

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3387

To amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to make improvements to certain programs for a member nearing separation, or for a veteran who recently separated, from the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 14, 2025

Mr. VAN ORDEN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to make improvements to certain programs for a member nearing separation, or for a veteran who recently separated, from the Armed Forces, 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 “Enhancing the
5 Transitioning Servicemember’s Experience Act” or the
6 “ETS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: AMENDMENTS;**
2 **PILOT PROGRAM; REPORTS.**

3 (a) SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES.—Subsection (a)
4 of section 1142 of title 10, United States Code, is amend-
5 ed, in paragraph (1), by inserting “(including each mem-
6 ber of the special operations forces)” after “armed
7 forces”.

8 (b) REQUIREMENT OF PRESEPARATION COUN-
9 SELING: NUMBER OF DAYS.—Such subsection is further
10 amended, in paragraph (1)—

11 (1) by inserting “(A)” before “Within”; and

12 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
13 paragraph:

14 “(B) The Secretary concerned shall ensure that a
15 member described in subparagraph (A) receives
16 preseparation counseling in the following amounts:

17 “(i) In the case of a member who has accepted
18 an offer of full-time employment, or has enrolled in
19 a program of education or vocational training, that
20 shall commence after the member separates, retires,
21 or is discharged, not fewer than three days.

22 “(ii) In the case of a member other than a
23 member described in clause (i), not fewer than five
24 days.”.

25 (c) PROVISION OF PRESEPARATION COUNSELING:
26 THIRD PARTY COUNSELORS; IN-PERSON TO THE EXTENT

1 PRACTICABLE.—Such subsection is further amended, in
2 paragraph (2)—

3 (1) by inserting “(A)” before “In carrying”;

4 and

5 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
6 paragraphs:

7 “(B) Preseparation counseling may not be provided
8 by an individual responsible for the retention of members
9 in the armed force concerned.

10 “(C) Preseparation counseling shall be provided in
11 person to the extent practicable. If the Secretary con-
12 cerned determines that a member cannot attend such
13 counseling in person, such member may receive such coun-
14 seling remotely.”.

15 (d) PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY: EXPANSION.—Such
16 subsection is further amended, in paragraph (3)—

17 (1) by striking “365” each place it appears and
18 inserting “540”; and

19 (2) by striking “365-day” and inserting “540-
20 day”.

21 (e) WAIVER FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE RE-
22 SERVE COMPONENTS.—Such subsection is further amend-
23 ed, in paragraph (4), by adding at the end the following
24 new subparagraph:

1 “(D) The Secretary concerned may waive the require-
2 ment for preseparation counseling under paragraph (1) in
3 the case of a member of the reserve components if—

4 “(i) the member requests such a waiver;

5 “(ii) the member received preseparation coun-
6 seling during the period of three years preceding the
7 date of such request; and

8 “(iii) matters covered by such counseling, speci-
9 fied in subsection (b), have not changed since the
10 member last received such counseling.”.

11 (f) ELIGIBILITY OF A MEMBER WHO REENLISTS TO
12 RECEIVE PRESEPARATION COUNSELING.—Such sub-
13 section is further amended by adding at the end the fol-
14 lowing new paragraph:

15 “(5) The commanding officer of a member described
16 in this subsection may, on a space available basis, author-
17 ize such member to receive preseparation counseling, re-
18 gardless of whether such member reenlists or agrees to
19 a new period of obligated service.”.

20 (g) REPEAT ATTENDANCE.—Such subsection is fur-
21 ther amended by adding at the end the following new para-
22 graph:

23 “(6) A member who received preseparation coun-
24 seling under this section may, before separation, retire-

1 ment, or discharge, request to receive, on a space-available
2 basis, such preseparation counseling a second time.”.

3 (h) ELECTIVE INCLUSION OF THE SPOUSE OF A
4 MEMBER.—Such section is further amended, in subsection
5 (b), in paragraph (5), by striking “regarding the matters
6 covered by paragraphs (9), (10), and (16)”.

