

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1887

To grant expedited hiring authority to the head of an agency to appoint college graduates and post-secondary students.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2017

Mr. LANKFORD introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To grant expedited hiring authority to the head of an agency to appoint college graduates and post-secondary students.

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 “Direct Hire of Stu-
5 dents and Recent Graduates Act of 2017”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPEDITED HIRING AUTHORITY FOR COLLEGE**
 2 **GRADUATES AND POST-SECONDARY STU-**
 3 **DENTS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 31 of title
 5 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end
 6 the following:

7 **“§ 3115. Expedited hiring authority for college grad-**
 8 **uates; competitive service**

9 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 “(1) DIRECTOR.—The term ‘Director’ means
 11 the Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

12 “(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—
 13 The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the
 14 meaning given the term in section 101(a) of the
 15 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

16 “(b) APPOINTMENT.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency may
 18 appoint, without regard to any provision of sections
 19 3309 through 3319 and 3330, a qualified individual
 20 to a position in the competitive service classified in
 21 a professional or administrative occupational cat-
 22 egory at the GS–11 level, or an equivalent level, or
 23 below.

24 “(2) RESTRICTIONS.—An appointment under
 25 paragraph (1) shall be made in accordance with reg-
 26 ulations prescribed by the Director.

1 “(c) QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT.—The
2 head of an agency may make an appointment under sub-
3 section (b) only if the individual being appointed—

4 “(1) has received a baccalaureate or graduate
5 degree from an institution of higher education;

6 “(2) applies for the position—

7 “(A) not later than 2 years after the date
8 on which the individual being appointed re-
9 ceived the degree described in paragraph (1); or

10 “(B) in the case of an individual who has
11 completed a period of not less than 4 years of
12 obligated service in a uniformed service, not
13 later than 2 years after the date of the dis-
14 charge or release of the individual from that
15 service; and

16 “(3) meets each minimum qualification stand-
17 ard prescribed by the Director for the position to
18 which the individual is being appointed.

19 “(d) PUBLIC NOTICE AND ADVERTISING.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency
21 making an appointment under subsection (b) shall
22 publicly advertise positions under this section.

23 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out para-
24 graph (1), the head of an agency shall—

25 “(A) adhere to merit system principles;

1 “(B) advertise positions in a manner that
2 provides for diverse and qualified applicants;
3 and

4 “(C) ensure potential applicants have ap-
5 propriate information relevant to the positions
6 available.

7 “(e) LIMITATION ON APPOINTMENTS.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
9 graph (2), the total number of employees that the
10 head of an agency may appoint under this section
11 during a fiscal year may not exceed the number
12 equal to 15 percent of the number of individuals
13 that the agency head appointed during the previous
14 fiscal year to a position in the competitive service
15 classified in a professional or administrative occupa-
16 tional category, at the GS–11 level, or an equivalent
17 level, or below, under a competitive examining proce-
18 dure.

19 “(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Under a regulation pre-
20 scribed under subsection (f), the Director may estab-
21 lish a lower limit on the number of individuals that
22 may be appointed under paragraph (1) of this sub-
23 section during a fiscal year based on any factor the
24 Director considers appropriate.

1 “(f) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after
2 the date of enactment of the Direct Hire of Students and
3 Recent Graduates Act of 2017, the Director shall issue
4 interim regulations, with an opportunity for comment, for
5 the administration of this section.

6 “(g) REPORTING.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September
8 30 of each of the first 3 fiscal years beginning after
9 the date of enactment of the Direct Hire of Students
10 and Recent Graduates Act of 2017, the head of an
11 agency that makes an appointment under this sec-
12 tion shall submit to Congress a report assessing the
13 impact of the use of the authority provided under
14 this section during the fiscal year in which the re-
15 port is submitted.

16 “(2) CONTENT.—The head of an agency shall
17 include in each report under paragraph (1)—

18 “(A) the total number of individuals ap-
19 pointed by the agency under this section, as
20 well as the number of such individuals who
21 are—

22 “(i) minorities or members of other
23 underrepresented groups; or

24 “(ii) veterans;

25 “(B) recruitment sources;

1 “(C) the total number of individuals ap-
2 pointed by the agency during the applicable fis-
3 cal year to a position in the competitive service
4 classified in a professional or administrative oc-
5 cupational category at the GS–11 level, or an
6 equivalent level, or below; and

7 “(D) any additional data specified by the
8 Director of the Office of Personnel Manage-
9 ment.

10 “(3) SUBMISSION TO OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
11 MANAGEMENT.—Upon request of the Director of the
12 Office of Personnel Management, the head of an
13 agency that submits a report to Congress under
14 paragraph (1) shall submit a copy of the report to
15 the Director.

16 “(h) SPECIAL PROVISION REGARDING THE DEPART-
17 MENT OF DEFENSE.—

18 “(1) AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section shall
19 preclude the Secretary of Defense from exercising
20 any authority to appoint a recent graduate under
21 section 1106 of the National Defense Authorization
22 Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (10 U.S.C. note prec.
23 1580), or any applicable successor statute.

24 “(2) REGULATIONS.—Any regulations pre-
25 scribed by the Director for the administration of this

1 section shall not apply to the Department of Defense
2 during the period ending on the date on which the
3 appointment authority of the Secretary of Defense
4 under section 1106 of the National Defense Author-
5 ization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (10 U.S.C. note
6 prec. 1580), or any applicable successor statute, ter-
7 minates.

