

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6833

To provide Peace Corps volunteers and trainees whose service was terminated as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic with health insurance, an expedited redeployment process, and domestic service opportunities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 12, 2020

Mr. PHILLIPS (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. WEXTON, Mr. CASE, Mr. SIRES, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. CONNOLLY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, 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 provide Peace Corps volunteers and trainees whose service was terminated as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic with health insurance, an expedited redeployment process, and domestic service opportunities, and for other purposes.

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 “Utilizing and Sup-
5 porting Evacuated Peace Corps Volunteers Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. HEALTH INSURANCE CONTINUATION FOR PEACE**
2 **CORPS VOLUNTEERS.**

3 Section 5(e) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C.
4 2504(e)) is amended—

5 (1) by striking “Volunteers shall receive such
6 health care” and inserting the following:

7 “(1) Volunteers shall receive such health care”;
8 and

9 (2) by adding at the end the following new
10 paragraphs:

11 “(2) Volunteers whose periods of service were
12 subject to early termination as a result of the
13 COVID–19 public health emergency declared under
14 section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42
15 U.S.C. 247d), and applicants for enrollment de-
16 scribed in section 8(a) whose training prior to enroll-
17 ment was subject to early termination as a result of
18 such public health emergency, shall receive—

19 “(A) 2 months of health insurance upon
20 their return to the United States; and

21 “(B) an opportunity to extend such health
22 insurance, at the expense of such volunteer or
23 applicant for enrollment, until the last day of
24 the last week for which such volunteer or appli-
25 cant for enrollment is eligible for payments

1 under section 2102 of the CARES Act (Public
2 Law 116–136).

3 “(3) Not later than 30 days prior to the date
4 on which the period of service of a volunteer shall
5 terminate, the Director of the Peace Corps, in con-
6 sultation with the Secretary of Health and Human
7 Services, shall provide general guidance to such vol-
8 unteer on options for health care after termination
9 other than health care provided by the Peace Corps,
10 including—

11 “(A) on the application process and eligi-
12 bility requirements for medical assistance under
13 State plans under title XIX of the Social Secu-
14 rity Act (or waivers of State plans);

15 “(B) on the qualified health plans (as de-
16 fined in section 1301(a) of the Patient Protec-
17 tion and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C.
18 18021(a))) offered through an Exchange estab-
19 lished under title I of such Act, including on
20 the enrollment periods for enrolling in such
21 plans; and

22 “(C) in the case such volunteer is 25 years
23 of age or younger, that such volunteer may be
24 eligible to enroll as a dependent child in a
25 group health plan or health insurance coverage

1 in which the parent of such volunteer is enrolled
2 if such plan or coverage offers such dependent
3 coverage.”.

4 **SEC. 3. EXPEDITED HIRING FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUN-**
5 **TEERS.**

6 (a) NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY HIRING STA-
7 TUS.—

8 (1) DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION.—Not
9 later than 30 days after the date of enactment of
10 this Act, and annually thereafter, the Director of the
11 Office of Personnel Management, in coordination
12 with the Director of the Peace Corps, shall prepare
13 and distribute information to each Federal depart-
14 ment and agency in the executive branch regarding
15 the noncompetitive appointment eligibility available
16 to Peace Corps volunteers for up to 3 years under
17 Executive Order 11103 (22 U.S.C. 2504 note; relat-
18 ing to Providing for the Appointment of Former
19 Peace Corps volunteers to the Civilian Career Serv-
20 ices), as amended by Executive Order 12107 (44
21 Fed. Reg. 1055; relating to the Civil Service Com-
22 mission and Labor-Management in the Federal Serv-
23 ice), including the qualifications for such eligibility.

24 (2) EXPEDITED PROCESS.—Each Federal de-
25 partment and agency in the executive branch facing

1 critical hiring needs as a result of the COVID–19
2 pandemic or that have unfilled noncompetitive posi-
3 tions shall establish a process by which staff with
4 hiring authority receive the information described in
5 paragraph (1) from the Office of Personnel Manage-
6 ment about the expedited process for hiring such in-
7 dividuals who meet the minimum qualifications of a
8 vacant position.

9 (b) CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY
10 SERVICE.—The Chief Executive Officer of the Corpora-
11 tion for National and Community Service, in coordination
12 with the Director of the Peace Corps, shall establish an
13 expedited process by which Peace Corps volunteers and
14 trainees evacuated due to the COVID–19 public health
15 emergency can participate in domestic service opportuni-
16 ties through AmeriCorps, FEMA Corps, or affiliated pro-
17 grams to help address the COVID–19 pandemic.

18 (c) FOREIGN SERVICE.—Section 301(c) of the For-
19 eign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3941(c)) is amended
20 to read as follows:

21 “(c)(1) The fact that an applicant for appointment
22 as a Foreign Service officer candidate is a veteran or dis-
23 abled veteran shall be considered an affirmative factor in
24 making such appointments.