7 (i) MINIMUM AMOUNT OF COUNSELING REGARDING
8 FINANCIAL PLANNING.—Such subsection is further
9 amended, in paragraph (9)—

10 (1) by striking “Financial” and inserting “(A)
11 General financial”;

12 (2) by striking “loans” and inserting “loans
13 and other debt, investing”; and

14 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
15 paragraphs:

16 “(B) Individualized assistance regarding mat-
17 ters described in subparagraph (A).

18 “(C) Counseling under subparagraph (A) or (B)
19 shall be provided by an individual who has signifi-
20 cant experience in financial planning and may not be
21 shorter than one hour.”.

22 (j) PATHWAYS: STANDARDIZATION; ESTABLISHMENT
23 OF PATHWAY FOR MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE COMPO-
24 NENTS.—Such section is further amended, in paragraph

1 (1) of subsection (c), in the matter preceding subpara-
2 graph (A)—

3 (1) by striking “Each Secretary concerned” and
4 inserting “The Secretaries of Defense and Homeland
5 Security”; and

6 (2) by striking “pathways for members of the
7 military department concerned” and inserting “path-
8 ways, standardized across the armed forces and in-
9 cluding one pathway for members of the reserve
10 components, for members”.

11 (k) PATHWAYS: RECORD OF PATHWAY ASSIGN-
12 MENT.—Such subsection is further amended by adding at
13 the end the following new paragraph:

14 “(4) The Secretary concerned shall ensure that the
15 pathway in which a member is placed, and the reasons
16 for such placement, are noted in the service record of such
17 member.”.

18 (l) COORDINATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS OF DE-
19 FENSE, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND LABOR.—Such section
20 is further amended, in subsection (d)—

21 (1) by striking the heading and inserting
22 “TRANSMISSION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION TO
23 OTHER DEPARTMENTS”;

24 (2) by inserting “(1)” before “In the case”; and

1 (3) by adding at the end the following new
2 paragraphs:

3 “(2) Before a member described in subsection (a)
4 separates, retires, or is discharged, the Secretary con-
5 cerned shall transmit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 the following information:

7 “(A) The contact information of such member.

8 “(B) The Department of Defense Form DD-
9 2648 regarding such member.

10 “(3)(A) In the case of a member described in sub-
11 section (a) whom the Secretary concerned determines is
12 at risk for a difficult transition to civilian life, the Sec-
13 retary concerned shall, before the member separates, re-
14 tires, or is discharged, provide—

15 “(i) such member with the contact information
16 of an employee of the Department of Veterans Af-
17 fairs and an employee of the Department of Labor;
18 and

19 “(ii) such employees with the contact informa-
20 tion of such member.

21 “(B) Each employee described in subparagraph (A)
22 shall contact the member described in such subparagraph
23 not later than 60 days after such member separates, re-
24 tires, or is discharged.

1 “(C) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Sec-
2 retary of Labor shall each submit to the Committees on
3 Armed Services and on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate
4 and House of Representatives an annual report that iden-
5 tifies the number of times, and reasons why, an employee
6 of the department under the jurisdiction of such Secretary
7 failed to carry out subparagraph (B) in the year preceding
8 the date of the report.

9 “(D) The Secretary of Defense and Secretary of
10 Homeland Security shall prescribe regulations to ensure
11 that, for purposes of this paragraph, each Secretary con-
12 cerned uses the same definition of the term ‘at risk for
13 a difficult transition to civilian life’.”.

14 (m) CONTRACTING: STANDARDIZATION.—Such sec-
15 tion is further amended by adding at the end the following
16 new subsection:

17 “(f) CONTRACTING.—A Secretary concerned may
18 enter into an agreement with an entity under which such
19 entity shall provide preseparation counseling under this
20 section. If more than one Secretary seeks to enter into
21 such an agreement, such Secretaries concerned shall, to
22 the extent practicable, seek to enter into such agreements
23 with the same entity.”.

