

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2263

To encourage effective, voluntary private sector investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual Federal awards to private sector employers recognizing such investments, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 10, 2015

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To encourage effective, voluntary private sector investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual Federal awards to private sector employers recognizing such investments, 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 “Honoring Investments
5 in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans
6 Act of 2015” or the “HIRE Vets Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. HIRE VETS MEDALLION PROGRAM.**

2 (a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—Not later than 1 year
3 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
4 Labor shall establish, by rule, a HIRE Vets Medallion
5 Program to solicit voluntary information from employers
6 for purposes of recognizing, by means of an award to be
7 designated a “HIRE Vets Medallion Award”, verified ef-
8 forts by such employers—

9 (1) to recruit, employ, and retain veterans; and

10 (2) to provide community and charitable serv-
11 ices supporting the veteran community.

12 (b) APPLICATION PROCESS.—Beginning in the cal-
13 endar year following the calendar year in which the Sec-
14 retary establishes the program, the Secretary shall annu-
15 ally—

16 (1) solicit and accept voluntary applications
17 from employers in order to consider whether those
18 employers should receive a HIRE Vets Medallion
19 Award;

20 (2) review applications received in each calendar
21 year;

22 (3) notify the recipients of the awards; and

23 (4) at a time to coincide with the annual com-
24 memoration of Veterans Day—

25 (A) announce the names of such recipients;

1 (B) recognize such recipients through pub-
2 lication in the Federal Register; and

3 (C) issue to each such recipient a HIRE
4 Vets Medallion Award of the level determined
5 under section 3, in the form of a certificate, to
6 be designated a “HIRE Vets Medallion Certifi-
7 cate”, which shall state that the employer is en-
8 titled to publicly display such Award as desired.

9 (c) TIMING.—

10 (1) SOLICITATION PERIOD.—The Secretary
11 shall solicit applications not later than January 31st
12 of each calendar year for the medallion awards to be
13 awarded in November of that calendar year.

14 (2) END OF ACCEPTANCE PERIOD.—The Sec-
15 retary shall stop accepting the applications not ear-
16 lier than April 30th of each calendar year for the
17 medallion awards to be awarded in November of that
18 calendar year.

19 (3) REVIEW PERIOD.—The Secretary shall fin-
20 ish reviewing the applications, as described in sec-
21 tion 3(a), not later than August 31st of each cal-
22 endar year for the medallion awards to be awarded
23 in November of that calendar year.

24 (4) DETERMINATIONS BY SECRETARY.—The
25 Secretary shall determine a list of employers to re-

1 ceive HIRE Vets Medallion Awards not later than
2 September 30th of each calendar year for the medal-
3 lion awards to be awarded in November of that cal-
4 endar year.

5 (5) NOTICE TO RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary
6 shall notify employers who will receive HIRE Vets
7 Medallion Awards not later than October 11th of
8 each calendar year for the medallion awards to be
9 awarded in November of that calendar year.

10 **SEC. 3. SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS.**

11 (a) APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, directly
13 or by contract, review all applications received in a
14 calendar year in accordance with section 2(c) to de-
15 termine whether an employer should receive a HIRE
16 Vets Medallion Award, and, if so, of what level.

17 (2) APPLICATION CONTENTS.—The Secretary
18 shall require that all applications provide informa-
19 tion on the programs and other efforts of applicant
20 employers during the calendar year previous to that
21 in which the medallion award is to be awarded, in-
22 cluding information concerning the number of em-
23 ployees of the applicant involved and activities gov-
24 erning the level of award for which the applicant is
25 eligible under subsection (b). The Secretary shall re-

1 quire that each application contain a certification,
2 signed by the senior executive responsible for em-
3 ployee hiring, that the employer has met the criteria
4 described in subsection (b) for a particular level of
5 medallion award.

6 (b) AWARDS.—

7 (1) LARGE EMPLOYERS.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall es-
9 tablish 3 levels of HIRE Vets Medallion Awards
10 to be awarded to employers employing 500 or
11 more employees, to be designated the “Bronze
12 HIRE Vets Medallion Award”, the “Silver
13 HIRE Vets Medallion Award”, and the “Gold
14 HIRE Vets Medallion Award”.

