

Bill will streamline federal certification process making it easier for veterans to use skills acquired in military for jobs at home

Washington, DC — Today, legislation introduced by U.S. Representatives Tim Walz (D-MN) and Jeff Denham (R-CA) to make it easier for veterans to find jobs using skills acquired through military training passed the U.S. Senate with unanimous support. The legislation [passed the House](#) of Representatives on Monday and will now head to the President's desk to be signed into law.

Earlier this year, Denham and Walz introduced H.R. 4155, the *Veteran Skills to Jobs Act*, to address the unacceptably high rate of veteran unemployment by streamlining the federal certification process and cutting through the bureaucratic red tape, making it easier for veterans to utilize the skills they acquired in the military to find work at home.

“Today marks a giant step forward towards promoting opportunity and prosperity for our returning veterans, while at the same time improving the efficiency of our government,” said Walz. “We must do all we can to ensure our veterans are finding careers that give them the opportunity to utilize their skills, support their families, and have passion for their work. This bill will work to do just that and I’m pleased that both parties were able to work together in bipartisan fashion and send this common-sense bill to the President’s desk to become law. The work does not end here, however, and I will continue to fight for ways to ensure our brave warriors are able to find good paying jobs when they get home.”

“America is blessed with the strongest, most capable and professional military in the world. Unfortunately for many of our returning veterans, transitioning into the civilian workforce means a battle with joblessness,” **said Denham**. “The federal government has invested in our service members and should do everything it can to ensure that they can put their skills to work. I’m proud to have worked with my colleagues in the House and Senate on both sides of the aisle to uphold our commitment to our veterans and ensure a seamless transition to civilian life.”

Rather than going through the process of redundant trainings for jobs they are already qualified for, the Walz/Denham legislation directs the head of each federal department and agency to treat relevant military training as sufficient to satisfy training or certification requirements for

federal license. Veterans with the relevant training would be eligible to receive a federal license and get back to work immediately. Companion legislation was subsequently introduced by Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) in the Senate as S. 2239, the Veterans Skills to Jobs Act of 2012.

"Today's accomplishment is the result of a collaborative effort by a bipartisan group of Members, including my colleague and fellow veteran Congressman Walz as well as Senator Nelson, who worked hard to see this bill become law," **Denham continued**. "I would also like to thank in particular the American Legion for their continued support and dedication to moving this legislation forward, as well as the many other Veteran Service Organizations who supported our efforts and made passage of this bill a priority. At a time when so many veterans are out of work, I look forward having this bill signed into law as soon as possible."

"When you come back from war, you shouldn't have to do battle with bureaucrats," **Sen. Bill Nelson said**.

"This should make it easier for veterans to use their military skills when they get home, and remove some of the roadblocks in their way."

Rep. Walz and other bipartisan cosponsors have received widespread support and praise for the *Veteran Skills to Jobs Act*, from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion, the [Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America](#) (IAVA), and several other Veteran Service Organizations.

National Commander Fang A. Wong of The American Legion reacted happily to today's vote, saying, "This is a significant victory in The American Legion's longstanding and assertive campaign to streamline the civilian licensing and credentialing of our highly trained and skilled veterans. We are grateful to the legislation's authors and sponsors for their concerted and praiseworthy bipartisan efforts on this issue. We are especially pleased that all voting members of Congress chose to 'do the right thing' for our nation's job seeking veterans."

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