These experts, called Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists, serve veterans through state employment service offices and one-stop centers. Currently, the funding to hire these specialists is provided by a rigid formula that affords states little flexibility in allocating personnel for veterans' employment services.

The Jobs for Veterans Act would change this formula, and would remove restrictions on how states can employ these experts in veterans' employment. I expect that these changes will enable the Department of Labor to rise above the criticism the veterans employment programs have recently drawn. These necessary changes would allow states to tailor their employment services to better serve our Nation's veterans.

Mr. President, the "Jobs for Veterans Act" would additionally restore priority of service to veterans, and spouses of certain veterans, for employment, training and placement and extend it to any job training program administered by the Department of Labor. Additionally, the Secretary of Labor would be authorized to set priorities among eligible veterans and spouses by taking into account their special needs.

H.R. 4015 would also modify the threshold that determines when Fed-

eral contractors and subcontractors must take affirmative action to employ—and to advance in employment—qualified veterans, including immediately listing employment openings for such contracts. This modified threshold keeps pace with inflation, and provides the Office of Contract Compliance with a manageable amount of contracts to oversee and assure that contractors are meeting their obligations.

This legislation would also provide special financial and nonfinancial incentives to state employees to encourage them to develop improved and modern employment services for veterans. The awards would be administered through the states, based on criteria established by the Secretary of Labor in consultation with the states.

In some states, certain economic obstacles may create serious challenges to finding appropriate job placements for veterans. The "Jobs for Veterans Act" would allow the Secretary of Labor to give technical assistance to states that might need help in finding solutions, and would mandate that the state develop and implement a corrective plan to be approved by the Secretary.

As we ask the young men and women of this Nation to prepare themselves to take up arms in its defense, we must ensure that we will be able to help them find productive careers upon their return as we did for the previous generations that defended our freedoms. I am pleased colleagues have joined in supporting this bill on behalf of those who have served, and those who will serve in the future.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying joint explanatory statement be printed in the RECORD following this statement.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SUMMARY OF H.R. 4015, AS AMENDED BY A MANAGER'S AMENDMENT JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT

Revises and improves employment, training and placement services furnished to veterans.

Provides priority of service (over non-veterans) to veterans and spouses of certain veterans in job training programs funded by the Department of Labor.

Revises the current formula for funding veterans employment service providers in State employment offices, and removes restrictions on how they are used by the State. This is to give States greater flexibility in how they provide employment, training and placement services to veterans.

Modifies the threshold for when Federal contractors and subcontractors must take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified veterans, including immediately listing employment openings for such contracts.

Promotes employment and job advancement opportunities within the Federal government for disabled veterans, veterans who served in a military operation for which a service medal was awarded, and recently separated veterans by removing an eligibility restriction that allowed only Vietnam veterans to participate in these opportunities.

Establishes financial and non-financial incentive awards for state employees who furnish quality employment, training and placement services to veterans.

Requires the Department of Labor to set performance standards for states and when those standards are not met for a corrective action plan be submitted to the Secretary for approval. Authorizes the Secretary to have on-going authority to furnish technical assistance to any State that the Secretary determines to have a deficient entered-employment rate, including assessment in developing a corrective action plan.

Establishes the President's National Hire Veterans Committee that would furnish information to employers regarding the advantages afforded employers by hiring veterans.

JOINT EXPLANATORY STATEMENT ON SENATE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 4015

H.R. 4015, as amended, the Jobs for Veterans Act, reflects a Compromise Agreement the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs have reached on H.R. 4015, as amended, ("House Bill"). H.R. 4015, as amended, passed the House of Representatives on May 21, 2002. There is no comparable Senate bill.

The House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs have prepared the following explanation of H.R. 4015, as amended, ("Compromise Agreement"). Clerical corrections, conforming changes, and minor drafting, technical, and clarifying changes are not noted in this document.

PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS IN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

Current law

Section 4212 of title 38, United States Code, requires that for certain Federal contracts of \$25,000 or more, contractors and subcontractors take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment "special disabled veterans" (veterans with serious employment handicaps or disability ratings of 30 percent or higher), Vietnam-era veterans, recently-separated veterans, and other veterans who are "preference eligible." Preference eligible veterans generally are veterans who have served during wartime or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized.

Under section 4214 of title 38, United States Code, the Office of Personnel Management administers the Veterans Readjustment Appointment ("VRA") authority program to promote employment and job advancement opportunities within the Federal government for disabled veterans, certain veterans of the Vietnam era, and veterans of the post-Vietnam era who are qualified for such employment and advancement. In general: (1) such appointments may be made up to and including the GS-11 level or its equivalent; (2) a veteran shall be eligible for such an appointment without regard to the veteran's number of years of education; (3) a veteran who receives VA disability compensation shall be given preference for a VRA appointment over other veterans; (4) upon receipt of a VRA appointment, a veteran may receive training or education if the veteran has less than 15 years of education; and (5) upon successful completion of the prescribed probation period, a veteran may acquire competitive status. Except for a veteran who has a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more, a veteran of the Vietnam era may receive a VRA appointment only during the period ending 10 years after the date of the veteran's last separation from active duty or December 31, 1995, whichever is later.

House bill

Section 2 of H.R. 4015 would create a new section 4215 within chapter 42 of title 38,

United States Code, to provide priority of service (over non-veterans) to veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any qualified job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor, notwithstanding any other provision of law. The Secretary of Labor would be authorized to establish priorities among such covered persons to take into account the needs of disabled veterans and such other factors as the Secretary determines appropriate.

With respect to Federal contracts and subcontracts in the amount of \$100,000 or more, section 2 would provide that a contractor and any subcontractor take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified veterans. This would include immediate listing of employment openings for such contracts through the appropriate employment delivery system.

Section 2 would also change the Veterans Readjustment Appointment ("VRA") to the "Veterans Recruitment Appointment" authority and change eligibility for these appointments from Vietnam era and post-Vietnam era veterans to qualified covered veterans (see below) within the 10-year period that begins on the date of the veteran's last discharge, the 10-year period would not apply to a veteran with a service-connected disability of 30 percent or more.

Finally, section 2 would make eligible as "covered veterans" for Federal contracts and subcontracts and the Veterans Recruitment Appointment authority: disabled veterans; veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized; veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a United States military operation for which an Armed Forces service medal was awarded; or veterans discharged or released from military service within the past three years.

Compromise agreement

Section 2 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language with amendments.

The agreement would delete the 10-year eligibility period for a VRA appointment, in light of the broader Veterans Recruitment (not "Readjustment") Appointment authority embodied in the Compromise Agreement.

The Committees note that the definition of the term "covered person" for priority of service in Department of Labor veterans job training programs includes both veterans and certain spouses and surviving spouses of deceased veterans. Specifically, the provision would include a surviving spouse of a veteran who died as a result of a service-connected disability, including the surviving spouse of a veteran who died in the active military, naval or air service, and the surviving spouse of a veteran who was totally disabled at the time of death. The provision would also apply to spouses of active duty servicemembers who have for a period of at least 90 days been missing in action, captured by a hostile force or forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government and the spouses of veterans who are totally disabled due to a service-connected disability.

FINANCIAL AND NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARDS FOR QUALITY VETERANS EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND PLACEMENT SERVICES

Current law

No provision.

House bill

Section 3 of H.R. 4015 would create a new section 4112 within chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary

to carry out a program of performance incentive awards to States to encourage improvement and modernization of employment, training and placement services to veterans. The Secretary would provide greater amounts to States that furnish the highest quality of services, but also would provide awards to States that have made significant improvements in services. States could use such awards to States that have made significant improvements in services. States could use such awards to hire additional State veterans' employment and training staff for such other purposes relating to these services that the Secretary may approve. Awards would be obligated by the State during the program year in which the award was received and the subsequent program year.

