

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2326

To amend the Social Security Act, to amend the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 15, 2019

Mr. LEVIN of California (for himself, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. CISNEROS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, and Mrs. LEE of Nevada) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Ways and Means, 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 amend the Social Security Act, to amend the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012, and to direct the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to take certain actions to improve transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces who separate, retire, or are discharged from the Armed Forces, 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 “Navy SEAL Chief
 5 Petty Officer William ‘Bill’ Mulder (Ret.) Transition Im-
 6 provement Act of 2019”.

7 **SEC. 2. TAP DEFINED.**

8 In this Act, the term “TAP” means the Transition
 9 Assistance Program under sections 1142 and 1144 of title
 10 10, United States Code.

11 **SEC. 3. ACCESS FOR THE SECRETARIES OF LABOR AND**
 12 **VETERANS AFFAIRS TO THE FEDERAL DIREC-**
 13 **TORY OF NEW HIRES.**

14 Section 453A(h) of the Social Security Act (42
 15 U.S.C. 653a(h)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 16 lowing new paragraph:

17 “(4) VETERAN EMPLOYMENT.—The Secretaries
 18 of Labor and of Veterans Affairs shall have access
 19 to information reported by employers pursuant to
 20 subsection (b) of this section for purposes of track-
 21 ing employment of veterans.”.

22 **SEC. 4. PILOT PROGRAM FOR OFF-BASE TRANSITION**
 23 **TRAINING FOR VETERANS AND SPOUSES.**

24 (a) EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Subsection
 25 (a) of section 301 of the Dignified Burial and Other Vet-

1 erans’ Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (Public Law
2 112–260; 10 U.S.C. 1144 note) is amended—

3 (1) by striking “During the two-year period be-
4 ginning on the date of the enactment of this Act”
5 and inserting “During the five-year period beginning
6 on the date of the enactment of the Navy SEAL
7 Chief Petty Officer William ‘Bill’ Mulder (Ret.)
8 Transition Improvement Act of 2019”; and

9 (2) by striking “to assess the feasibility and ad-
10 visability of providing such program to eligible indi-
11 viduals at locations other than military installa-
12 tions”.

13 (b) LOCATIONS.—Subsection (c) of such section is
14 amended—

15 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “not less than
16 three and not more than five States” and inserting
17 “not fewer than 50 locations in States (as defined
18 in section 101 of title 38, United States Code)”; and

19 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “at least two”
20 and inserting “at least 20”.

21 (c) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Subsection (f) of such
22 section is repealed.

1 **SEC. 5. GRANTS FOR PROVISION OF TRANSITION ASSIST-**
2 **ANCE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES**
3 **AFTER SEPARATION, RETIREMENT, OR DIS-**
4 **CHARGE.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 shall make grants to eligible organizations for the provi-
7 sion of transition assistance to members of the Armed
8 Forces who are separated, retired, or discharged from the
9 Armed Forces, and spouses of such members.

10 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—The recipient of a grant under
11 this section shall use the grant to provide to members of
12 the Armed Forces and spouses described in subsection (a)
13 resume assistance, interview training, job recruitment
14 training, and related services leading directly to successful
15 transition, as determined by the Secretary.

16 (c) ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS.—To be eligible for a
17 grant under this section, an organization shall submit to
18 the Secretary an application containing such information
19 and assurances as the Secretary, in consultation with the
20 Secretary of Labor, may require.

21 (d) PRIORITY FOR HUBS OF SERVICES.—In making
22 grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority
23 to an organization that provides multiple forms of services
24 described in subsection (b).

25 (e) AMOUNT OF GRANT.—A grant under this section
26 shall be in an amount that does not exceed 50 percent

1 of the amount required by the organization to provide the
2 services described in subsection (b).

3 (f) DEADLINE.—The Secretary shall carry out this
4 section not later than six months after the effective date
5 of this Act.

6 (g) TERMINATION.—The authority to provide a grant
7 under this section shall terminate on the date that is five
8 years after the date on which the Secretary implements
9 the grant program under this section.

10 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
11 authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 to carry out
12 this section.

