

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3399

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain clarifications and improvements in the academic and vocational counseling programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 30, 2013

Ms. CHU (for herself, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. COOK, and Mr. DENHAM) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain clarifications and improvements in the academic and vocational counseling programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

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 “Veterans Education
5 Counseling Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE PRO-**
2 **VISION OF ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL**
3 **COUNSELING TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS BY**
4 **THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**

5 (a) ACADEMIC COUNSELING AND EDUCATIONAL IN-
6 FORMATION SERVICE.—Section 3697A of title 38, United
7 States Code, is amended—

8 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “counseling
9 services, including” and inserting “a program of
10 counseling services, to be known as the ‘Academic
11 Counseling and Educational Information Service’.
12 Such counseling services shall include”;

13 (2) in subsection (e), by adding at the end the
14 following: “In making such information available
15 under this subsection, the Secretary shall make
16 available information about the definitions, eligibility
17 requirements, and services provided under this sec-
18 tion and information about how the counseling serv-
19 ices provided under this section differ from the serv-
20 ices provided under section 3104(a)(2) of this title.
21 At a minimum, the Secretary shall make such infor-
22 mation available to an individual described in sub-
23 section (b) before the individual applies for edu-
24 cational assistance described in subsection (b)(1).”;
25 and

1 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
2 sections:

3 “(f) The Secretary shall maintain an Internet website
4 on which—

5 “(1) a person is able to request counseling serv-
6 ices under this section in such a manner that clearly
7 distinguishes such services from counseling services
8 available under section 3104(a)(2) of this title; and

9 “(2) an individual receiving counseling services
10 under this section is able to receive such services
11 using a web-based counseling tool and to confiden-
12 tially access aptitude tests.

13 “(g) The primary goal of the counseling services pro-
14 vided under this section is to provide to individuals with
15 assistance in—

16 “(1) pursuing postsecondary education and
17 training opportunities;

18 “(2) obtaining information regarding available
19 postsecondary educational and training opportuni-
20 ties;

21 “(3) obtaining career-related information and
22 data on available postsecondary educational and
23 training opportunities;

24 “(4) selecting a program of education or train-
25 ing; and

1 “(5) addressing other needs relating to edu-
2 cation.

3 “(h) Services provided under this section are different
4 from the services provided under section 3104(a)(2) of
5 this title and do not involve rehabilitation services.”.

6 (b) VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELING.—

7 (1) ELECTRONIC APPLICATION.—Section 3102
8 of such title is amended by adding at the end the
9 following new paragraph:

10 “(c) ELECTRONIC APPLICATION FOR BENEFITS.—
11 The Secretary shall maintain an Internet website on which
12 a person is able to submit an application for benefits
13 under this chapter.”.

14 (2) CLARIFICATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY.—

15 Veterans are only eligible for counseling services pro-
16 vided under section 3104(a)(2) of title 38, United
17 States Code, if they are entitled to a rehabilitation
18 program under chapter 31 of such title. Not all vet-
19 erans who are transitioning from service on active
20 duty in the Armed Forces are eligible for such serv-
21 ices.

22 (3) GOAL OF PROGRAM.—The primary goal of
23 the counseling services provided under section
24 3104(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is to help

- 1 veterans eligible for such services to prepare for, ob-
- 2 tain, and retain employment.

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