

Amendment 2826 —To consolidate duplicative federal veterans job training programs

The legislation creates a new mandatory federal program aimed at employing veterans. The legislation will essentially provide \$1 billion for the government to hire a slew of veterans for the next few years. However, the legislation does not address the significant overlap and duplication of existing federal job training programs for veterans at the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Labor, and in fact only adds to the existing duplication.

This amendment would require the Secretaries of the VA and the Department of Labor to work together to consolidate the existing duplicative job training programs and establish metrics for evaluating if federal efforts to train veterans for employment are effective in putting some of American's bravest back to work after their sacrifice for our country.

The New Veterans Job Corps Spends \$1 Billion to Hire Veterans, but Does Not Eliminate Duplicative Veterans Programs

The legislation grants broad authority to the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Agriculture Department, Commerce Department, Homeland Security, Interior Department, and the Army Corps of Engineers to hire veterans in jobs such in areas such as "conservation" and "first responders." The legislation gives the authority to the Secretary of the above agencies to either hire that veteran through the federal agency or to provide grants to state and local agencies so that they can hire veterans for other work.

The government already operates a number of veteran job training programs, which are designed to provide returning service members with the skills they need to find gainful employment in the private sector.

Further, there is a veterans hiring preference for nearly all federal jobs. If these existing federal efforts are failing, and there is a need for the government to simply hire veterans, these duplicative job training programs should be repealed.

Even more, this new veterans employment program should be forced to compete with the rest of the annual discretionary VA budget for funding. However, this legislation removes the need to set priorities for current and

future veterans spending by creating the program on the mandatory side of the federal ledger, which is not subject to the appropriations process, but spends out automatically and with little congressional oversight.

According to a 2011 GAO report, there are at least six job training programs that target veterans, five of which provide seven similar types of employment and training services. According to the VA, these six programs spent more than \$1.1 billion on employment and training services in FY 2009 and served roughly 823,000 participants in the most recent year in which data were available.

This amendment would require the secretaries of the VA and the department of labor to work together to consolidate the following six veterans' job training programs into one program at the VA.

Further, the amendment directs the Secretary of the VA to should establish metrics for measuring success of the program.

- Disabled Veterans Outreach Program
- Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project
- Local Veterans' Employment Representative Program
- Transition Assistance Program
- Veterans' Workforce Investment Program
- Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Veterans

Figure 5: Services Provided by Programs Targeting Veterans, Fiscal Year 2009

Program name	Employment counseling and assessment	General Equivalency Diploma assistance	Development of job opportunities	Job readiness skills training	Job referrals	Job reentry training	Job search or job placement activities	Occupational or vocational training	On-the-job training	Remedial academic, English language skills, or basic adult literacy	Work experience	Other
Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DOL)	●		○	○	○	○				○		● ^a
Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project (DOL)	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○		
Local Veterans' Employment Representative Program (DOL)	○		●	○	●	○	●		○		○	● ^b
Transition Assistance Program (DOL)	○			●		●						
Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (DOL)	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○		
Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Veterans (VA)	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		● ^{a,b}

- Primary services
- Secondary services

Source: GAO survey of agency officials.

^aOther services included developing individual employment plans, conducting outreach activities, and coordinating supportive services.

^bOther services included conducting outreach to employers to advocate for the hiring of veterans.