

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 244

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 presidential awards to private sector employers recognizing such efforts, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 4, 2017

Mr. COOK (for himself and Ms. GABBARD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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 presidential awards to private sector employers recognizing such efforts, 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 2017” 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”, verified efforts by
8 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—

15 (1) the Secretary shall annually—

16 (A) solicit and accept voluntary applica-
17 tions from employers in order to consider
18 whether those employers should receive a HIRE
19 Vets Medallion;

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

22 (C) provide to the President a list of re-
23 cipients; and

24 (2) the President shall annually—

25 (A) notify such recipients of their awards;

26 and

1 (B) at a time to coincide with the annual
2 commemoration of Veterans Day—

3 (i) announce the names of such recipi-
4 ents;

5 (ii) recognize such recipients through
6 publication in the Federal Register; and

7 (iii) issue to each such recipient—

8 (I) a HIRE Vets Medallion of the
9 level determined under section 3; and

10 (II) a certificate stating that
11 such employer is entitled to display
12 such HIRE Vets Medallion during the
13 following calendar year, to be des-
14 ignated a “HIRE Vets Medallion Cer-
15 tificate”.

16 (c) TIMING.—

17 (1) SOLICITATION PERIOD.—The Secretary
18 shall solicit applications not later than January 31st
19 of each calendar year for the medallions to be
20 awarded in November of that calendar year.

21 (2) END OF ACCEPTANCE PERIOD.—The Sec-
22 retary shall stop accepting applications not earlier
23 than April 30th of each calendar year for the medal-
24 lions to be awarded in November of that calendar
25 year.

1 (3) REVIEW PERIOD.—The Secretary shall fin-
2 ish reviewing applications not later than August 31st
3 of each calendar year for the medallions to be
4 awarded in November of that calendar year.

5 (4) RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRESIDENT.—The
6 Secretary shall provide to the President a list of em-
7 ployers to receive HIRE Vets Medallions not later
8 than September 30th of each calendar year for the
9 medallions to be awarded in November of that cal-
10 endar year.

11 (5) NOTICE TO RECIPIENTS.—The President
12 shall notify employers who will receive HIRE Vets
13 Medallions not later than October 11th of each cal-
14 endar year for the medallions to be awarded in No-
15 vember of that calendar year.

16 **SEC. 3. SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS.**

17 (a) APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall review
19 all applications received in a calendar year to deter-
20 mine whether an employer should receive a HIRE
21 Vets Medallion, and, if so, of what level.

22 (2) APPLICATION CONTENTS.—The Secretary
23 shall require that all applications provide informa-
24 tion on the programs and other efforts of applicant
25 employers during the calendar year prior to that in

1 which the medallion is to be awarded, including the
2 categories and activities governing the level of award
3 for which the applicant is eligible under subsection
4 (b).

5 (3) VERIFICATION.—In reviewing applications,
6 the Secretary shall verify all information provided in
7 the applications, to the extent that such information
8 is relevant in determining whether or not an appli-
9 cant should receive a HIRE Vets Medallion or in de-
10 termining the appropriate level of HIRE Vets Me-
11 dallion for that employer to receive.

12 (b) AWARDS.—

13 (1) LARGE EMPLOYERS.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall es-
15 tablish two levels of HIRE Vets Medallions to
16 be awarded to employers employing 500 or
17 more employees, to be designated the “Gold
18 HIRE Vets Medallion” and the “Platinum
19 HIRE Vets Medallion”.

20 (B) GOLD HIRE VETS MEDALLION.—No
21 employer shall be eligible to receive a Gold
22 HIRE Vets Medallion in a given calendar year
23 unless—

1 (i) veterans constitute not less than 7
2 percent of all employees hired by such em-
3 ployer during the prior calendar year;

4 (ii) such employer has established an
5 employee veteran organization or resource
6 group to assist new veteran employees with
7 integration, including coaching and men-
8 toring; and

9 (iii) such employer has established
10 programs to enhance the leadership skills
11 of veteran employees during their employ-
12 ment.