1 (n) YEARLY SURPRISE AUDITS.—Such section is fur-
2 ther amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
3 section:

4 “(g) AUDITS.—(1) Not less than once each year, an
5 employee or contractor of the Department of Veterans Af-
6 fairs, and an employee or contractor of the Department
7 of Labor, shall make unannounced visits to pre-separation
8 counseling under this section in order to audit such coun-
9 seling.

10 “(2) Not later than 90 days after such a visit, the
11 employee or contractor shall submit to the Committees on
12 Armed Services and on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate
13 and House of Representatives a report regarding such
14 audit.

15 “(3) Such employees or contractors shall have exper-
16 tise regarding matters described in subsection (b).”.

17 (o) INFORMATION PROVIDED TO STATE VETERANS
18 AGENCIES REGARDING MEMBERS SEPARATING FROM
19 THE ARMED FORCES.—

20 (1) EXPANSION.—Section 570F of the National
21 Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020
22 (Public Law 116–92; 10 U.S.C. 1142 note) is
23 amended, in subsection (a)—

24 (A) by redesignating paragraph (8) as
25 paragraph (9); and

1 (B) by inserting, after paragraph (7), the
2 following new paragraph (8):

3 “(8) Benefits for low-income households, includ-
4 ing the supplemental nutrition assistance program
5 (as such term is defined in section 3 of the Food
6 and Nutrition Act of 2008 (Public Law 88–525; 7
7 U.S.C. 2012)).”.

8 (2) LIMITATION OF VOLUNTARY PARTICIPA-
9 TION.—Such section is further amended, in sub-
10 section (d), by striking “Information” and inserting
11 “Except for information related to whether an indi-
12 vidual is eligible for benefits described in paragraph
13 (8) of subsection (a), information”.

14 (p) PILOT PROGRAM FOR MILITARY SPOUSES.—

15 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than one year
16 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
17 retary of Defense shall establish a pilot program for
18 spouses of members of the covered Armed Forces
19 who are eligible to receive preseparation counseling
20 under TAP.

21 (2) VOLUNTARY BASIS.—Participation in the
22 pilot program shall be on a voluntary basis.

23 (3) CURRICULUM.—The Secretary of Defense,
24 in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Af-

1 fairs and the Secretary of Labor, shall establish a
2 curriculum based on TAP for the pilot program.

3 (4) COUNSELING.—Counseling under the pilot
4 program shall—

5 (A) be tailored to the military spouse and
6 family;

7 (B) be offered at least once per calendar
8 quarter at each location selected under para-
9 graph (5);

10 (C) be offered at times including nights
11 and weekends; and

12 (D) include at least one hour regarding
13 benefits and assistance available to military
14 families and veterans from each department
15 under the jurisdiction of the Secretaries speci-
16 fied in subparagraph (C).

17 (5) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary of Defense
18 shall carry out the pilot program at not fewer than
19 five military installations of each of the covered
20 Armed Forces. One such location shall be located
21 outside the continental United States.

22 (6) REPORT.—Not later than one year before
23 the pilot program terminates, the Secretary of De-
24 fense shall submit to the Committees on Armed
25 Services of the Senate and House of Representatives

1 a report to the regarding the pilot program. Such re-
2 port shall include elements the Secretary determines
3 appropriate, including whether the pilot program
4 should be made permanent.

5 (7) TERMINATION.—The pilot program shall
6 terminate three years after the Secretary of Defense
7 establishes the pilot program.

8 (8) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

9 (A) The term “covered Armed Force”
10 means the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air
11 Force, or Space Force.

12 (B) The term “TAP” means the Transi-
13 tion Assistance Program under sections 1142
14 and 1144 of title 10, United States Code.

