

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8705

To strengthen United States leadership through the recruitment and hiring of veterans of the United States Armed Forces to civil service positions, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 12, 2022

Ms. HERRELL (for herself, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mrs. FLORES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Oversight and Reform, 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 strengthen United States leadership through the recruitment and hiring of veterans of the United States Armed Forces to civil service positions, 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 “Veteran Recruitment
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENHANCEMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF STATE RE-**
2 **CRUITMENT AND HIRING OF VETERANS.**

3 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date
4 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall,
5 after consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Vet-
6 erans Affairs, submit a report to the President providing
7 a detailed and comprehensive plan for prioritizing the re-
8 cruitment and hiring of veterans into covered positions.
9 Such plan shall, subject to presidential modification and
10 to be fully implemented not later than one year after the
11 date the plan is submitted to the President, accomplish
12 the following:

13 (1) Ensure that veterans receive priority re-
14 cruitment and retention for covered positions, in-
15 cluding through implementation of military rank
16 equivalency for at least mid-level ranks within the
17 Foreign Service.

18 (2) Identify and eliminate explicit and implicit
19 barriers in the Department’s recruitment and hiring
20 practices that, intentionally or otherwise, prevent
21 veterans from the obtaining covered positions, in-
22 cluding barriers in existing digital and non-digital
23 recruitment materials.

24 (3) Identify and adjust Foreign Service training
25 and management standards to align with those of
26 other Federal defense, intelligence, and security

1 agencies, including implementation of rigorous and
2 selective training courses for newly hired recruits.

3 (4) Identify and initiate specific steps that the
4 Department will take to ensure that physically dis-
5 abled veterans have equal access to covered posi-
6 tions.

7 (b) HIRING.—Not later than 90 days after the date
8 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall
9 initiate and complete the following steps to prioritize the
10 hiring of veterans to covered positions:

11 (1) Expand nationwide access to the Foreign
12 Service oral assessment job interview, including
13 through proctored video-conferencing from military
14 facilities.

15 (2) Direct the Director General of the Foreign
16 Service to expand outreach and recruitment jurisdic-
17 tion and efforts to United States Armed Forces
18 bases and other facilities in the vicinities of their re-
19 spective colleges and universities of residence, in-
20 cluding through the use of Diplomats in Residence.

21 (3) Direct the Department of State's Under
22 Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries to coordinate
23 with relevant Department of Defense leadership and
24 personnel to develop outreach and recruitment pro-
25 grams, which would be tailored to duty stations, that

1 would communicate with active-duty United States
2 Armed Forces personnel who are in the process of
3 honorably separating from military service about
4 covered positions.

5 (4) Expand eligibility of the existing Veterans
6 Innovation Partnership Fellowship in order to boost
7 access of veterans to such Fellowship, including by,
8 at a minimum, eliminating the master's degree
9 threshold requirement for access to the fellowship.

10 (5) Establish at least one new academic fellow-
11 ship for veterans, to be modeled on the Department
12 of State's Rangel and Pickering Fellowships, not
13 later than October 1, 2022.

14 **SEC. 3. ENHANCEMENT OF U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL ME-**
15 **DIA'S RECRUITMENT AND HIRING OF VET-**
16 **ERANS.**

17 Not later than 90 days after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act, the Chief Executive Officer of the U.S.
19 Agency for Global Media shall, after consultation with the
20 Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs, submit a re-
21 port to the President providing a detailed and comprehen-
22 sive plan for prioritizing the Agency's recruitment and hir-
23 ing efforts of veterans into positions at the Agency, includ-
24 ing leadership, management, policy, and broadcasting po-
25 sitions. Such plan shall, subject to presidential modifica-

1 tion and to be fully implemented not later than one year
2 after the date the plan is submitted to the President, ac-
3 complish the following:

4 (1) Ensure that veterans receive priority re-
5 cruitment for Agency positions, including leadership,
6 management, policy, and broadcasting positions.

7 (2) Evaluate explicit and implicit barriers in
8 Agency recruitment and hiring practices that, inten-
9 tionally or otherwise, prevent veterans from obtain-
10 ing positions with in the Agency, including barriers
11 in existing digital and non-digital recruitment mate-
12 rials.

13 (3) Identify specific steps that the Agency will
14 take to ensure that physically disable veterans have
15 equal access to Agency positions.

16 (4) Recommend redeployment or realignment of
17 discretionary Agency monetary and personal re-
18 sources to support all of the above efforts.

19 **SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT AND**
20 **IMPLEMENTATION OF SEPARATION MEMO-**
21 **RANDA OF UNDERSTANDING WITH FEDERAL**
22 **AGENCIES.**

23 Not later than 90 days after the date of the enact-
24 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall—

1 (1) in any circumstance where the Department
2 of Defense has an memorandum of understanding to
3 assist active-duty United States Armed Forces per-
4 sonnel who are in the process of honorably sepa-
5 rating from military service (in this section defined
6 as a “separation MOU”) with a Federal agency, re-
7 assess and, where necessary, recommend modifica-
8 tions to the separation MOU to enhance recruitment
9 efforts of such personnel by that agency; and

10 (2) in any circumstance where the Department
11 does not have an existing separation MOU with a
12 Federal agency, at a minimum initiate a separation
13 MOU to enhance recruitment efforts of such per-
14 sonnel by that agency.

15 **SEC. 5. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ELIMI-**
16 **NATION OF VETERANS PREFERENCE WAIV-**
17 **ERS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
19 sion of law, beginning on the date of enactment of this
20 Act and until the date guidance is issued under subsection
21 (b), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management
22 may not grant any veteran preference waiver under section
23 3312 of title 5, United States Code.

24 (b) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 30 days after the
25 date of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall issue

1 new guidance providing updated criteria for the Office’s
2 granting of Federal agency, board, or commission veteran
3 preference waiver requests.

4 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act—

6 (1) the term “civil service” has the meaning
7 given that term in section 2101 of title 5, United
8 States Code;

9 (2) the term “covered positions” means civil
10 service positions within the Department of State, in-
11 cluding Foreign Service positions and leadership,
12 management, and policy positions; and

13 (3) the term “veteran” has the meaning given
14 that term in section 101 of title 38, United States
15 Code.

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