

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1989

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a high technology education pilot program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 6, 2017

Mr. MCCARTHY (for himself, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. HURD, Mr. PAULSEN, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. YODER, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a high technology education pilot program.

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 Employment
5 Through Technology Education Courses Act” or the
6 “VET TEC Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HIGH TECH-**
2 **NOLOGY PILOT PROGRAM.**

3 (a) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
4 fairs shall carry out a pilot program under which the Sec-
5 retary shall provide eligible veterans with the opportunity
6 to enroll in high technology programs of education.

7 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—For purposes of the pilot program
8 under this section, an eligible veteran is a veteran who
9 is entitled to educational assistance under the laws admin-
10 istered by the Secretary.

11 (c) CONTRACTS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of carrying out
13 subsection (a), by not later than 180 days after the
14 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
15 shall seek to enter into contracts with multiple quali-
16 fied providers of high technology programs of edu-
17 cation for the provision of such programs to eligible
18 veterans under the pilot program.

19 (2) PAYMENT OF CONTRACTORS.—A contract
20 under this subsection shall provide that the Sec-
21 retary shall pay to a provider—

22 (A) 25 percent of the cost of providing the
23 program of education upon the enrollment of an
24 eligible veteran in the program;

25 (B) 25 percent of such cost upon the com-
26 pletion of the program by the veteran; and

1 (C) 50 percent of such cost upon the em-
2 ployment of the veteran following completion of
3 the program.

4 (3) QUALIFIED PROVIDERS.—For purposes of
5 the pilot program, a provider of a high technology
6 program of education is qualified if the provider has
7 been operational for at least two years.

8 (4) TUITION REIMBURSEMENT.—In entering
9 into contracts to carry out the pilot program, the
10 Secretary shall give preference to a qualified pro-
11 vider that offers tuition reimbursement for any stu-
12 dent who—

13 (A) completes a program of education of-
14 fered by the provider; and

15 (B) does not find full-time meaningful em-
16 ployment within the 180-day period beginning
17 on the date the student completes the program.

18 (d) HOUSING STIPEND.—The Secretary shall pay to
19 each eligible veteran who is enrolled in a high technology
20 program of education under the pilot program on a full-
21 time basis a monthly housing stipend equal to the prod-
22 uct—

23 (1) of—

24 (A) in the case of a veteran pursuing resi-
25 dent training, the monthly amount of the basic

allowance for housing payable under section 403 of title 37, United States Code, for a member with dependents in pay grade E-5 residing in the military housing area that encompasses all or the majority portion of the ZIP code area in which is located the institution at which the individual is enrolled; or

(B) in the case of a veteran pursuing a program of education through distance learning, a monthly amount equal to 50 percent of the amount payable under subparagraph (A), multiplied by

(2) the lesser of—

(A) 1.0; or

(B) the number of course hours borne by the individual in pursuit of the program of education involved, divided by the minimum number of course hours required for full-time pursuit of such program of education, rounded to the nearest multiple of 10.

(e) HIGH TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM OF EDUCATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term “high technology program of education” means a program of education that—

1 (1) is offered by an entity other than an institu-
2 tion of higher learning;

3 (2) does not lead to a degree; and

4 (3) provides instruction in computer program-
5 ming, computer software, media application, data
6 processing, or information sciences.

7 (f) REPORTS.—

8 (1) SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Not
9 later than one year after the date of the enactment
10 of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary
11 shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot pro-
12 gram under this section.

13 (2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—

14 (A) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than
15 three years after the date on which the Sec-
16 retary first enters into a contract under this
17 section, the Comptroller General of the United
18 States shall submit to Congress a report con-
19 taining the results of the interim assessment of
20 the Comptroller General. Such report shall in-
21 clude the recommendations of the Comptroller
22 General for improving the pilot program and an
23 assessment of each of the following:

24 (i) The technology experience of the
25 directors and instructors of the providers

1 of high technology programs of education
2 under the pilot program.

3 (ii) Whether the providers cooperated
4 with the technology industry to create the
5 curriculum for the program of education.

6 (iii) Whether the providers use an
7 open source curriculum for the program of
8 education.

9 (iv) The admittance rate into the pilot
10 program.

11 (v) The job placement rate for vet-
12 erans who completed a program of edu-
13 cation under the pilot program.

14 (vi) The average salary of veterans
15 who completed a program of education
16 under the pilot program and were subse-
17 quently employed.

18 (vii) The average age of veterans who
19 participated in the pilot program.

20 (B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than five
21 years after the date on which the Secretary first
22 enters into a contract under this section, the
23 Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a
24 final report on the pilot program. Such report
25 shall include the recommendation of the Comp-

1 troller General with respect to whether the pro-
2 gram should be extended and an assessment of
3 each of the following:

4 (i) Each item described in clauses (i)
5 through (vii) of subparagraph (A).

6 (ii) The percentage of veterans who
7 completed a program of education under
8 the pilot program who were subsequently
9 employed for a period of six months or
10 longer.

11 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
12 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans
13 Affairs \$15,000,000 for each fiscal year during which the
14 Secretary carries out a pilot program under this section.

15 (h) TERMINATION.—The authority to carry out a
16 pilot program under this section shall terminate on the
17 date that is five years after the date on which the Sec-
18 retary first enters into a contract under this section.

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