15 (B) BRONZE HIRE VETS MEDALLION
16 AWARD.—No employer shall be eligible to re-
17 ceive a Bronze HIRE Vets Medallion Award in
18 a given calendar year unless—

19 (i)(I) veterans constitute not less than
20 5 percent of all employees hired by such
21 employer during the previous calendar
22 year; or

23 (II) veterans constitute not less than
24 7 percent of the employer’s total work-
25 force;

1 (ii) such employer provides charitable
2 contributions to veteran support organiza-
3 tions;

4 (iii) such employer retains through
5 the end of that previous calendar year not
6 less than 75 percent of veteran employees
7 hired during the calendar year prior to the
8 previous calendar year (unless that prior
9 calendar year began more than 1 year be-
10 fore the first year in which the Secretary
11 solicited applications under section
12 2(b)(1)); and

13 (iv) such employer provides a targeted
14 training program for new veteran employ-
15 ees.

16 (C) SILVER HIRE VETS MEDALLION
17 AWARD.—No employer shall be eligible to re-
18 ceive a Silver HIRE Vets Medallion Award in
19 a given calendar year unless—

20 (i) such employer is eligible to receive
21 a Bronze HIRE Vets Medallion Award in
22 such year;

23 (ii)(I) veterans constitute not less
24 than 7 percent of all employees hired by

1 such employer during the previous cal-
2 endar year; or

3 (II) veterans constitute not less than
4 10 percent of the employer's total work-
5 force;

6 (iii) such employer has established an
7 employee veteran organization or resource
8 group to assist new veteran employees with
9 integration, including providing coaching
10 and mentoring; and

11 (iv) such employer has established a
12 program to enhance the leadership skills of
13 veteran employees, to promote their up-
14 ward mobility during their employment.

15 (D) GOLD HIRE VETS MEDALLION
16 AWARD.—No employer shall be eligible to re-
17 ceive a Gold HIRE Vets Medallion Award in a
18 given calendar year unless—

19 (i) such employer is eligible to receive
20 a Silver HIRE Vets Medallion Award in
21 such year;

22 (ii)(I) veterans constitute not less
23 than 10 percent of all employees hired by
24 such employer during the previous cal-
25 endar year; or

1 (II) veterans constitute not less than
2 15 percent of the employers total work-
3 force;

4 (iii) such employer retains through
5 the end of that previous calendar year not
6 less than 85 percent of veteran employees
7 hired during the calendar year prior to the
8 previous calendar year (unless that prior
9 calendar year began more than 1 year be-
10 fore the first year in which the Secretary
11 solicited applications under section
12 2(b)(1));

13 (iv) such employer employs a dedi-
14 cated human resources professional to sup-
15 port hiring and retention of veteran em-
16 ployees, including undertaking efforts fo-
17 cused on veteran hiring and training;

18 (v) such employer provides each of its
19 employees, who is a member of a reserve
20 component of the Armed Forces serving on
21 active duty, with compensation sufficient,
22 in combination with the employee's basic
23 pay in connection with service on active
24 duty in the Armed Forces, to achieve a
25 combined level of income commensurate

1 with the employee's compensation prior to
2 undertaking active duty; and

3 (vi) such employer has established a
4 tuition assistance program to support vet-
5 eran employees' attendance at an institu-
6 tion of higher education during the term of
7 their employment.

8 (E) EXEMPTION FOR SMALLER EMPLOY-
9 ERS.—An employer shall be deemed to meet the
10 requirements of subparagraph (D)(iv) if such
11 employer—

12 (i) employs 5,000 or fewer employees;

13 and

14 (ii) employs at least one human re-
15 sources professional whose primary work
16 duties include those described under sub-
17 paragraph (D)(iv).

18 (F) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA.—The Sec-
19 retary may provide, by rule, additional criteria
20 with which to determine qualifications for re-
21 ceipt of each level of HIRE Vets Medallion
22 Award. If the Secretary provides for the addi-
23 tional criteria, the employer shall include infor-
24 mation on the criteria in the application de-
25 scribed in subsection (a)(2), and the Secretary

1 shall determine eligibility for such an award on
2 the basis of those criteria and the other criteria
3 specified in this paragraph.