13 (C) PLATINUM HIRE VETS MEDALLION.—
14 No employer shall be eligible to receive a Plat-
15 inum HIRE Vets Medallion in a given calendar
16 year unless—

17 (i) veterans constitute not less than
18 10 percent of all employees hired by such
19 employer during the prior calendar year;

20 (ii) such employer retains through the
21 end of the prior calendar year not less
22 than 85 percent of veteran employees hired
23 during the calendar year before the prior
24 calendar year;

1 (iii) such employer employs dedicated
2 human resources professionals to support
3 hiring and retention of veteran employees,
4 including efforts focused on veteran hiring
5 and training;

6 (iv) such employer provides each of its
7 employees serving on active duty in the
8 United States National Guard or Reserve
9 with compensation sufficient, in combina-
10 tion with the employee's active duty pay, to
11 achieve a combined level of income com-
12 mensurate with the employee's salary prior
13 to undertaking active duty; and

14 (v) such employer has established a
15 tuition assistance program to support vet-
16 eran employees' attendance in postsec-
17 ondary education during the term of their
18 employment.

19 (D) EXEMPTION FOR SMALLER EMPLOY-
20 ERS.—An employer shall be deemed to meet the
21 requirements of subparagraph (C)(iv) if such
22 employer—

23 (i) employs 5,000 or fewer employees;
24 and

1 (ii) employs at least one human re-
2 sources professional whose regular work
3 duties include those described under sub-
4 paragraph (C)(iii).

5 (E) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA.—The Sec-
6 retary may provide, by rule, additional criteria
7 with which to determine qualifications for re-
8 ceipt of each level of HIRE Vets Medallion.

9 (2) SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZED EMPLOYERS.—
10 The Secretary shall establish similar awards in order
11 to recognize achievements in supporting veterans
12 by—

13 (A) employers with 50 or fewer employees;

14 and

15 (B) employers with more than 50 but
16 fewer than 500 employees.

17 (c) DESIGN BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall es-
18 tablish the shape, form, and metallic content of each
19 HIRE Vets Medallion.

20 **SEC. 4. DISPLAY OF AWARD.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The recipient of a HIRE Vets Me-
22 dallion may—

23 (1) publicly display such medallion through the
24 end of the calendar year following receipt of such
25 medallion; and

1 (2) publicly display the HIRE Vets Medallion
2 Certificate issued in conjunction with such medal-
3 lion.

4 (b) UNLAWFUL DISPLAY PROHIBITED.—It is unlaw-
5 ful for any employer to publicly display a HIRE Vets Me-
6 dallion, in connection with, or as a part of, any advertise-
7 ment, solicitation, business activity, or product—

8 (1) for the purpose of conveying, or in a man-
9 ner reasonably calculated to convey, a false impres-
10 sion that the employer received the medallion
11 through the HIRE Vets Medallion Program, if such
12 employer did not receive such medallion through the
13 HIRE Vets Medallion Program; or

14 (2) for the purpose of conveying, or in a man-
15 ner reasonably calculated to convey, a false impres-
16 sion that the employer received the medallion
17 through the HIRE Vets Medallion Program during
18 the preceding calendar year if it is after the end of
19 the calendar year following the calendar year in
20 which such medallion was issued to such employer
21 through the HIRE Vets Medallion Program.

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

23 (a) FUND ESTABLISHED.—There is established in
24 the Treasury of the United States a fund to be designated
25 the “HIRE Vets Medallion Award Fund”.

1 (b) FEE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may assess a
2 reasonable fee on employers that apply for receipt of a
3 HIRE Vets Medallion and the Secretary shall deposit such
4 fees into the HIRE Vets Medallion Award Fund. The Sec-
5 retary shall establish the amount of the fee such that the
6 amounts collected as fees and deposited into the Fund are
7 sufficient to cover the costs associated with carrying out
8 this Act.

9 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts in the HIRE Vets
10 Medallion Award Fund shall be available, subject to ap-
11 propriation, to the Secretary to carry out the HIRE Vets
12 Medallion Program.

13 **SEC. 6. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

14 (a) REPORTS.—Beginning not later than 2 years
15 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
16 submit to Congress annual reports on—

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

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

22 (3) the number of applications for HIRE Vets
23 Medallions received in the prior year; and

24 (4) the HIRE Vets Medallions awarded in the
25 prior year, including the name of each employer to

1 whom a HIRE Vets Medallion was awarded and the
2 level of medallion awarded 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 Education and the
7 Workforce and Veterans’ Affairs of the House of
8 Representatives; and

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

12 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

13 In this Act:

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

18 (1) the Federal Government;

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

20 (3) any foreign state.

21 (b) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the
22 Secretary of Labor.

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

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