1 “(2) The fact that an applicant for appointment as
2 a Foreign Service officer candidate is a returned Peace
3 Corps volunteer shall be considered an affirmative factor
4 in making such appointments. The value accorded the af-
5 firmative factor under this paragraph shall be significant,
6 but shall be less than the affirmative factor provided to
7 individuals who qualify under paragraph (1).

8 “(3) In this subsection:

9 “(A) The term ‘returned Peace Corps volunteer’
10 means an individual who has completed—

11 “(i) a full term of service as a volunteer
12 under the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et
13 seq.); or

14 “(ii) satisfactory service as a Peace Corps
15 volunteer (as defined by the Director of the
16 Peace Corps).

17 “(B) The term ‘veteran or disabled veteran’
18 means an individual who is preference eligible (as
19 defined in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of section
20 2108(3) of title 5, United States Code).”.

21 **SEC. 4. RESUMPTION OF PEACE CORPS OPERATIONS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the
23 Director of the Peace Corps determines, as a result of the
24 cessation of the COVID–19 pandemic, that it is safe to
25 resume Peace Corps global operations, the Director shall

1 seek to resume, to the fullest extent possible, all of its pro-
2 grams in every country in which it operated immediately
3 before the March 15, 2020, suspensions of all Peace Corps
4 volunteer activities.

5 (b) REPORT ON RESTART OF PEACE CORPS OPER-
6 ATIONS FOLLOWING END OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMER-
7 GENCY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enact-
8 ment of this Act, the Director of the Peace Corps shall
9 submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations
10 of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
11 the House of Representatives that describes the efforts of
12 the Peace Corps to—

13 (1) offer reenrollment to each Peace Corps vol-
14 unteer and trainee whose service ended suddenly on
15 March 15, 2020 (or earlier, in the case of volunteers
16 who were serving China and Mongolia), due to the
17 COVID–19 public health emergency;

18 (2) obtain approval from countries, as appro-
19 priate, to return reenrolled volunteers and trainees
20 to their previous assignments or countries of service;

21 (3) provide additional measures necessary for
22 the safety and health of volunteers and trainees and
23 develop contingency plans in the event overseas oper-
24 ations are disrupted by future COVID–19 outbreaks;

1 (4) develop and maintain a robust volunteer co-
2 hort; and

3 (5) identify the anticipated additional appro-
4 priations or new statutory authorities that would be
5 necessary to achieve the goal of safely redeploying
6 7,300 Peace Corps volunteers during the 1-year pe-
7 riod beginning on the date on which Peace Corps op-
8 erations resume.

9 (c) EXPEDITED REENROLLMENT PROCESS.—The Di-
10 rector of the Peace Corps shall establish an expedited
11 process for the reenrollment of former Peace Corps volun-
12 teers and trainees whose service was interrupted as a re-
13 sult of the COVID–19 pandemic, including—

14 (1) streamlining, to the fullest extent prac-
15 ticable, all application requirements for the reenroll-
16 ment of such volunteers and trainees during the 2-
17 year period beginning on March 15, 2020;

18 (2) expediting the medical clearance for such
19 volunteers and trainees to facilitate reenrollment;

20 (3) starting on the date on which such a volun-
21 teer or trainee reenrolls, providing such volunteer
22 and trainee with the compensation, allowances, bene-
23 fits, and other terms and conditions of service to
24 which such volunteer or trainee is entitled under the
25 Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.); and

1 (4) subject to the discretion of the Director of
2 the Peace Corps, affording evacuated volunteers and
3 trainees, to the fullest extent possible, the oppor-
4 tunity to return to their previous country of service
5 and resume work in the project area in which they
6 had been serving prior to the evacuation due to the
7 COVID–19 public health emergency.

8 (d) REENROLL DEFINED.—In this section, the term
9 “reenroll” means a Peace Corps volunteer or trainee that
10 was evacuated due to the COVID–19 public health emer-
11 gency resuming service in the Peace Corps for a length
12 of time determined by the Director of the Peace Corps.

13 **SEC. 5. USE OF OFFICIAL SEAL, EMBLEM, AND NAME OF**
14 **THE PEACE CORPS.**

15 Section 19(b) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C.
16 2518(b)) is amended—

17 (1) in paragraph (1), by inserting after “under
18 this chapter” the following: “, except that the offi-
19 cial seal or emblem and the name ‘Peace Corps’ may
20 be used on any death announcement, gravestone,
21 plaque, or other grave marker of any person who
22 served as a volunteer or as an officer or employee
23 of the Peace Corps under such rules as may be pre-
24 scribed by the Director”; and

1 (2) in paragraph (2), by inserting “or in ac-
2 cordance with the exception specified in paragraph
3 (1),” after “under this chapter,”.

4 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

5 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
6 this Act and section 5(e)(2) of the Peace Corps Act, as
7 added by section 2, such sums as may be necessary for
8 each of the fiscal years 2020 through 2022.

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