HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
CHAIRMAN MIKE BOST

Veterans Benefits Reform – Shifting The Department of Labor Veterans Education and Training Service to the Department of Veterans Affairs

Background:

The Department of Labor's Veterans Education and Training Service (DOL-VETS) program provides employment and training services to veterans, as well as connecting them with businesses interested in hiring veterans. While well intended, the DOL-VETS program and its services continue to underperform and are underutilized. All states in the program pick their own goal percentage of veterans helped. A state may reach 90% of its goal, but the goal may have only helped 54% of veterans. These numbers are extremely low and are even lower than the general workforce population for employment. Through Committee oversight, DOL told Congress that they do not check if they are double counting individuals entering the DOL-VETS program. Therefore, in some instances a state within DOL-VETS may have a 50% employment rating with 3 different entries from the same veteran. Although DOL-VETS state directors may be meeting their goals, their goals are not challenging to meet. This raises the question of whether the programs and strategies are as effective as they could be for the veterans they serve. This lack of oversight and underperformance has been documented by the Government Accountability Office reports for decades.

This bill would address the lack of accountability and oversight in DOL-VETS by realigning employment programs for workforce opportunities back into the agency that is solely focused on veterans.

The Message:

This bill would streamline DOL-VETS programs and transfer them over to VA. This bill would also increase accountability at VA by making it easier to hold officials accountable who oversee programs previously under DOL's jurisdiction.

The restructuring would:

- Realign DOL-VETS programs to VA to better serve veterans.

- Increase accountability and transparency within these programs by moving all veteran employment programs to VA's jurisdiction.

- Reduce bureaucracy in VBA by making VA a one stop shop for veterans' employment and training – in return, reducing the complexity of different agencies offering different services to veterans.