13 **SEC. 6. ONE-YEAR INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE EF-**
14 **ECTIVENESS OF TAP.**

15 (a) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 90
16 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
17 retary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the cov-
18 ered officials, shall enter into an agreement with an appro-
19 priate entity with experience in adult education to carry
20 out a one-year independent assessment of TAP, includ-
21 ing—

22 (1) the effectiveness of TAP for members of
23 each military department during the entire military
24 life cycle;

1 (2) the appropriateness of the TAP career read-
2 iness standards;

3 (3) a review of information that is provided to
4 the Department of Veterans Affairs under TAP, in-
5 cluding mental health data;

6 (4) whether TAP effectively addresses the chal-
7 lenges veterans face entering the civilian workforce
8 and in translating experience and skills from mili-
9 tary service to the job market;

10 (5) whether TAP effectively addresses the chal-
11 lenges faced by the families of veterans making the
12 transition to civilian life;

13 (6) appropriate metrics regarding TAP out-
14 comes for members of the Armed Forces one year
15 after separation, retirement, or discharge from the
16 Armed Forces;

17 (7) what the Secretary, in consultation with the
18 covered officials and veterans service organizations
19 determine to be successful outcomes for TAP;

20 (8) whether members of the Armed Forces
21 achieve successful outcomes for TAP, as determined
22 under paragraph (7);

23 (9) how the Secretary and the covered officials
24 provide feedback to each other regarding such out-
25 comes;

1 (10) recommendations for the Secretaries of the
2 military departments regarding how to improve out-
3 comes for members of the Armed Forces after sepa-
4 ration, retirement, and discharge; and

5 (11) other topics the Secretary and the covered
6 officials determine would aid members of the Armed
7 Forces as they transition to civilian life.

8 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the com-
9 pletion of the independent assessment under subsection
10 (a), the Secretary and the covered officials, shall submit
11 to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and
12 House of Representatives and the Committees on Armed
13 Services of the Senate and House of Representatives—

14 (1) the findings and recommendations (includ-
15 ing recommended legislation) of the independent as-
16 sessment prepared by the entity described in sub-
17 section (a); and

18 (2) responses of the Secretary and the covered
19 officials to the findings and recommendations de-
20 scribed in paragraph (1).

21 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 (1) The term “covered officials” is comprised
23 of—

24 (A) the Secretary of Defense;

25 (B) the Secretary of Labor;

1 (C) the Administrator of the Small Busi-
2 ness Administration; and

3 (D) the Secretaries of the military depart-
4 ments.

5 (2) The term “military department” has the
6 meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10,
7 United States Code.

8 **SEC. 7. LONGITUDINAL STUDY ON CHANGES TO TAP.**

9 (a) STUDY.—Not later than 90 days after the date
10 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans
11 Affairs, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense
12 and Labor and the Administrator of the Small Business
13 Administration, shall conduct a five-year longitudinal
14 study regarding TAP on three separate cohorts of mem-
15 bers of the Armed Forces who have separated from the
16 Armed Forces, including—

17 (1) a cohort that has attended TAP counseling
18 as implemented on the date of the enactment of this
19 Act;

20 (2) a cohort that attends TAP counseling after
21 the Secretaries of Defense and Labor implement
22 changes recommended in the report under section
23 6(b) of this Act; and

24 (3) a cohort that has not attended TAP coun-
25 seling.

1 (b) PROGRESS REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days
2 after the day that is one year after the date of the initi-
3 ation of the study under subsection (a) and annually
4 thereafter for the three subsequent years, the Secretaries
5 of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the Adminis-
6 trator of the Small Business Administration, shall submit
7 to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and
8 House of Representatives and the Committees on Armed
9 Services of the Senate and House of Representatives a
10 progress report of activities under the study during the
11 immediately preceding year.

12 (c) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after
13 the completion of the study under subsection (a), the Sec-
14 retaries of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Labor, and the
15 Administrator of the Small Business Administration, shall
16 submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Sen-
17 ate and House of Representatives and the Committees on
18 Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representa-
19 tives a report of final findings and recommendations based
20 on the study.

21 (d) ELEMENTS.—The final report under subsection
22 (c) shall include information regarding the following:

23 (1) The percentage of each cohort that received
24 unemployment benefits during the study.

1 (2) The numbers of months members of each
2 cohort were employed during the study.

3 (3) Annual starting and ending salaries of
4 members of each cohort who were employed during
5 the study.

6 (4) How many members of each cohort enrolled
7 in an institution of higher learning, as that term is
8 defined in section 3452(f) of title 38, United States
9 Code.

10 (5) The academic credit hours, degrees, and
11 certificates obtained by members of each cohort dur-
12 ing the study.

13 (6) The annual income of members of each co-
14 hort.

15 (7) The total household income of members of
16 each cohort.

17 (8) How many members of each cohort own
18 their principal residences.

19 (9) How many dependents that members of
20 each cohort have.

21 (10) The percentage of each cohort that
22 achieves a successful outcome for TAP, as deter-
23 mined under section 6(a)(7) of this Act.

- 1 (11) Other criteria the Secretaries and the Ad-
- 2 ministrator of the Small Business Administration
- 3 determine appropriate.

○