

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3492

To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand educational assistance to veterans who pursue certain apprenticeship programs, to establish a pilot program for veterans to pursue certification programs in computer numerically controlled machining, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 27, 2017

Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. HULTGREN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Ms. NORTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to expand educational assistance to veterans who pursue certain apprenticeship programs, to establish a pilot program for veterans to pursue certification programs in computer numerically controlled machining, 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. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Apprenticeships can help veterans bridge
2 the gap between service in the Armed Forces and ci-
3 vilian employment by—

4 (A) receiving on-the-job training under the
5 direct supervision of a professional and class-
6 room instruction;

7 (B) implementing skills the veterans ac-
8 quired while in the Armed Forces;

9 (C) providing practical work experience to
10 the veterans; and

11 (D) forming professional connections to
12 fellow members of skilled occupations.

13 (2) According to the Employment and Training
14 Administration of the Department of Labor, in fiscal
15 year 2016—

16 (A) more than 21,000 apprenticeship pro-
17 grams across the United States are registered
18 with the Administration;

19 (B) approximately 1,700 new apprentice-
20 ship programs were established in the United
21 States;

22 (C) more than 206,000 individuals across
23 the United States entered an apprenticeship
24 program;

1 (D) more than 505,000 apprentices sought
2 to acquire skills to earn the wages necessary for
3 financial security; and

4 (E) approximately 49,000 individuals grad-
5 uated from apprenticeship programs.

6 **SEC. 2. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS WHO**
7 **PURSUE CERTAIN APPRENTICESHIP PRO-**
8 **GRAMS.**

9 Section 3313(g)(3) of title 38, United States Code,
10 is amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
11 paragraphs:

12 “(E) In the case of an individual pursuing
13 a program of apprenticeship (that is registered
14 with the Employment and Training Administra-
15 tion of the Department of Labor) on more than
16 a half-time but less than full-time basis, an an-
17 nual stipend for tuition and fees not to exceed
18 the lesser of—

19 “(i) the actual net cost for tuition and
20 fees for the program of apprenticeship
21 after the application of any waiver of, or
22 reduction in, tuition and fees; or

23 “(ii) 25 percent of the amount cal-
24 culated under subsection (c)(1)(A)(ii).

1 “(F) In the case of an individual pursuing
2 a program of apprenticeship (that is registered
3 with the Employment and Training Administra-
4 tion of the Department of Labor and for which
5 the individual provides proof of current reg-
6 istration to the Secretary) that is not sponsored
7 by the employer of the individual, an annual sti-
8 pend for tuition and fees not to exceed the less-
9 er of—

10 “(i) the actual net cost for tuition and
11 fees for the program of apprenticeship
12 after the application of any waiver of, or
13 reduction in, tuition and fees; or

14 “(ii) 25 percent of the amount cal-
15 culated under subsection (c)(1)(A)(ii).”.

16 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

17 It is the sense of Congress that apprenticeship pro-
18 grams that are not sponsored by employers of participants
19 in such programs should supply professional development
20 resources and interview training to the participants.

21 **SEC. 4. PILOT PROGRAM FOR VETERANS WHO PURSUE**
22 **COMPUTER NUMERICALLY CONTROLLED MA-**
23 **CHINING CERTIFICATIONS.**

24 (a) **PILOT PROGRAM.**—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
25 fairs shall carry out a pilot program under which the Sec-

1 retary shall provide eligible veterans with the opportunity
2 to enroll in certification programs in computer numerically
3 controlled machining.

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

8 (c) CONTRACTS.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of carrying out
10 subsection (a), by not later than 180 days after the
11 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
12 shall seek to enter into contracts with multiple quali-
13 fied providers of certification programs in computer
14 numerically controlled machining for the provision of
15 such programs to eligible veterans under the pilot
16 program.

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

20 (A) 25 percent of the cost of providing the
21 certification program upon the enrollment of an
22 eligible veteran in the program;

23 (B) 25 percent of such cost upon the com-
24 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 certification pro-
6 gram in computer numerically controlled machining
7 is qualified if the provider has been operational for
8 at least two years.

