

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2789

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to administer a pilot program to employ veterans in positions that relate to conservation and resource management activities.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 22, 2021

Mr. LAMB (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to administer a pilot program to employ veterans in positions that relate to conservation and resource management activities.

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

1 **SECTION 1. PILOT PROGRAM TO EMPLOY VETERANS IN PO-**
2 **SITIONS RELATING TO CONSERVATION AND**
3 **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.**

4 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans
5 Affairs and the Secretaries concerned shall jointly estab-
6 lish a pilot program under which veterans are employed
7 by the Federal Government in positions that relate to the
8 conservation and resource management activities of the
9 Department of the Interior and the Department of Agri-
10 culture.

11 (b) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary of Veterans
12 Affairs shall administer the pilot program under sub-
13 section (a).

14 (c) POSITIONS.—The Secretaries concerned shall—

15 (1) identify vacant positions in the respective
16 Departments of the Secretaries that are appropriate
17 to fill using the pilot program under subsection (a);
18 and

19 (2) to the extent practicable, fill such positions
20 using the pilot program.

21 (d) APPLICATION OF CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—A vet-
22 eran employed under the pilot program under subsection
23 (a) shall be treated as an employee as defined by section
24 2105 of title 5, United States Code.

25 (e) BEST PRACTICES FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.—
26 The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish guide-

1 lines containing best practices for departments and agen-
2 cies of the Federal Government that carry out programs
3 to employ veterans who are transitioning from service in
4 the Armed Forces. Such guidelines shall include—

5 (1) lessons learned under the Warrior Training
6 Advancement Course of the Department of Veterans
7 Affairs; and

8 (2) methods to realize cost savings based on
9 such lessons learned.

10 (f) PARTNERSHIP.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
11 fairs, the Secretaries concerned, and the Secretary of De-
12 fense may enter into a partnership to include the pilot pro-
13 gram under subsection (a) as part of the Skillbridge pro-
14 gram under section 1143 of title 10, United States Code.

15 (g) REPORTS.—

16 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 60 days
17 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
18 retary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretaries con-
19 cerned shall jointly submit to the appropriate con-
20 gressional committees a report on the pilot program
21 under subsection (a), including—

22 (A) a description of how the pilot program
23 will be carried out in a manner to reduce the
24 unemployment of veterans; and

1 (B) any recommendations for legislative
2 actions to improve the pilot program.

3 (2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than one
4 year after the date on which the pilot program under
5 subsection (a) commences, the Secretary of Veterans
6 Affairs and the Secretaries concerned shall jointly
7 submit to the appropriate congressional committees
8 a report on the implementation of the pilot program.

9 (3) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 30 days
10 after the date on which the pilot program under sub-
11 section (a) is completed, the Secretary of Veterans
12 Affairs and the Secretaries concerned shall jointly
13 submit to the appropriate congressional committees
14 a report on the pilot program that includes the fol-
15 lowing:

16 (A) The number of veterans who applied to
17 participate in the pilot program.

18 (B) The number of such veterans employed
19 under the pilot program.

20 (C) The number of veterans identified in
21 subparagraph (B) who transitioned to full-time
22 positions with the Federal Government after
23 participating in the pilot program.

1 (D) Any other information the Secretaries
2 determine appropriate with respect to meas-
3 uring the effectiveness of the pilot program.

4 (h) DURATION.—The authority to carry out the pilot
5 program under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date
6 that is two years after the date on which the pilot program
7 commences.

8 (i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) The term “appropriate congressional com-
10 mittees” means—

11 (A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs,
12 the Committee on Agriculture, and the Com-
13 mittee on Natural Resources of the House of
14 Representatives; and

15 (B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs,
16 the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and
17 Forestry, and the Committee on Energy and
18 Natural Resources of the Senate.

19 (2) The term “Secretary concerned” means—

20 (A) the Secretary of Agriculture with re-
21 spect to matters regarding the National Forest
22 System and the Department of Agriculture; and

1 (B) the Secretary of the Interior with re-
2 spect to matters regarding the National Park
3 System and the Department of the Interior.

○