4 (2) SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZE EMPLOYERS.—

5 The Secretary shall establish similar criteria for
6 Bronze, Silver, and Gold Hire Vets Medallion
7 Awards in order to recognize achievements in sup-
8 porting veterans by—

9 (A) employers with 50 or fewer employees;

10 and

11 (B) employers with more than 50 but
12 fewer than 500 employees.

13 (c) DESIGN BY SECRETARY.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as described in para-
15 graph (2), the Secretary shall establish the shape,
16 form, and design of each HIRE Vets Medallion
17 Award.

18 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The award shall be in
19 the form of a certificate. The award shall state the
20 year for which it is awarded.

21 **SEC. 4. DISPLAY OF AWARD.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The recipient of a HIRE Vets Me-
23 dallion Award may publicly display such medallion award
24 as desired.

1 (b) UNLAWFUL DISPLAY PROHIBITED.—It is unlaw-
2 ful for any employer to publicly display a HIRE Vets Me-
3 dallion Award if such employer did not receive such medal-
4 lion award through the HIRE Vets Medallion Program.

5 **SEC. 5. APPLICATION FEE AND FUNDING.**

6 (a) FEE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may assess a
7 reasonable fee on employers that apply for receipt of a
8 HIRE Vets Medallion Award.

9 (b) FUND ESTABLISHED.—There is established in
10 the Treasury of the United States a separate account for
11 the deposit of fees collected under subsection (a), to be
12 designated the “HIRE Vets Medallion Fund”.

13 (c) DEPOSIT.—The Secretary shall deposit any fees
14 collected pursuant to subsection (a) into the HIRE Vets
15 Medallion Fund.

16 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

17 (1) SOURCES OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

18 (A) FIRST 2 YEARS.—There are authorized
19 to be appropriated for the first 2 fiscal years in
20 which applications are to be solicited under sec-
21 tion 2(b) such sums as may be necessary to
22 carry out this Act in such fiscal years.

23 (B) YEARS FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS.—
24 Amounts in the HIRE Vets Medallion Fund
25 shall be available, to the extent provided in ap-

1 appropriations Acts, for each fiscal year following
2 a prior fiscal year in which fees are collected
3 under subsection (a).

4 (2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pur-
5 suant to paragraph (1) are authorized to remain
6 available until expended.

7 (3) USE.—Amounts in the Fund shall be avail-
8 able, as provided in appropriation Acts pursuant to
9 paragraph (1), for carrying out this Act.

10 **SEC. 6. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

11 (a) REPORTS.—Beginning not later than 2 years
12 after the date of the establishment of the HIRE Vets Me-
13 dallion Program under section 2(a), the Secretary shall
14 submit to Congress annual reports in January of each cal-
15 ender year on—

16 (1) the fees collected from applicants for HIRE
17 Vets Medallion Awards in the prior year and any
18 changes in fees to be proposed in the present year;

19 (2) the cost of administering the HIRE Vets
20 Medallion Program in the prior year;

21 (3) the number of applications for HIRE Vets
22 Medallion Awards received in the prior year; and

23 (4) the HIRE Vets Medallion Awards awarded
24 in the prior year, including the name of each em-
25 ployer to whom a HIRE Vets Medallion Award was

1 awarded and the level of Medallion Award awarded
2 to each such employer.

3 (b) COMMITTEES.—The Secretary shall provide the
4 reports required under subsection (a) to the Chairman and
5 Ranking Member of—

6 (1) the Committees on Appropriations, Edu-
7 cation and the Workforce, and Veterans’ Affairs of
8 the House of Representatives; and

9 (2) the Committees on Appropriations, Health,
10 Education, Labor, and Pensions, and Veterans’ Af-
11 fairs of the Senate.

12 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

13 In this Act:

14 (1) EMPLOYER.—The term “employer” has the
15 meaning given such term under section 4303 of title
16 38, United States Code, except that such term does
17 not include—

18 (A) the Federal Government;

19 (B) any State, as defined in such section;

20 or

21 (C) any foreign state.

22 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
23 the Secretary of Labor.

1 (3) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the
2 meaning given such term under section 101 of title
3 38, United States Code.

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