



No. 22

September 10, 2012

S. 3457 – Veterans Job Corps Act

Noteworthy

- **Floor Situation:** S. 3457 was introduced by Senators Nelson (FL) and Murray on July 30, 2012. The Majority Leader has used the Rule 14 process to place it on the Senate Calendar, bypassing all committees of jurisdiction. Many elements of this bill come from other bills likely to be part of a mark-up in the Veterans Committee some time in September. Cloture has been filed on the motion to proceed to the bill, with a vote scheduled for Tuesday September 11 at 2:15 p.m. There may be a budget point of order lying against the bill.
- **Executive Summary:** The Veterans Jobs Corps Act establishes a federal job corps to employ veterans to work in conservation efforts and as first responders.
- **Background:** The [unemployment rate](#) for veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is 10.9 percent. In November 2011, the Vow to Hire Heroes Act (P.L. 112-56) was enacted. In July 2012, the Veteran Skills to Jobs Act (P.L. 112-147) was enacted.

Overview

The President's fiscal year 2013 budget [request](#) sought a billion dollars in mandatory funding for a Veterans Job Corps, which was to be a [federal program](#) for up to 20,000 veterans to work in conservation and federal lands programs. The Veterans Job Corps is part of President Obama's "To Do List" for Congress.

There already exist numerous national service and environmental programs. For example, the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) (CNCS) already has many community service projects related to the environment through its three major programs: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps,

and Learn and Serve America. CNCS says it is specifically [committed](#) this year “to increasing its focus and efforts for our veterans and military families.” The [Public Land Corps](#) allows citizens to work “to restore, protect, and rehabilitate” national parks. Finally, with respect to federal hiring itself, the Department of Labor [points out](#) veterans “are generally entitled to preference over non-Veterans both in Federal hiring practices and in retention during reductions in force.”

Bill Provisions

Section 2 – Veterans Job Corps

This section directs numerous executive branch entities to coordinate in establishing a Veterans Job Corps to employ veterans in conservation efforts and as first responders. The executive branch is to employ veterans directly or provide grants to state and local government and non-government entities. It authorizes “without further appropriation” \$1 billion over the next five years, no more than 10 percent of which may be used to employ veterans as first responders.

Section 3 – Pilot Program Providing Veterans with Access to Internet Websites

This section directs the Secretary of Labor to begin a pilot program to give veterans seeking employment access to computing facilities to facilitate their access to Internet websites that match veterans with jobs and allow employers to post information. Under the program, the Secretary would then assist veterans in using such computing facilities.

Section 4 – Consideration of Military Training in State Certifications and Licenses

This section is directed at helping veterans with certain types of military training demonstrate qualifications for certain state civilian certification or license requirements. It amends current law pertaining to two veterans hiring programs: the Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program and Local Veterans’ Employment Representative Program. The section requires the Department of Labor to certify that states, as a condition of receiving funding under those programs, take into consideration the training and experience of a veteran. It would include licenses to become an emergency medical technician, be a certified nursing assistant, or drive a commercial vehicle.

Section 5 – Minimum Funding Levels for Local Veterans' Employment Representatives

This section directs the Secretary of Labor to establish minimum funding levels for the Department’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service. This includes ensuring each state can support at least one representative under the Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program and Local Veterans’ Employment Representative Program per 5,000 square miles of service delivery area (with certain exceptions).

Section 6 – Off-Base Transition Training

This section requires the Department of Labor, on a one-year trial basis in three to five states, to provide the Transition Assistance [Program](#) at locations other than military bases. This program

prepares service members and their spouses with job search assistance during their transition into civilian life. At least two of the states where this is to take place are to be states with high rates of unemployment among veterans.

Section 7 – Levy on Payment to Medicare Providers and Suppliers

Under current law, the Treasury is authorized to withhold up to 15 percent of Medicare payments to Medicare service providers who have delinquent tax debt. Section seven increases this to 100 percent, resulting in faster payment of the tax debt. Once the tax debt is paid, the provider would receive full Medicare payments. CBO has in the past estimated this will raise \$355 million over five years.

Section 8 – Program for Ultra-Deepwater and Unconventional Natural Gas

This section repeals the authorization for the research and development program with respect to ultra-deepwater and unconventional natural gas resources as provided for in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. CBO has in the past estimated this repeal will save \$98 million over five years.

Section 9 – Revocation or Denial of Passport in Case of Certain Unpaid Taxes

Under current law, the State Department is authorized to refuse to issue or renew a passport if the applicant owes more than \$2,500 in child support. Section nine provides for similar actions for people owing more than \$50,000 in delinquent federal taxes if they are not making payments under an installment agreement or if collection actions have been suspended due to taxpayer appeal. CBO has in the past estimated this will raise \$556 million over five years.

Administration Position

A Statement of Administration Policy has not been released at the time of publication of this notice.

Cost

Other than the revenue estimates listed for sections seven, eight, and nine, CBO has not completed a cost estimate of the bill.

Possible Amendments

As of the publication of this notice, there is no unanimous consent agreement governing the processing of amendments.