Section 3 also would authorize additional funds to be appropriated for the Secretary to carry out the program of performance incentive awards in the following amounts: \$10 million for the program year beginning in fiscal year 2004; \$25 million for the program year beginning in fiscal year 2005; \$50 million for the program year beginning in fiscal year 2006; \$75 million for the program year beginning in fiscal year 2007; and \$100 million for the program year beginning in fiscal year 2008.

Compromise agreement

Section 3 of the Compromise Agreement would establish a system of financial and non-financial incentive awards to be administered by the States, based on criteria established by the Secretary in consultation with the States. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists ("DVOP"), Local Veterans Employment Representatives ("LVER"), Workforce Investment Act ("WIA"), and Wagner-Peyser staffs would be eligible for each award. Beginning in program years during or after fiscal year 2004, the Secretary would be required to identify and assign one percent of the annual grant to each State for the State to use as a performance incentive financial award (see section 4). Under this section, each State would be required to describe how it would administer this award in its annual grant application to the Secretary (see section 4). States would also administer the non-financial performance incentive award program based on criteria established by the Secretary.

The Committees intend that the Secretary's criteria be broad in order to give States maximum flexibility in the manner chosen to recognize employees for excellence in service delivery to veterans or improvements thereto. The Committees also intend that States use Salary and Expense (S&E) funds to pay for such items as employee recognition plaques and other modest forms of recognition, as part of the non-financial performance incentive awards program.

REFINEMENT OF JOB TRAINING AND PLACEMENT FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT

Current law

Chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, establishes policies governing the administration of veterans' employment and training services by the States, as funded by Department of Labor funds.

Section 4101 of title 38, United States Code, defines terms used in the chapter, such as "disabled veteran," "eligible person," and "local employment service office."

In section 4102, Congress declares as its intent and purpose that there shall be an effective: (1) job and training counseling service program; (2) employment placement service program; and (3) job training placement service program for eligible veterans and eligible persons.

Section 4102A specifies the job duties of the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans'

Employment and Training ("ASVET") and Regional Administrators for Veterans' Employment and Training ("RAVET"). The RAVET is required to be a veteran. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training ("DASVET") is also required to be a veteran. The ASVET need not be a veteran.

Section 4103 prescribes in detail the 15 job duties of Directors ("DVET") and Assistant Directors ("ADVET") of Veterans' Employment and Training. It also requires that the Secretary of Labor assign to each State one ADVET for every 250,000 veterans and eligible persons in the State veteran's population.

Section 4103A prescribes the appointment of one DVOP for every 7,400 veterans who are between the ages of 20 and 64 residing in each State. This section also requires that each DVOP be a veteran and specifies that preference be given to qualified disabled veterans in filling these positions. It prescribes where a DVOP is to be stationed in furnishing services and the specific functions that DVOPs perform.

Section 4104 requires that in any fiscal year funding be available to the States to employ 1,600 full-time LVERs. This section prescribes that funding furnished to the States for LVERs shall be assigned in each State on January 1, 1987, plus one additional LVER per State. This section also specifies in detail the manner in which the 1,600 LVERs shall be allocated to the States, and the manner in which the States shall assign LVERs to local employment service offices based on the number of veterans and eligible persons who register for assistance. This section also requires that in appointing LVERs, preference shall be given to qualified eligible veterans or eligible persons. Preference is accorded first to qualified eligible veterans, and then to qualified eligible persons. Lastly, this section prescribes the specific functions that LVERs shall perform.

Section 4104A requires that each State employment agency develop and apply DVOP and LVER programs. It requires the Secretary to furnish prototype standards to the States. This section also requires DVETs and ADVETs to furnish appropriate assistance to States in developing and implementing such standards.

Section 4106 requires the Secretary to estimate the funds necessary for the proper and efficient administration of chapters 41, 42, and 43 of title 38, United States Code. This section authorizes such sums as may be necessary for administration of chapter 41 services, including the National Veterans' Employment and Training Services Institute ("NVETSI").