15 (q) REPORTS; TRACKING SYSTEM.—

16 (1) ANNUAL REPORT ON TAP PARTICIPATION.—
17 Not later than one year after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter for four
19 years, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the
20 Committees on Armed Services and on Veterans’ Af-
21 fairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a
22 report on the Transition Assistance Program at mili-
23 tary installations where at least 250 members per
24 year receive preseparation counseling under section
25 1142 of title 10, United States Code. Such report

1 shall include the following elements with regards to
2 the year preceding the date of such report,
3 disaggregated by military installation:

4 (A) The number of members described in
5 subsection (a)(1)(B)(ii) of such section 1142, as
6 added by subsection (a), who received fewer
7 than five days of preseparation counseling
8 under such section.

9 (B) The average period of time between
10 when a member begins to receive preseparation
11 counseling and the day the member separates,
12 retires, or is discharged.

13 (C) The number of members who began to
14 receive preseparation counseling and then re-en-
15 listed or agreed to a new period of obligated
16 service.

17 (D) The number of members who began to
18 receive preseparation counseling and then were
19 deployed.

20 (E) The number of members assigned to
21 each pathway under subsection (c) of such sec-
22 tion.

23 (F) The number of members who, in the
24 course of such preseparation counseling, were

1 referred to another Federal agency or depart-
2 ment.

3 (G) The Federal agencies or departments
4 to which members were so referred.

5 (H) The number of members who should
6 have been, but were not, so referred, and rea-
7 sons why such referrals did not occur.

8 (I) The number of members who receive
9 such preseparation counseling and apply for un-
10 employment compensation under subchapter II
11 of chapter 85 of title 5, United States Code.

12 (J) The total amount of such unemploy-
13 ment compensation paid to members separating
14 from the Armed Forces.

15 (K) The frequency with which the com-
16 mander of the military installation received a
17 briefing regarding attendance of members in ac-
18 cordance with statutory requirements of the
19 Transition Assistance Program.

20 (2) ANNUAL REPORT ON TAP CURRICULA.—Not
21 less than once each year after the date of the enact-
22 ment of this Act, the Secretaries of Defense, Vet-
23 erans Affairs, and Labor shall—

24 (A) review and update curricula under the
25 Transition Assistance Program; and

1 (B) submit to Congress copies of such cur-
2 ricula.

3 (3) TRACKING OF TIMELINESS.—

4 (A) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than
5 one year after the date of the enactment of this
6 Act, the Secretary of Defense shall implement
7 a system to track how many, and what percent-
8 age of, members of the Armed Forces begin to
9 receive preseparation counseling within the time
10 periods established in section 1142 of title 10,
11 United States Code.

12 (B) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than two
13 years after the date of the enactment of this
14 Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of
15 Defense shall submit to the Committees on
16 Armed Services, and the Committees on Vet-
17 erans' Affairs, of the Senate and House of Rep-
18 resentatives, a report on data recorded with
19 such tracking system during the year preceding
20 the date of such report. Such report shall in-
21 clude a list of the seven military installations lo-
22 cated inside the continental United States, and
23 three military installations located outside the
24 continental United States, where members are

1 least likely to receive TAP preseparation coun-
2 seling in accordance with such time periods.

3 **SEC. 3. TRANSITIONAL HEALTH CARE FOR MEMBERS**
4 **BEING SEPARATED OR RECENTLY SEPA-**
5 **RATED: EXTENSION OF AVAILABILITY.**

6 Section 1145(a) of title 10, United States Code, is
7 amended—

8 (1) in paragraph (4)—

9 (A) by striking “180 days” and inserting
10 “270 days”; and

11 (B) by striking “180-day period” and in-
12 serting “270-day period”; and

13 (2) in paragraph (7)—

14 (A) by striking “180-day transition pe-
15 riod” and inserting “270-day transition pe-
16 riod”; and

17 (B) by striking “180 days” both places it
18 appears and inserting “270 days”.

19 **SEC. 4. SKILLBRIDGE: GAO STUDY.**

20 (a) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—The Comptroller General of
21 the United States shall conduct a study of the Skillbridge
22 programs under section 1143(e) of title 10, United States
23 Code.