8 **“§ 3116. Expedited hiring authority for post-sec-**
9 **ondary students; competitive service**

10 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11 “(1) DIRECTOR.—The term ‘Director’ means
12 the Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

13 “(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—
14 The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the
15 meaning given the term in section 101(a) of the
16 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

17 “(3) STUDENT.—The term ‘student’ means an
18 individual enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an
19 institution of higher education who is pursuing a
20 baccalaureate or graduate degree on at least a part-
21 time basis as determined by the institution of higher
22 education.

23 “(b) APPOINTMENT.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency may
25 make a time-limited appointment of a student, with-

1 out regard to any provision of sections 3309 through
2 3319 and 3330, to a position in the competitive
3 service at the GS-11 level, or an equivalent level, or
4 below for which the student is qualified.

5 “(2) RESTRICTIONS.—An appointment under
6 paragraph (1) shall be made in accordance with reg-
7 ulations prescribed by the Director.

8 “(c) PUBLIC NOTICE.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency
10 making an appointment under subsection (b) shall
11 publicly advertise positions available under this sec-
12 tion.

13 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out para-
14 graph (1), the head of an agency shall—

15 “(A) adhere to merit system principles;

16 “(B) advertise positions in a manner that
17 provides for diverse and qualified applicants;
18 and

19 “(C) ensure potential applicants have ap-
20 propriate information relevant to the positions
21 available.

22 “(d) LIMITATION ON APPOINTMENTS.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
24 graph (2), the total number of students that the
25 head of an agency may appoint under this section

1 during a fiscal year may not exceed the number
2 equal to 15 percent of the number of students that
3 the agency head appointed during the previous fiscal
4 year to a position in the competitive service at the
5 GS–11 level, or an equivalent level, or below.

6 “(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Under a regulation pre-
7 scribed under subsection (g), the Director may es-
8 tablish a lower limit on the number of students that
9 may be appointed under paragraph (1) of this sub-
10 section during a fiscal year based on any factor the
11 Director considers appropriate.

12 “(e) CONVERSION.—The head of an agency may,
13 without regard to any provision of chapter 33 or any other
14 provision of law relating to the examination, certification,
15 and appointment of individuals in the competitive service,
16 convert a student serving in an appointment under sub-
17 section (b) to a permanent appointment in the competitive
18 service within the agency without further competition if
19 the student—

20 “(1) has completed the course of study leading
21 to the baccalaureate or graduate degree;

22 “(2) has completed not less than 640 hours of
23 current continuous employment under subsection
24 (b); and

1 “(3) meets the qualification standards for the
2 position to which the student will be converted.

3 “(f) TERMINATION.—The head of an agency shall,
4 without regard to any provision of chapter 35 or 75, termi-
5 nate the appointment of a student appointed under sub-
6 section (b) upon completion of the designated academic
7 course of study unless the student is selected for conver-
8 sion under subsection (e).

9 “(g) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after
10 the date of enactment of the Direct Hire of Students and
11 Recent Graduates Act of 2017, the Director shall issue
12 interim regulations, with an opportunity for comment, for
13 the administration of this section.

14 “(h) REPORTING.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September
16 30 of each of the first 3 fiscal years beginning after
17 the date of enactment of the Direct Hire of Students
18 and Recent Graduates Act of 2017, the head of an
19 agency that makes an appointment under this sec-
20 tion shall submit to Congress a report assessing the
21 impact of the use of the authority provided under
22 this section during the fiscal year in which the re-
23 port is submitted.

24 “(2) CONTENT.—The head of an agency shall
25 include in each report under paragraph (1)—

1 “(A) the total number of individuals ap-
2 pointed by the agency under this section, as
3 well as the number of such individuals who
4 are—

5 “(i) minorities or members of other
6 underrepresented groups; or

7 “(ii) veterans;

8 “(B) recruitment sources;

9 “(C) the total number of individuals ap-
10 pointed by the agency during the applicable fis-
11 cal year to a position in the competitive service
12 at the GS–11 level, or an equivalent level, or
13 below; and

14 “(D) any additional data specified by the
15 Director of the Office of Personnel Manage-
16 ment.

17 “(3) SUBMISSION TO OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
18 MANAGEMENT.—Upon request of the Director of the
19 Office of Personnel Management, the head of an
20 agency that submits a report to Congress under
21 paragraph (1) shall submit a copy of the report to
22 the Director.

23 “(i) SPECIAL PROVISION REGARDING THE DEPART-
24 MENT OF DEFENSE.—

1 “(1) AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section shall
2 preclude the Secretary of Defense from exercising
3 any authority to appoint a post-secondary student
4 under section 1106 of the National Defense Author-
5 ization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (10 U.S.C. note
6 prec. 1580), or any applicable successor statute.

7 “(2) REGULATIONS.—Any regulations pre-
8 scribed by the Director for the administration of this
9 section shall not apply to the Department of Defense
10 during the period ending on the date on which the
11 appointment authority of the Secretary of Defense
12 under section 1106 of the National Defense Author-
13 ization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (10 U.S.C. note
14 prec. 1580), or any applicable successor statute, ter-
15 minates.”.

16 (b) TABLE OF SECTIONS AMENDMENTS.—The table
17 of sections for subchapter I of chapter 31 of title 5, United
18 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
19 lowing:

“3115. Expedited hiring authority for college graduates; competitive service.

“3116. Expedited hiring authority for post-secondary students; competitive serv-
ice.”.

○