

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

CHAIRMAN MIKE BOST

Veterans Benefits Reform – Creation of Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration

Background:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is responsible for all VA benefits provided to veterans outside of healthcare and cemetery services. During the last few Congresses, the bulk of VBA staffing and resources have been directed towards the administration of disability compensation and pension claims. While these efforts have been productive, this has resulted in the lack of attention to other VBA programs, such as the GI Bill, Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E), Home Loan benefits, and the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). Because of this focus, there is not proper oversight and accountability measures in place on other programs, and it is increasingly difficult for Congress to hold VA employees accountable without a streamlined VBA.

This bill would address the lack of accountability and oversight in VBA by realigning transition, education, and employment programs at VA under a new administration, the Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration.

The Message:

This would streamline VBA by separating Compensation and Pension from economic, education, and transition programs as these programs become increasingly popular for veterans and their families. This would also increase accountability at VA by making it easier to hold officials accountable who oversee programs under VEOTA.

The restructuring would:

- Realign transition, education, and employment programs under a new administration to streamline programs that VA administers.
- Increase accountability and transparency by making it easier to hold VA employees accountable to the veterans and taxpayers they serve in these specific VA programs.
- Reduce bureaucracy at VBA by decoupling employees under different programs and creating a cleaner organization chart that Congress can better oversee.
- Require VA to have subject matter experts in education, transition, and employment programs in high-ranking career positions, and political appointees, whereas currently VA has officials specialized in compensation and pension claims.
- Meet veterans demands for these education, economic, and transition programs at VA.