

making, teamwork, and the drive to win. All of these are critical to success as a small business owner.

The military does not teach its members how to take these skills and transfer them to starting a business. They require additional training to understand the key components of operating their own business without first having to serve a sort of "apprenticeship" working with others.

In 1999 Congress recognized that more services should be directed to help the 25 million veterans start and grow their small businesses. Those efforts succeeded because a number of small businesses owned by veterans have grown to 14 percent of all small businesses.

Despite this success more must be done to assist our veterans in the start-up and operation of their businesses. Outreach must improve to ensure that veterans wishing to start their own businesses will have the training and advice needed to transfer their skills to entrepreneurship.

The technical advice and assistance are not limited to veterans leaving the service. Reservists who operate their own small businesses have their own unique set of operational problems associated with their call-up to duty. They may not know how long their call-up will last, and they may need assistance in ensuring that they have in place a plan to operate their businesses while they are on Active Duty.

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H.R. 2366 represents an effort to expand the focus of the SBA entrepreneurial assistance programs to our veterans. Of most significant importance is the need to create more Veteran Business Outreach Centers. These centers operate as cooperative agreements between the Small Business Administration and the non-profit entities. These centers provide entrepreneurial development services, such as business training, counseling, mentoring and referrals. They also conduct entrepreneurial business development workshops focusing on self-development and self-employment. Counseling services may range from development of business plans to identifying government procurement opportunities.

There are only four Veteran Business Outreach Centers. To serve our military men and women, more are obviously needed, and title III requires the establishment of two more centers in each of the next two fiscal years.

Another important element of the bill is the recognition of the changing nature of the military with a greater involvement of women. Title I of the bill requires the administrator to establish within the Office of Veterans Business Development a program to provide assistance to women veterans. Given the rapid expansion and success of women-owned businesses, it makes sense to ensure that the needs of women veterans are met when they seek to start and operate small businesses.

Our fighting men and women are the best in the world. Let us help them become the best entrepreneurs in the world by enacting H.R. 2366.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), a member of the Small Business Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2366.

By now, every American should know who our Greatest Generation is. Our Greatest Generation was made up of the returning heroes of the Second World War. This generation was responsible for one of the greatest periods of economic growth in our Nation's history, leading to the creation of the lone superpower which now has become the world's leader in almost every conceivable category. But it is because we empowered our returning veterans with educational, business and social opportunities which helped create an environment in which success was attainable for those who wanted it. The Greatest Generation went on to become small business owners and operators, driving the very engine which is critical for the sustained economic growth of our Nation.

We are now witnessing the emergence of another great generation, a generation of volunteer warriors who have sacrificed so much in defense of our Nation's interest. We would be negligent if we did not grant to this generation the same opportunities to succeed as we have done with past generations. That is why I support H.R. 2366, and I move for its passage.

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. I would like to yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BUCHANAN) as much time as he may consume.

Mr. BUCHANAN. I would like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee, for yielding, and also the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

I would also like to commend Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ and Ranking Member CHABOT for their proving that leadership and bipartisanship is alive and well in the United States Congress. The Madam Chair has worked very hard on this bill, and I appreciate her effort.

Mr. Speaker, my bill, H.R. 2366, would create an important program within the Small Business Administration that gives our veterans not just a chance in a business enterprise but provides them with all the help and assistance a grateful Nation can offer.

This legislation is intended to help veterans through grants, information services and contacts with professionals in their field of endeavor. This Federal program will enhance the ability of a veteran to become an entrepreneur in his or her own right.

My bill puts an emphasis on providing veterans with market research, financial options and technological training important to become a successful small business owner.

H.R. 2366 not only expands the number and the scope of Veteran Outreach Centers, it ensures the opening of more doors and opportunities for our women veterans. Assisting our veterans returning from combat has been an area long overlooked, and it is high time we did something about it.

I am encouraged by the unanimous consent that this bill received in the committee and by the spirit of bipartisanship that is symbolic of its passage. Today, the House will pass a bill that will help individuals make an important transition from a veteran to a small business entrepreneur.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2366.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the motion is withdrawn.

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR EARMARK REFORM

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules be discharged from further consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 491) providing for earmark reform, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. TAUSCHER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, reserving the right to object, I would simply ask my very distinguished Chair for an explanation of exactly what it is that we're doing here.

I am happy to yield to the distinguished Chair of the Committee on Rules under my reservation, Madam Speaker.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

What this measure does is absolutely guarantee that any earmark in a conference report that has not been passed in the House will be subject to a point of order even though the Rules Committee may have protected against all points of order.

Mr. DREIER. If I may, under my reservation, Madam Speaker, I would just like to make sure that we have in place a provision now, as was agreed on last week, that will ensure that the rights of Members, when it comes to raising a point of order, are maintained when it comes to appropriations bills.

I would say, Madam Speaker, that I believe this is a very good start. My personal preference would have been that we could have gone back to the provision that we had last year to allow the same kind of protection for earmarks when it comes to both authorization and tax bills. And I hope very much, Madam Speaker, that we are going to have an opportunity to work together. I look forward to working with the distinguished Chair of the

Committee on Rules and the leadership teams on both sides of the aisle to ensure that we can in fact pursue further transparency, openness, accountability and enforceability when it comes to the issue of earmarks.

