

NEW BILL FOR UNEMPLOYED VETERANS



Unemployment has been a major concern and problem across the country since 2009 and veterans of the United States Armed Forces are not exempt from those problems. Veterans have had an increasingly tough time finding work upon their return from service. Now those veterans will have a better shot at finding work under a new measure that is awaiting the signature of President Obama. The VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 was passed by the Senate on November 10 and the House passed it last week. Now it awaits the approval of Obama. "No veteran who fought for our country should have to fight for a job when they come home," President Barack Obama said after Wednesday's House vote. The government released data regarding "Gulf War-era II" veterans, stating that they are suffering through an 11.7 percent unemployment rate. This rate is compared to the 9.1 percent unemployment rate that the nation currently has. It is estimated by the government that there are close to one million veterans unemployed across the country. The brand new bill would do the following for veterans looking for jobs: The expansion of education and training of veterans: The bill would provide close to 100,000 unemployed veterans from past eras and wars with one year of Montgomery GI Bill benefits. This would help the veterans qualify for jobs that exist in high-demand industries ranging from technology to trucking. Veterans who have used up all of their unemployment benefits will also have an additional year of VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits. The Transition and Assistance Program will be improved: For the majority of veterans transitioning to civilian status, this new bill will make attending the Transition and Assistance Program mandatory. The program will help veterans with career counseling, teaching them job-hunting skills, while also providing information about the job market in this high-tech world. Operating a seamless transition: The new bill will allow veterans to start looking for employment and applying for jobs by acquiring their veterans' preference status prior to leaving the service. A seamless transition would be created for veterans who would like to work at the VA or for any other federal organization looking to hire veterans. Turning military skills into job skills: The Department of Labor will investigate how to translate military skills and training earned while in the service to skills that can be used in civilian jobs. The bill will also help veterans obtain any licenses or certifications needed to work in specific sectors of the job market. Veterans Tax Credits: The bill, VOW to Hire Heroes Act, will provide employers with tax credits if they hire veterans and disabled veterans who are unemployed. If a veteran who has been out of work for longer than one month, the employer will receive a \$2,400 tax credit. The employer will receive a \$5,600 tax credit if the veteran has been unemployed for more than six months and was disabled because of service on a war zone.

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