

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4769

To direct the Secretary of Defense to carry out a pilot program to supplement the transition assistance program of the Department of Defense.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2021

Mr. KATKO (for himself, Ms. SHERRILL, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Mr. BAIRD, and Ms. SCHRIER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Defense to carry out a pilot program to supplement the transition assistance program of the Department of Defense.

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 “Onward to Opportunity
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PILOT GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPLEMENT THE**
2 **TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF THE**
3 **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.**

4 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense, in
5 consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall
6 carry out a pilot grant program under which the Secretary
7 of Defense provides enhanced support and funding to eligi-
8 ble entities to supplement TAP to provide job opportuni-
9 ties for industry recognized certifications, job placement
10 assistance, and related employment services directly to
11 covered individuals.

12 (b) **SERVICES.**—Under the pilot grant program, the
13 Secretary of Defense shall provide grants to eligible enti-
14 ties to provide to covered individuals the following services:

15 (1) Using an industry-validated screening tool,
16 assessments of prior education, work history, and
17 employment aspirations of covered individuals, to
18 tailor appropriate and employment services.

19 (2) Preparation for civilian employment
20 through services like mock interviews and salary ne-
21 gotiations, training on professional networking plat-
22 forms, and company research.

23 (3) Several industry-specific learning path-
24 ways—

25 (A) with entry-level, mid-level and senior
26 versions;

1 (B) in fields such as project management,
2 cybersecurity, and information technology;

3 (C) in which each covered individual works
4 with an academic advisor to choose a career
5 pathway and navigate coursework during the
6 training process; and

7 (D) in which each covered individual can
8 earn industry-recognized credentials and certifi-
9 cations, at no charge to the covered individual.

10 (4) Job placement services.

11 (c) PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION
12 MODEL.—The pilot grant program shall follow existing
13 economic opportunity program models that combine indus-
14 try-recognized certification training, furnished by profes-
15 sionals, with online learning staff.

16 (d) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the program,
17 the Secretary of Defense shall seek to consult with private
18 entities to assess the best economic opportunity program
19 models, including existing economic opportunity models
20 furnished through public-private partnerships.

21 (e) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant
22 under the pilot grant program, an entity shall—

23 (1) follow a job training and placement model;

24 (2) have rigorous program evaluation practices;

1 (3) have established partnerships with entities
2 (such as employers, governmental agencies, and non-
3 profit entities) to provide services described in sub-
4 section (b);

5 (4) have online training capability to reach
6 rural veterans, reduce costs, and comply with new
7 conditions forced by COVID-19; and

8 (5) have a well-developed practice of program
9 measurement and evaluation that evinces program
10 performance and efficiency, with data that is high
11 quality and shareable with partner entities.

12 (f) COORDINATION WITH FEDERAL ENTITIES.—A
13 grantee shall coordinate with Federal entities, including—

14 (1) the Office of Transition and Economic De-
15 velopment of the Department of Veterans Affairs;
16 and

17 (2) the Office of Veteran Employment and
18 Transition Services of the Department of Labor.

19 (g) METRICS AND EVALUATION.—Performance out-
20 comes shall be verifiable using a third-party auditing
21 method and include the following:

22 (1) The number of covered individuals who re-
23 ceive and complete skills training.

24 (2) The number of covered individuals who se-
25 cure employment.

1 (3) The retention rate for covered individuals
2 described in paragraph (2).

3 (4) Median salary of covered individuals de-
4 scribed in paragraph (2).

5 (h) SITE LOCATIONS.—The Secretary of Defense
6 shall select five military installations in the United States
7 where existing models are successful.

8 (i) ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE EXPANSION.—A
9 grantee shall assess the feasibility of expanding the cur-
10 rent offering of virtual training and career placement serv-
11 ices to members of the reserve components of the Armed
12 Forces and covered individuals outside the United States.

13 (j) DURATION.—The pilot grant program shall termi-
14 nate on September 30, 2025.

15 (k) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the ter-
16 mination of the pilot grant program, the Secretary of De-
17 fense shall submit to the congressional defense committees
18 a report that includes—

19 (1) a description of the pilot grant program, in-
20 cluding a description of specific activities carried out
21 under this section; and

22 (2) the metrics and evaluations used to assess
23 the effectiveness of the pilot grant program.

24 (l) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

25 (1) The term “covered individual” means—

1 (A) a member of the Armed Forces partici-
2 pating in TAP; or

3 (B) a spouse of a member described in
4 subparagraph (A).

5 (2) The term “military installation” has the
6 meaning given such term in section 2801 of title 10,
7 United States Code.

8 (3) The term “TAP” means the transition as-
9 sistance program of the Department of Defense
10 under sections 1142 and 1144 of title 10, United
11 States Code.

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