24 (b) **REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the date
25 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall

1 submit to the Committees on Armed Services, and the
2 Committees on Veterans' Affairs, of the Senate and House
3 of Representatives, a report regarding such study. Such
4 report shall include observations and recommendations of
5 the Comptroller regarding, with respect to members and
6 employers who participate in Skillbridge—

7 (1) differences in criteria for participation be-
8 tween the Armed Forces;

9 (2) other differences in Skillbridge programs
10 between the Armed Forces;

11 (3) best practices in Skillbridge programs
12 across the Armed Forces, including—

13 (A) the selection of employers; and

14 (B) the development of contracts; and

15 (4) the feasibility of making Skillbridge pro-
16 grams uniform across the Armed Forces.

17 **SEC. 5. WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-**
18 **FAIRS REGARDING PROGRAMS FOR NEW VET-**
19 **ERANS.**

20 Section 523 of title 38, United States Code, is
21 amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
22 section:

23 “(c) The Secretary shall maintain a publicly available
24 website of the Department through which a veteran or de-
25 pendent of a veteran may search by ZIP code for pro-

1 grams for veterans who recently separated from active
2 military, naval, air, or space service, or dependents of such
3 veterans.”.

4 **SEC. 6. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR A CERTAIN PRO-**
5 **GRAM OF JOB COUNSELING, TRAINING, AND**
6 **PLACEMENT SERVICE FOR VETERANS.**

7 (a) DEFINITION.—Section 4101 of title 38, United
8 States Code, is amended in paragraph (5)—

9 (1) in subparagraph (A), by striking the comma
10 at the end and inserting a semicolon;

11 (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “power,
12 or” and inserting “power;”;

13 (3) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period
14 at the end and inserting “; or”; and

15 (4) by adding at the end the following new sub-
16 paragraph:

17 “(D) a member of the Armed Forces eligi-
18 ble for the Transition Assistance Program
19 under sections 1142 and 1144 of title 10.”.

20 (b) OUTREACH.—Section 4103A(a)(1) of such title is
21 amended—

22 (1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
23 by inserting “and certain eligible persons” after “eli-
24 gible veterans”;

1 (2) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as sub-
2 paragraph (D); and

3 (3) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the fol-
4 lowing new subparagraph (C):

5 “(C) Eligible persons described in paragraph
6 (5)(D) of section 4101 of this title.”.

7 **SEC. 7. SOLID START PROGRAM: INTERACTION WITH TRAN-**
8 **SITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

9 (a) **CLARIFICATION OF REFERENCE TO TAP.**—Sub-
10 section (b) of section 6320 of title 38, United States Code,
11 is amended, in of paragraph (1), by striking “transition
12 classes or separation” and inserting “TAP classes or
13 preseparation counseling”.

14 (b) **PROVISION OF TAP MATERIALS.**—Such para-
15 graph is further amended—

16 (1) by redesignating subparagraphs (D)
17 through (H) as subparagraphs (E) through (I), re-
18 spectively; and

19 (2) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the fol-
20 lowing new subparagraph (D):

21 “(D) furnishing TAP materials to veterans;”.

22 (c) **ASSESSMENT OF TAP.**—Such paragraph is fur-
23 ther amended, in subparagraph (I), as redesignated, by
24 inserting “and of TAP” before the period.

1 (d) DEFINITIONS.—Such section is further amend-
2 ed—

3 (1) by striking paragraph (3) of subsection (b);

4 and

5 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
6 section:

7 “(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 “(1) The term ‘TAP’ means the Transition As-
9 sistance Program under sections 1142 and 1144 of
10 title 10.

11 “(2) The term ‘Vet Center’ has the meaning
12 given such term in section 1712A(h) of this title.

13 “(3) The term ‘veterans service organization’
14 means an organization recognized by the Secretary
15 for the representation of veterans under section
16 5902 of this title.”.

○