

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3056

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on the provision of outreach and support services to veterans pursuing higher education under the Post 9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 2, 2013

Mr. TAKANO (for himself and Ms. BROWNLEY of California) 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 pilot program on the provision of outreach and support services to veterans pursuing higher education under the Post 9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department 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 “Warriors’ Peer-Out-
5 reach Pilot Program Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PILOT PROGRAM ON THE PROVISION OF OUTREACH**
2 **AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO VETERANS PUR-**
3 **SUING HIGHER EDUCATION UNDER THE**
4 **POST 9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PRO-**
5 **GRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**
6 **AFFAIRS.**

7 (a) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
8 fairs shall carry out a three-year pilot program to provide
9 outreach and support services at institutions of higher
10 learning (as that term is defined in section 3452(f) of title
11 38, United States Code) that are designed to promote im-
12 proved higher-education outcomes and the successful use
13 of needed services for veterans using their entitlement to
14 educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United
15 States Code, to pursue a program of education leading to
16 a degree at the institution of higher learning.

17 (b) SELECTION OF INSTITUTIONS.—

18 (1) TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS.—The Secretary
19 shall select three institutions of higher learning at
20 which the Secretary shall carry out the pilot pro-
21 gram under this section, as follows:

22 (A) One four-year public university.

23 (B) One community college.

24 (C) One private, not-for-profit college.

1 (2) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible to
2 participate in the pilot program under this section,
3 an institution shall—

4 (A) provide office space, the capability for
5 veterans described in subsection (c)(1) to use
6 information technology equipment, and appro-
7 priate information-technology support services
8 for the individual who will provide peer-out-
9 reach and peer-support services at such institu-
10 tion; and

11 (B) cooperate with the Secretary in pro-
12 viding such data as the Secretary may require
13 to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot pro-
14 gram, as described in subsection (c)(3).

15 (3) PRIORITY FOR SELECTION.—In selecting in-
16 stitutions of higher learning for purposes of the pilot
17 program under this section, the Secretary shall give
18 priority to—

19 (A) institutions of higher learning with ex-
20 isting peer outreach programs for veteran stu-
21 dents; and

22 (B) institutions of higher learning located
23 in States with large student veteran popu-
24 lations, as determined by the Secretary.

1 (c) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the
2 pilot program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

3 (1) Provide peer-outreach and peer-support
4 services to veterans of Operation Enduring Free-
5 dom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New
6 Dawn who are students at an institution where the
7 Secretary carries out the pilot program, with par-
8 ticular emphasis on assisting individuals who may
9 have, or may be having, difficulty in adjusting to
10 such institution, or who may need services or sup-
11 ports that such institution is not equipped to pro-
12 vide, by employing veterans—

13 (A) who—

14 (i) are using their entitlement to edu-
15 cational assistance under chapter 33 of
16 title 38, United States Code, to pursue a
17 program of education leading to a degree
18 at the institution of higher learning; or

19 (ii) have used their entitlement to
20 educational assistance under such chapter
21 to complete a program of education and
22 graduate from such an institution during
23 the 18-month period preceding the date on
24 which the veteran is hired to perform serv-
25 ices under the pilot program; and

1 (B) who have served on active duty in a
2 theater of combat operations (with special con-
3 sideration given to veterans who have recovered
4 or are recovering from a mental health condi-
5 tion).

6 (2) Provide for training veterans employed as
7 described in paragraph (1).

8 (3) Develop requirements and measures for as-
9 sassing the impact and effectiveness of the services
10 provided under the pilot program, including—

11 (A) developing and disseminating an online
12 survey instrument (designed to establish base-
13 line data, including data on need for services)
14 to veterans attending the institutions of higher
15 education described in paragraph (1) of this
16 subsection;

17 (B) developing and disseminating (not ear-
18 lier than 18 months after the start of the pilot
19 program) a follow-up online survey instrument
20 (designed to gather data, including data to as-
21 sress engagement with peer-support, experience
22 accessing services, and adjustment to higher
23 education) other on the possible impact of the
24 program); and

25 (C) tabulating—

1 (i) the number of veterans who meet
2 on an individual basis with such peer;

3 (ii) the number of referrals such indi-
4 vidual makes; and

5 (iii) the outcome of such referrals.

6 (d) DURATION.— The authority of the Secretary to
7 provide services under the pilot program under this section
8 shall terminate on the later of the following dates:

9 (1) The date that is three years after the date
10 of the commencement of the pilot program.

11 (2) The date of the last day of the academic
12 year that ends not more than 180 days after the
13 date that is three years after the date of the com-
14 mencement of the pilot program.

15 (e) REPORT.—Not later than nine months after the
16 completion of the pilot program under this section, the
17 Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Af-
18 fairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives a
19 report on the pilot program. The report shall include the
20 following:

21 (1) A description of the implementation and op-
22 eration of the program.

23 (2) An evaluation of effectiveness of then peer-
24 outreach services provided under the program in—

1 (A) reducing the prevalence of veterans
2 failing to continue higher education pursuits
3 using their entitlement to educational assistance
4 under chapter 33 of title 38, United States
5 Code;

6 (B) improving other outcomes related to
7 higher education for veterans using such enti-
8 tlement; and

9 (C) the use by such veterans of needed be-
10 havioral health and other services.

11 (3) An analysis of the costs and benefits of the
12 program.

13 (4) The Secretary's recommendations, if any,
14 regarding an extension or expansion of the program.

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