In general, section 4107 of title 38, United States Code, requires the Secretary of Labor to establish and carry out various administrative controls to ensure veterans and eligible persons receive job placement, job training, or some other form of assistance such as individual job development or employment counseling services. This section also requires the Secretary to submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House and Senate not later than February 1 of each year, a report on the success during the previous program year of the Department of Labor ("DOL") and State employment service agencies in furnishing veterans' employment and training services.

Section 4109 requires that the Secretary make available such funds as may be necessary to operate a NVETSI for training DVOP, LVER, DVET, ADVET, and RAVET personnel.

House bill

Section 4 of H.R. 4015 would amend sections 4102A, 4103, 4103A, 4104, and 4109 of title 38, United States Code.

Section 4 of H.R. 4015 would amend current law section 4102A, of title 38, United States Code. The ASVET would be required to be a veteran. It also would impose new qualifications for the position of DASVET. In doing so, it would make this position a career federal civil service position. The individual appointed to this position would be required to have at least five years of continuous Federal service in the executive branch immediately preceding appointment as Deputy Assistant Secretary, and to be a veteran.

This section would set forth conditions for receipt of funding by States to include a requirement that a State submit an application for a grant or contract describing the manner in which the State would furnish employment, training, and placement services. A service delivery plan would include a description of the DVOP and LVER duties assigned by the State and other matters.

Section 4 would revise the methods by which the Secretary furnishes funds to a State. It would require the Secretary to make funds available for a fiscal year to each State in proportion to the number of veterans seeking employment using such criteria as the Secretary may establish in regulations. Under this section, the proportion of funding would reflect the ratio of the total number of veterans residing in the State who are seeking employment to the total number of veterans seeking employment in all States.

Section 4 also would require:

1. A State to annually submit to the Secretary of Labor an application for a grant or contract that includes a plan describing the manner in which the State would furnish employment, training, and placement services, with a description of DVOP and LVER duties assigned by the State. The plan would also be required to describe the manner in which DVOPs and LVERs would be integrated into the employment service delivery systems in the State, the veteran population to be served, and additional information the Secretary might require;

2. The Secretary to make available to each State based on an application approved by the Secretary, an amount of funding in proportion to the number of veterans seeking employment using such criteria as the Secretary might establish in regulation, including civilian labor force and unemployment data;

3. The Secretary to phase-in such annual funding over the three fiscal year-periods that begin on October 1, 2002;

4. The Secretary to establish minimum funding levels and hold-harmless criteria in administering funding to the States;

5. The State to develop and implement a corrective action plan to be submitted to the Secretary when a State has an entered-employment rate that the Secretary determines is deficient for the proceeding year;

6. The Secretary to establish by regulation a uniform national threshold entered-employment rate for a program year by which determinations of deficiency might be made. The Secretary would be required to take into account applicable annual unemployment data for the State and consider other factors, such as prevailing economic conditions, that affect performance of individuals providing employment, training, and placement services in the State;

7. The State to notify the Secretary on an annual basis of, and provide a supporting rationale for, each non-veteran who is employed as a DVOP and LVER for a period in excess of six months;

8. The Secretary to assign to each region a representative of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service ("VETS") to serve as RAVET. The RAVET would be required to be a veteran; and

9. The ASVET to establish and implement a comprehensive accountability system to measure the performance of delivery systems in a State. The accountability system would be required to be (1) consistent with State performance measures applicable under section 136(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and (2) appropriately weighted to provide special consideration for veterans requiring intensive services and for veterans who enroll in readjustment counseling services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Supervisory Personnel. Section 4 would also amend current section 4103 of title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary to assign as supervisory personnel such representatives of VETS as the Secretary determines appropriate. It would also replace the specific requirements for appointment of ADVET with a more flexible authority to appoint supervisory personnel.

Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist. This section would amend current section 4103A of title 38, United States Code, to require, subject to approval by the Secretary, that States employ a sufficient number of full or parttime DVOPs to carry out intensive services to meet the employment needs of special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans and other eligible veterans. It would require to the maximum extent practicable, that such employees be qualified veterans. Preference would be given to qualified disabled veterans.

Local Veterans Employment Specialists. Section 4 would amend current law section 4104 of title 38, United States Code, by requiring, subject to approval by the Secretary, that a State employ such full and part-time LVERs as the State determines appropriate and efficient to carry out employment, training, and placement services. It would require, to the maximum extent practicable, that such employees be qualified veterans.

This section would require that each LVER be administratively responsible to the manager of the employment service delivery system. Under this section, the LVER would provide reports, not less frequently than quarterly, to the manager of such office and to the DVET for the State regarding compliance with Federal law and regulations with respect to special services and priorities for eligible veterans and eligible persons.

National Veterans' Employment and Training Services Institute. Additionally, section 4 would amend current section 4109 of title 38, United States Code, to clarify the authority of the NVETSI to enter into contracts or agreements with departments or agencies of the United States or of a State, or with other organizations, to carry out training in providing veterans' employment, training, and placement services. Further, it would require that each annual budget submission include a separate listing of the amount of funding proposed for NVETSI.

Finally, section 4 would require that the Secretary, within 18 months of enactment, enhance the delivery of services by providing "one-stop" services and assistance to covered persons by way of the Internet and by other electronic means.

Compromise agreement

Section 4 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language with amendments.

Under this section, the individual appointed as DASVET would be required to have at least five years of service in a management position as a Federal civil service employee or comparable service in a management position in the Armed Forces preceding appointment as DASVET.

The annual grant application plan submitted by the States would have an additional requirement to describe the manner in

which the respective States would administer the performance incentives established in section 3. The Committees note that other aspects of the State plan and grant application requirements contained in the House-passed bill, such as describing DVOP and LVER duties, are retained.

The Compromise Agreement clarifies that State corrective action plans would be submitted to the Secretary for approval, and if approved, would be expeditiously implemented. If the Secretary disapproves a corrective action plan, the Secretary would be required to take such steps as would be necessary for the State to implement corrective actions.

The Secretary would also be required to identify and assign one percent of the funding grant to each State to establish financial performance incentive awards. Further, the Secretary would have on-going authority to furnish technical assistance to any State that the Secretary determines has, or may have, a deficient entered-employment rate, including assistance in developing a corrective action plan.

The Committees intend that the Secretary should offer technical assistance in an anticipatory way, so as to avoid deficient performance.

The Compromise Agreement would require that the DVET be a bona fide resident of the State for two years to qualify for such a position.

Lastly, the Compromise Agreement does not require that the ASVET, DASVET, RVET, DVET, or ADVET be veterans. The Committees encourage the appointment of veterans to these positions but do not believe a statutory requirement is necessary.

The amendments made by subsection (a) revising department level senior officials and functions, and subsection (b) revising statutorily-defined duties of DVOP and LVERs, would take effect on the date of enactment of this Act, and apply to program and fiscal years under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, beginning on or after such date.

ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS IN VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES

Current law

Sections 4102, 4106(a), 4107(a), 4107(c)(1), and section 4109(a) of title 38, United States Code, refer to terms such as "job and job training counseling service program," "proper counseling," "employment counseling services," "the number counseled," and "counseling," respectively, in describing services available to veterans and eligible persons under this chapter.

Section 4101(7) of title 38, United States Code, defines the term "local employment service office" as a service delivery point which has an intrinsic management structure and at which employment services are offered in accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act.

Section 4107(c)(1) of title 38, United States Code, defines "veterans of the Vietnam era" as a group which the Secretary must address with respect to various employment and training services in the annual report to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs. Section 4107(c)(2) requires submission in the report of data on the "job placement rate" for veterans and eligible persons.

House bill

Section 5 of H.R. 4015 would substitute the words "intensive services" for the word "counseling" throughout chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, so as to make the chapter consistent with section 134(d)(3) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220. This section would also add programs carried out by the VETS to ease transition of servicemembers to civilian careers

as a new program the Secretary would administer.

