

the resignation of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER), the whole number of the House is 432.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

VETERAN SKILLS TO JOBS ACT

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4155) to treat relevant military training as sufficient to satisfy training or certification requirements for Federal licenses, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4155

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veteran Skills to Jobs Act".

SEC. 2. CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT MILITARY TRAINING FOR ISSUANCE OF A FEDERAL LICENSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The head of each Federal licensing authority shall consider and may accept, in the case of any individual applying for a license, any relevant training received by such individual while serving as a member of the armed forces, for the purpose of satisfying the requirements for such license.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this Act—

(1) the term "license" means a license, certification, or other grant of permission to engage in a particular activity;

(2) the term "Federal licensing authority" means a department, agency, or other entity of the Government having authority to issue a license;

(3) the term "armed forces" has the meaning given such term by section 2101(2) of title 5, United States Code; and

(4) the term "Government" means the Government of the United States.

SEC. 3. REGULATIONS.

The head of each Federal licensing authority shall—

(1) with respect to any license a licensing authority grants or is empowered to grant as of the date of enactment of this Act, prescribe any regulations necessary to carry out this Act not later than 180 days after such date; and

(2) with respect to any license of a licensing authority not constituted or not empowered to grant the license as of the date of enactment of this Act, prescribe any regulations necessary to carry out this Act not later than 180 days after the date on which the agency is so constituted or empowered, as the case may be.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are here today to discuss H.R. 4155, the Veteran Skills to Jobs Act, introduced by Mr. DENHAM of California. I really appreciate the approach that this is taking with jobs and the economic environment as such. This is a commonsense, good measure. I think it is widely supported on both sides of the aisle, and I would urge my colleagues to pass it.

Essentially, H.R. 4155 ensures that applicants for Federal licenses receive credit for relevant training completed while serving as a member of the Armed Forces. While most licenses are issued by the States, the Federal Government does grant a number of licenses, most notably in the aerospace, communications, and maritime sectors.

After 40 months with the unemployment rate above 8 percent, we must do more to help create jobs; and with the unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans at 12.7 percent, we must better support our veterans as they transition to the civilian workforce.

In April, the Defense Business Board issued a report recommending Federal agencies review military training as a qualification for their respective program requirements. H.R. 4155 is in line with this recommendation.

The bill provides some certainty to veterans during their transition from the military by ensuring their training is taken into account when applying for Federal licenses. The bill does not infringe on the jurisdiction of the licensing agency. Instead, it leaves the agency free to determine whether military training is sufficient to meet license requirements.

H.R. 4155 will reduce the licensing burden for qualified veterans, enabling them to more quickly re-enter the workforce and ease their transition to civilian life.

Again, I appreciate the work of Mr. DENHAM, Mr. WALZ, and others in a bipartisan way to introduce this bill, and I would urge my colleagues to support it.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4155 and yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the sponsors of H.R. 4155, especially Mr. DENHAM and Mr. WALZ, for their dedicated service to our Nation while in uniform and for their

commitment to supporting our veterans here in Congress.

I deeply value and appreciate the sacrifices made by the men and women in our Armed Forces, and I'm proud to represent thousands of them who reside in the 11th District of Virginia, a district that takes military service very seriously and holds it in high esteem.

I believe that we here in Congress have a sacred duty, Mr. Speaker, to provide for their well-being. For that reason, I strongly support efforts to expedite the transition of our Nation's warriors to civilian life. We need to do all we can to help these dedicated veterans find gainful employment. It's a shameful fact that the men and women who volunteer to safeguard our country are having so much trouble finding steady, good-paying jobs. A double-digit unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans—almost double the national average—is simply unacceptable.

Transitioning to civilian life is difficult under any circumstance; however, this hardship is compounded when veterans cannot easily translate their military skills into careers in the Federal or private sector workforce through no fault of their own.

In addition, there's the task of educating employers to better understand that so much of military training is readily transferrable to civilian job requirements in the private sector.

We need to do better for our veterans, and I believe H.R. 4155 is a strong step in that direction. It would require each agency with Federal licensing authority to treat relevant military training as sufficient to satisfy training or certification requirements for Federal licenses. This will help our returning servicemembers get credit for their military training towards a license which they can use to get Federal or private sector jobs and reintegrate into civilian life.

The Federal Government, private sector employers, and our economy will benefit by being able to take full advantage of their talent, unique skills, and experience as veterans.

Mr. Speaker, the Senate has already passed an identical version of this non-controversial, but important, bill by unanimous consent. I urge all Members to support this bill that will enable our Nation's veterans to get back to work.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield as much time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from California, the sponsor of the bill, Mr. DENHAM.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support legislation I authored, H.R. 4155, the Veteran Skills to Jobs Act.

America is blessed with the strongest, most capable and professional military in the world. Unfortunately for many of our veterans, transitioning from service means a battle with joblessness. And as my friend from Utah explained, the unemployment rate is 12.7 percent; but for our young veterans, it's 29.1 percent for those that are under the age of 25.