

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2130

To direct the Secretary of Interior to establish a veterans conservation corps,
and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 17, 2012

Mr. NELSON of Florida introduced the following bill; which was read twice and
referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Interior to establish a veterans
conservation corps, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Conservation
5 Corps Authorization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) CORPS.—The term “corps” means the vet-
9 erans conservation corps established under section
10 3(a).

1 (2) ELIGIBLE VETERAN.—The term “eligible
2 veteran” means a veteran (as the term is defined in
3 section 101 of title 38, United States Code) that, as
4 of the date on which the application for the corps is
5 submitted—

6 (A) is unemployed;

7 (B) is not enrolled in any other Federal
8 training program; and

9 (C) meets any other criteria that the Sec-
10 retary determines to be appropriate.

11 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
12 the Secretary of the Interior.

13 **SEC. 3. VETERANS CONSERVATION CORPS.**

14 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, in cooperation
15 with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary
16 of Commerce, shall establish a veterans conservation
17 corps—

18 (1) to provide training and employment to eligi-
19 ble veterans;

20 (2) to assist eligible veterans in the transition
21 from service in the Armed Forces to civilian life; and

22 (3) to assist the Federal Government in main-
23 taining Federal land and water.

24 (b) EMPLOYMENT OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS.—

25 (1) LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT.—

1 (A) INITIAL PERIOD.—The Secretary shall
2 employ in the corps eligible veterans for a 1-
3 year period to carry out work projects assigned
4 under subsection (c).

5 (B) EXTENSION OF EMPLOYMENT.—The
6 Secretary may, on a case-by-case basis and as
7 the Secretary considers appropriate, extend the
8 employment of an eligible veteran under sub-
9 paragraph (A) for an additional 1-year period.

10 (2) TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT FOR STUDENT
11 VETERANS.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may es-
13 tablish a program in the corps for the short-
14 term employment of eligible veterans that are
15 attending institutions of higher education.

16 (B) TERMS.—The employment of an eligi-
17 ble veteran under subparagraph (A) shall not
18 exceed 16 weeks in total.

19 (3) COMPENSATION.—An eligible veteran em-
20 ployed by the corps under paragraph (1) or (2) shall
21 receive a stipend and living allowance in an amount
22 to be determined by the Secretary, in consultation
23 with Secretary of Veteran Affairs.

24 (c) WORK PROJECTS.—

1 (1) ASSIGNMENT.—Each eligible veteran em-
2 ployed under subsection (b)(1) shall be assigned to
3 a work project that—

4 (A) furthers the purposes described in sub-
5 section (a); and

6 (B) falls within 1 or more of the following
7 categories:

8 (i) Transportation improvements, such
9 as improving wilderness trails.

10 (ii) Erosion control.

11 (iii) Landscape and recreation.

12 (iv) Habitat protection and restora-
13 tion, including removal of invasive species.

14 (v) Data collection.

15 (vi) Any other specific project cat-
16 egory identified under paragraph (2).

17 (2) SPECIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL PROJECT
18 CATEGORIES.—Not later than 180 days after the
19 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the
20 Secretary of Commerce shall identify additional
21 project categories that the Secretary and the Sec-
22 retary of Commerce consider appropriate to further
23 the purposes described in subsection (a).

24 (3) LEVERAGING OF MILITARY SKILLS.—To the
25 maximum extent practicable, an eligible veteran in

1 the corps shall be assigned to a work project under
2 paragraph (1) that enables the eligible veteran to
3 use the skills that the eligible veteran developed as
4 a member of the Armed Forces.

5 (4) DEVELOPMENT AND SUPERVISION OF WORK
6 PROJECTS.—The Secretary and the Secretary of
7 Commerce shall develop and supervise the work
8 projects under the corps that relate to the respective
9 jurisdiction of the Secretary and the Secretary.

10 (d) EDUCATION AND TRAINING.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in coopera-
12 tion with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the
13 Secretary of Commerce, shall establish a program as
14 part of the corps to provide to eligible veterans em-
15 ployed under the corps any education or training
16 that is necessary to enable the eligible veterans to
17 carry out the work projects assigned under sub-
18 section (c)(1).

19 (2) USE OF EXISTING FACILITIES.—To the
20 maximum extent practicable, the Secretary, the Sec-
21 retary of Veterans Affairs, and the Secretary of
22 Commerce shall use existing facilities of the Federal
23 Government to provide the education and training
24 required under paragraph (1).

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