

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1722

To require a demonstration program on the accession as Air Force officers of candidates with auditory impairments.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 2015

Mr. TAKANO (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. TED LIEU of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require a demonstration program on the accession as Air Force officers of candidates with auditory impairments.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Keith Nolan Air Force
5 Deaf Demonstration Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM ON ACCESSION OF**
7 **CANDIDATES WITH AUDITORY IMPAIRMENTS**
8 **AS AIR FORCE OFFICERS.**

9 (a) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Begin-
10 ning not later than 90 days after the date of the enact-

1 ment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air Force shall carry
2 out a demonstration program to assess the feasibility and
3 advisability of permitting individuals with auditory impair-
4 ments (including deafness) to access as officers of the Air
5 Force.

6 (b) CANDIDATES.—

7 (1) NUMBER OF CANDIDATES.—The total num-
8 ber of individuals with auditory impairments who
9 may participate in the demonstration program shall
10 be not fewer than 15 individuals or more than 20 in-
11 dividuals.

12 (2) MIX AND RANGE OF AUDITORY IMPAIR-
13 MENTS.—The individuals who participate in the
14 demonstration program shall include individuals who
15 are deaf and individuals who have a range of other
16 auditory impairments.

17 (3) QUALIFICATION FOR ACCESSION.—Any indi-
18 vidual who is chosen to participate in the demonstra-
19 tion program shall meet all essential qualifications
20 for accession as an officer in the Air Force, other
21 than those related to having an auditory impair-
22 ment.

23 (c) SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Air
25 Force shall—

1 (A) publicize the demonstration program
2 nationally, including to individuals who have
3 auditory impairments and would be otherwise
4 qualified for officer training;

5 (B) create a process whereby interested in-
6 dividuals can apply for the demonstration pro-
7 gram; and

8 (C) select the participants for the dem-
9 onstration program, from among the pool of ap-
10 plicants, based on the criteria in subsection (b).

11 (2) NO PRIOR SERVICE AS AIR FORCE OFFI-
12 CERS.—Participants selected for the demonstration
13 program shall be individuals who have not previously
14 served as officers in the Air Force.

15 (d) BASIC OFFICER TRAINING.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The participants in the dem-
17 onstration program shall undergo, at the election of
18 the Secretary of the Air Force, the Basic Officer
19 Training course or the Commissioned Officer Train-
20 ing course at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

21 (2) NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—Once individ-
22 uals begin participating in the demonstration pro-
23 gram, each Basic Officer Training course or Com-
24 missioned Officer Training course at Maxwell Air
25 Force Base, Alabama, shall include not fewer than

1 4, or more than 6, participants in the demonstration
2 program until all participants have completed such
3 training.

4 (3) AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES.—The Sec-
5 retary of Defense shall ensure that participants in
6 the demonstration program have the necessary auxil-
7 iary aids and services (as that term is defined in sec-
8 tion 4 of the Americans With Disabilities Act of
9 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12103)) in order to fully partici-
10 pate in the demonstration program.

11 (e) COORDINATION.—

12 (1) SPECIAL ADVISOR.—The Secretary of the
13 Air Force shall designate a special advisor to the
14 demonstration program to act as a resource for par-
15 ticipants in the demonstration program, as well as a
16 liaison between participants in the demonstration
17 program and those providing the officer training.

18 (2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The special advisor shall
19 be a member of the Armed Forces on active duty—

20 (A) who—

21 (i) if a commissioned officer, shall be
22 in grade O-3 or higher; or

23 (ii) if an enlisted member, shall be in
24 grade E-5 or higher; and

1 (B) who is knowledgeable about issues in-
2 volving, and accommodations for, individuals
3 with auditory impairments (including deafness).

4 (3) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The special advisor
5 shall be responsible for facilitating the officer train-
6 ing for participants in the demonstration program,
7 intervening and resolving issues and accommoda-
8 tions during the training, and such other duties as
9 the Secretary of the Air Force may assign to facili-
10 tate the success of the demonstration program and
11 participants.

12 (f) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date
13 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air
14 Force shall submit to the appropriate committees of Con-
15 gress a report on the demonstration program. The report
16 shall include the following:

17 (1) A description of the demonstration program
18 and the participants in the demonstration program.

19 (2) The outcome of the demonstration program,
20 including—

21 (A) the number of participants in the dem-
22 onstration program that successfully completed
23 the Basic Officer Training course or the Com-
24 missioned Officer Training course;

1 (B) the number of participants in the dem-
2 onstration program that were recommended for
3 continued military service;

4 (C) the issues that were encountered dur-
5 ing the program; and

6 (D) such recommendation for modifications
7 to the demonstration program as the Secretary
8 considers appropriate to increase further inclu-
9 sion of individuals with auditory disabilities
10 serving as officers in the Air Force or other
11 Armed Forces.

12 (3) Such recommendations for legislative or ad-
13 ministrative action as the Secretary considers appro-
14 priate in light of the demonstration program.

15 (g) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DE-
16 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate commit-
17 tees of Congress” means—

18 (1) the Committee on Armed Services, the
19 Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pen-
20 sions, and the Committee on Appropriations of the
21 Senate; and

22 (2) the Committee on Armed Services and the
23 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
24 resentatives.

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