This section of the bill would make a definitional change so as to replace "local employment service office" and its current-law definition with "employment service delivery system." The latter term would be redefined as a service delivery system at which or through which labor exchange services, including employment, training and placement services, are offered in accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act.

This section also would replace "job placement rate" with "the rate of entered employment (as determined in a manner consistent with State performance measures applicable under section 136(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998)." Further, with respect to the Secretary's annual report, it would replace "veterans of the Vietnam era" and "eligible persons registered for assistance" with "eligible persons, recently separated veterans (as defined in section 4211(6) of title 38), and servicemembers transitioning to civilian careers who are registered for assistance."

Lastly, section 5 would add two additional requirements to the Secretary's annual report submitted to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House and Senate. First, the report must include information on the operation during the preceding program year of the program of performance incentive awards for quality employment services under section 4112 of this title, including an analysis of the amount of incentives distributed to each State and the rationale for such distribution. Second, a report would be required on the "performance of States and organizations and entities carrying out employment, training, and placement services under this chapter, as measured by revised performance criteria. In the case of a State that the Secretary determines has not met the minimum standard of performance established by the Secretary, the Secretary would be required to include an analysis of the extent and reasons for the State's failure to meet that minimum standard, together with the State's plan for corrective action during the succeeding year."

Compromise agreement

Section 5 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language with an amendment. The Secretary's annual report to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House and Senate would be required to include information on the operation during the preceding program year of performance incentive awards for quality employment services administered through the States. The report would not require an analysis of the amount of incentives distributed to each State and the rationale for such distribution because each State's DVOP/LVER grant would identify and assign one percent of the grant for use by State for the financial incentive awards.

COMMITTEE TO RAISE EMPLOYER AWARENESS OF SKILLS OF VETERANS AND BENEFITS OF HIRING VETERANS

Current law

No provision.

House bill

Section 6 of H.R. 4015 would authorize \$3 million to be appropriated to the Secretary of Labor from the Employment Security Administration account in the Unemployment Trust Fund for each of fiscal years 2003 through 2005 to establish within the Department of Labor the President's National Hire Veterans Committee. The Committee would furnish information to employers with respect to the training and skills of veterans and disabled veterans, and with respect to the advantages afforded employers by hiring

veterans. The Secretary of Labor would provide staff and administrative support to the Committee to assist it in carrying out its duties under this section. Upon request of the Committee, the head of any Federal department or agency would be authorized to detail staff on a non-reimbursable basis. The Committee would also have the authority to contract with government and private agencies to furnish information to employers. The Committee would terminate on December 31, 2005.

Compromise agreement

Section 6 of the Compromise Agreement contains the House language.

SENSE OF CONGRESS COMMENDING VETERANS AND MILITARY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Current law

No provision.

House bill

Section 7 of the H.R. 4015 would express the sense of Congress commending veterans and military service organizations, and encouraging them to provide job placement assistance to veterans who are job-ready by making personal computers available to them with access to electronic job placement services and programs.

Compromise agreement

The Compromise Agreement does not include this section.

REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF EMPLOYMENT REFORMS

Current law

No provision.

House bill

Section 8 of H.R. 4015 would authorize \$1 million for the Secretary of Labor to enter into a contract with an appropriate organization or entity to conduct an 18-month study to quantify the economic benefit to the United States attributable to the provision of employment and training services provided under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, in helping veterans to attain long-term, sustained employment.

Compromise agreement

Section 7 of the Compromise Agreement would direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the implementation by the Secretary of Labor of the provisions of this title during the program years that begin during fiscal years 2003 and 2004. The study would include an assessment of the effect of this title on employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans. Not later than six months after the conclusion of the program year that begins during fiscal year 2004, the Comptroller General would submit to Congress a report on the conducted study. Under this section, the report would include recommendations for legislation or administrative action.

Mr. DASCHLE. I ask unanimous consent that the Rockefeller substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to, the bill be read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4884) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (H.R. 4015), as amended, was read the third time and passed.