



**Legislative Alert #113-12: SUPPORT H.R. 1796 & S. 700, TROOP
TALENT ACT OF 2013
VETERANS**

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Issue Background: With the unemployment rate of Veterans greater than the national average, more needs to be done to help our servicemembers transition from military to civilian life. As of February 2013, the Veteran unemployment rate among Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans was 9.4%, up from 7.6% in 2012. The number of Veterans receiving unemployment benefits has more than doubled since 2002, rising from 44,810 to 89,725 in 2012. Servicemembers and Veterans are often unaware of licenses and certifications that are required for employment in many civilian sectors. Furthermore, civilian organizations need to better understand the training that military members receive. Enhancing the information to both servicemembers and civilian employers is critical in reducing the alarmingly high unemployment rate of Veterans.

Action Required: Contact your Senators and Representatives and urge them to support and cosponsor H.R. 1796, introduced by Representative Tammy Duckworth (D-IL-08), and S. 700, introduced by Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA), the Troop Talent Act of 2013, which provides credential training and assistance to servicemembers as they transition into the civilian workforce.

Details (To Be Put Into Letter):

This bipartisan legislation provides the groundwork which creates a smoother transition for servicemembers and Veterans into the civilian working world. As of February 2013, the Veteran unemployment rate among Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans was 9.4%, up from 7.6% in 2012. The number of Veterans receiving unemployment benefits has more than doubled since 2002, rising from 44,810 to 89,725 in 2012. Servicemembers and Veterans are often unaware of licenses and certifications that are required for employment in many civilian sectors. The essential feature of these bills is providing professional credentials to Veterans who have experience performing similar duties during their time of active service.

The first step the act takes is in providing clear information to service members about civilian certifications and licenses before they separate from the military. Many of the problems unemployed Veterans face today stem from unpreparedness and a lack of training and education providing them with information of how to properly transition from soldier to civilian. Other features of the bill include the establishment of strict standards for certification programs or courses as to prevent credential fraud. It requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs to reestablish a

committee which provides oversight of the credentialing process, ensuring the highest return on investment for servicemembers and taxpayers. It will also expand the DOD Pilot Program on credentialing to increase access to high-demand career fields, including information technology and other fast-growing industries

H.R. 1796 & S. 700 are fantastic pieces of bipartisan legislation serving the needs of our transitioning servicemembers and current Veterans. Early and continuous education on employment opportunities, credentialing programs for job skills learned during time of service, and programs specifically designed to increase access to high-demand career fields take the necessary steps in fixing the unacceptably high Veteran unemployment rate.

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.