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

14 (A) completes a certification program of-
15 fered by the provider; and

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

19 (d) HOUSING STIPEND.—The Secretary shall pay to
20 each eligible veteran who is enrolled in a certification pro-
21 gram in computer numerically controlled machining under
22 the pilot program on a full-time basis a monthly housing
23 stipend equal to the product of—

24 (1) in the case of—

1 (A) a veteran pursuing resident training,
2 the monthly amount of the basic allowance for
3 housing payable under section 403 of title 37,
4 United States Code, for a member with depend-
5 ents in pay grade E-5 who resides in the mili-
6 tary housing area that encompasses all or the
7 majority of the ZIP code area in which the
8 campus at which the veteran attends training or
9 classes is located; or

10 (B) a veteran pursuing a certification pro-
11 gram through distance learning, a monthly
12 amount equal to 50 percent of the amount pay-
13 able under subparagraph (A); and

14 (2) the lesser of—

15 (A) 1.0; or

16 (B) the number of course hours carried by
17 the individual in pursuit of the certification pro-
18 gram involved, divided by the minimum number
19 of course hours required for full-time pursuit of
20 such certification program, rounded to the
21 nearest tenth.

22 (e) CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IN COMPUTER NU-
23 MERICALLY CONTROLLED MACHINING DEFINED.—In this
24 section, the term “certification program in computer nu-

1 numerically controlled machining” means a training program
2 that—

3 (1) is offered by an entity—

4 (A) other than an institution of higher
5 learning; or

6 (B) that is a professional organization;

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

8 (3) leads to a National Institute for Metal-
9 working Skills credential or certification in computer
10 numerically controlled machining.

11 (f) REPORTS.—

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

17 (2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—

18 (A) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than
19 three years after the date on which the Sec-
20 retary first enters into a contract under this
21 section, the Comptroller General of the United
22 States shall submit to Congress a report con-
23 taining the results of the interim assessment of
24 the Comptroller General. Such report shall in-
25 clude the recommendations of the Comptroller

1 General for improving the pilot program and an
2 assessment of each of the following:

3 (i) The manufacturing and training
4 experience of the directors and instructors
5 of the providers of certification programs
6 in computer numerically controlled machin-
7 ing under the pilot program.

8 (ii) Whether the providers followed
9 training curricula commonly used in the
10 industry (including curricula from the Na-
11 tional Institute for Metalworking Skills)
12 for the certification programs.

13 (iii) Whether the providers use open
14 source curricula for the certification pro-
15 grams.

16 (iv) The admittance rate into the pilot
17 program.

18 (v) The job placement rate for vet-
19 erans who completed a certification pro-
20 gram under the pilot program.

21 (vi) The average salary of veterans
22 who completed a certification program
23 under the pilot program and were subse-
24 quently employed.

1 (vii) The average age of veterans who
2 participated in the pilot program.

3 (B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than five
4 years after the date on which the Secretary first
5 enters into a contract under this section, the
6 Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a
7 final report on the pilot program. Such report
8 shall include the recommendation of the Comp-
9 troller General with respect to whether the pro-
10 gram should be extended and an assessment of
11 each of the following:

12 (i) Each item described in clauses (i)
13 through (vii) of subparagraph (A).

14 (ii) The percentage of veterans who
15 completed a certification program under
16 the pilot program who were subsequently
17 employed for a period of six months or
18 longer.

19 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
20 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans
21 Affairs \$5,000,000 for each fiscal year during which the
22 Secretary carries out a pilot program under this section.

23 (h) TERMINATION.—The authority to carry out a
24 pilot program under this section shall terminate on the

1 date that is five years after the date on which the Sec-
2 retary first enters into a contract under this section.

3 **SEC. 5. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF THE CAREER**
4 **TECHNICAL TRAINING TRACK OF THE TRAN-**
5 **SITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

6 Not later than one year after the date of the enact-
7 ment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United
8 States shall conduct a review of the career technical train-
9 ing track of the Transition Assistance Program of the De-
10 partment of Veterans Affairs (specifically with regard to
11 the effectiveness of educating participants about appren-
12 ticeship opportunities) and submit to Congress a report
13 on the results of the review and any recommendations of
14 the Comptroller General for improving the program.

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