



Legislative Alert #113-31: SUPPORT H.R. 3453 & S. 6, the Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act of 2013
VETERANS

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Issue Background: In 2012 the unemployment rate for Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) Veterans hovered at 10%. While this is much better than the 2011 rate of 12%, our Nation's returning heroes deserve a better chance to be able to work to secure a good future for themselves and their families. Legislative action is needed to ensure that Veterans have all the tools necessary for them to find employment in today's difficult job market, while also making sure their rights in the civilian sector are protected once they attain employment. This begins with improvements to the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), an interagency workshop coordinated collaboratively by the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), as well as the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Action Required: Contact your Representatives and Senators and urge them to support and cosponsor H.R. 3453, introduced by Representative Steven Horsford (D-NV-04) and S. 6, introduced by Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), the Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act of 2013, which would extend the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 and provide assistance to small businesses owned by Veterans, while also improving enforcement of employment and reemployment rights of members of the uniformed services.

Details (To Be Put Into Letter):

Despite recent report of the jobless rate falling amongst the Veteran community, from 12% in 2011 to 10% in 2012, there is still much work to be done to combat Veteran unemployment. Our country must continue to strengthen our Veteran's prospects for employment. This can be done by extending and strengthening incentives for businesses to employ Veterans, helping Veterans trying to open their own businesses, and, most importantly, doing a better job of helping Veterans find employment through improvements in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), while strengthening their employment rights once they do find a job in the civilian workforce.

The Putting our Veterans Back to Work Act of 2013 would extend the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, which provides a tax credit of up to \$5,600 for hiring Veterans who have been looking for a job for more than six months. Resume building workshops and career counseling sessions through TAP, before a servicemember transitions into the civilian workforce, will also help ensure that they

find work after they transition from the military. The bills also create a new, unified, online employment portal for Veterans seeking information regarding Federal employment and job training resources. Finally, the bills protect Veterans in the workplace by enabling the Attorney General to investigate and file suit against a pattern or practice of Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) violations by a State or private employer and to issue civil investigative demands for relevant documentary material. This legislation also provides the Special Counsel with authority to subpoena attendance, testimony, and documents from Federal employees and agencies in order to carry out investigations related to USERRA.

H.R. 3453 and S. 6 are great bills that seek to provide Veterans with training, opportunities and protections to help them succeed in the job market. Passage of these bills would ensure Veteran access of the full range of benefits available to them, provide assistance while searching for employment, and safeguard their rights in the workplace, while continuing the fight to significantly lower the unemployment rate amongst our Veteran population.

Take Action: Click the “**Take Action**” link at the top of the Alert to immediately email and/or write to your Senators and Representatives. This is the quickest and most effective method of expressing your views to Congress. You can also write and/or e-mail the ‘Details’ section or edit as you desire for a more personalized communication . Also, contact friends and family and urge them to use the Contact Congress feature on AUSN’s website as well. Please direct any questions concerning this issue to our Director of Legislation, Anthony Wallis, at 703-548-5800 or at Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org.