With that, I withdraw my reservation, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 491

Resolved, That during the remainder of the 110th Congress it shall not be in order to consider a conference report to accompany a regular general appropriation bill unless the joint explanatory statement prepared by the managers on the part of the House and the managers on the part of the Senate includes a list of congressional earmarks (as that term is used in clause 9(d) of rule XXI) in the conference report or joint statement (and the name of any Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, or Senator who submitted a request to the respective House or Senate committee for each respective item included on such list) that were not committed to the conference committee by either House, not in a report on such bill, and not in a report of a committee of the Senate on a companion measure.

SEC. 2. It shall not be in order to consider a rule or order that waives the application of the first section of this resolution.

SEC. 3. A point of order under this resolution shall be disposed of by the question of consideration under the same terms as specified in clause 9(b) of rule XXI.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR RULES COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, the Rules Committee is expected to meet Wednesday, June 20, to grant a rule which may structure the amendment process for floor consideration of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2008.

Members who wish to offer an amendment to this bill should submit 30 copies of the amendment and a brief description of the amendment to the Rules Committee in H-312 in the Capitol no later than 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 20. Members are strongly advised to adhere to the amendment deadlines to ensure the amendments receive consideration.

Amendments should be drafted to the bill as ordered reported by the Committee on Appropriations. A copy of that bill is expected to be posted on the Web site of the Rules Committee on Tuesday afternoon.

Amendments should be drafted by Legislative Counsel and also should be reviewed by the Office of the Parliamentarian to be sure that the amendments comply with the Rules of the House. Members are also strongly en-

couraged to submit their amendments to the Congressional Budget Office for analysis regarding possible PAYGO violations.

SBA VETERANS' PROGRAMS ACT OF 2007

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2366) to reauthorize the veterans entrepreneurial development programs of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2366

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “SBA Veterans’ Programs Act of 2007”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—OFFICE OF VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Sec. 101. Office of Veterans Business Development.

TITLE II—VETERANS ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

Sec. 201. Veterans Assistance and Services program.

TITLE III—EXPANDING VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTERS

Sec. 301. Increasing the number of outreach centers.

Sec. 302. Independent study on gaps in availability of outreach centers.

TITLE I—OFFICE OF VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 101. OFFICE OF VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

Section 32 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657b) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) PARTICIPATION IN TAP WORKSHOPS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Associate Administrator shall increase veteran outreach by ensuring that Veteran Business Outreach Centers regularly participate, on a nationwide basis, in the workshops of the Transition Assistance Program of the Department of Labor.

“(2) PRESENTATIONS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), a Center may provide grants to eligible entities located in Transition Assistance Program locations to make presentations on the opportunities available from the Administration for recently separating veterans. Each such presentation must include, at a minimum, the entrepreneurial and business training resources available from the Administration.

“(3) REPORTS.—The Associate Administrator shall submit to Congress progress reports on the implementation of this subsection.

“(d) WOMEN VETERANS BUSINESS TRAINING RESOURCE PROGRAM.—The Associate Administrator shall establish a Women Veterans Business Training Resource Program. The program shall—

“(1) compile information on resources available to women veterans for business training, including resources for—

“(A) vocational and technical education;

“(B) general business skills, such as marketing and accounting; and

“(C) business assistance programs targeted to women veterans; and

“(2) disseminate the information through Veteran Business Outreach Centers and women’s business centers.”.

TITLE II—VETERANS ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

SEC. 201. VETERANS ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES PROGRAM.

Section 21 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(n) VETERANS ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A Small Business Development Center may apply for an additional grant to carry out a veterans assistance and services program.

“(2) ELEMENTS OF PROGRAM.—Under a program under paragraph (1), the Center shall—

“(A) create a marketing campaign to promote awareness and education of the services of the Center that are available to veterans, and to target the campaign toward veterans, disabled veterans, military units, Federal agencies, and veterans organizations;

“(B) use technology-assisted online counseling and distance learning technology to overcome the impediments to entrepreneurship faced by veterans and members of the Armed Forces; and

“(C) increase coordination among organizations that assist veterans, including by establishing virtual integration of service providers and offerings for a one-stop point of contact for veterans who are entrepreneurs or small business owners.

“(3) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—Each grant under this subsection shall be for at least \$75,000.

“(4) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—A grant under this subsection may not exceed \$250,000.

“(5) FUNDING.—Subject to amounts approved in advance in appropriations Acts, the Administration may make grants or enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the provisions of this subsection.”.

TITLE III—EXPANDING VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTERS

SEC. 301. INCREASING THE NUMBER OF OUTREACH CENTERS.

The Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall use the authority in section 8(b)(17) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 647(b)) to ensure that the number of Veterans Business Outreach Centers throughout the United States increases—

(1) by at least 2, for each of fiscal years 2008 and 2009; and

(2) by the number that the Administrator considers appropriate, based on existing need, for each fiscal year thereafter.

SEC. 302. INDEPENDENT STUDY ON GAPS IN AVAILABILITY OF OUTREACH CENTERS.

The Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall sponsor an independent study on gaps in the availability of Veterans Business Outreach Centers across the United States. The purpose of the study shall be to identify the gaps that do exist so as to inform decisions on funding and on the allocation and coordination of resources. Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report on the results of the study.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK).